

Breastfeeding – Pumping by hand (hand expression)

You can help your baby get breast milk by expressing it from your breasts. This can be done by hand or using an electric breast pump if your baby:

- has not yet started to suckle
- needs more milk than it is possible to get directly from the breast.

We recommend trying hand expression as soon as possible after birth, ideally within the first few hours.

Hand expression is gentle on the breast. In the first 1-2 days, it is often the easiest way to collect the first milk (colostrum).

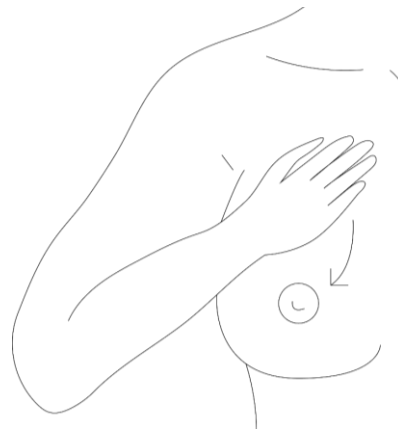
Hand expression can also be helpful if your baby has difficulty breastfeeding. This may happen if your baby:

- falls asleep quickly while feeding
- becomes restless or cries a lot
- has trouble latching onto the nipple.

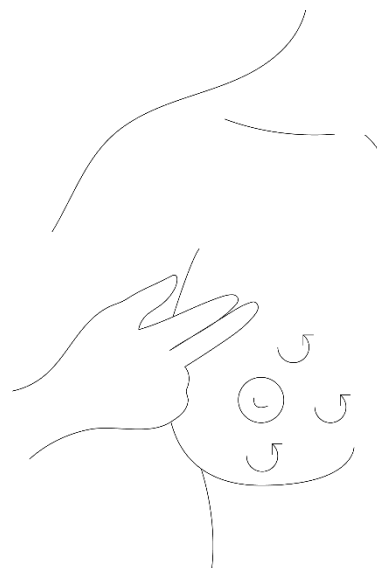
How to express milk by hand

Follow these steps to express milk properly:

1. Wash or disinfect your hands before starting.
2. Use a clean syringe or cup to collect the milk.
3. Find a comfortable and quiet place. Relax, inhale deeply, and think of your baby. This helps your milk to flow.
4. Stimulate your let-down reflex: Stroke from the chest wall towards the nipple with a flat hand. If needed, repeat this on the entire breast.



5. Gently massage the breast in small, circular motions using your index and middle finger. If needed, repeat this on the entire breast.

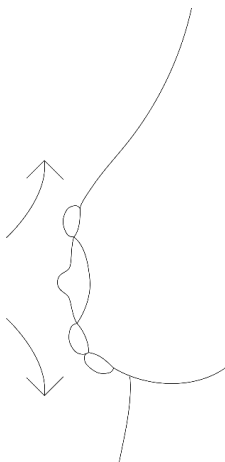


Kvindesygdomme og Fødsler

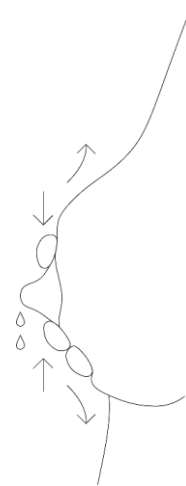
6. Place the tip of your thumb an inch above the nipple and place your index and middle finger below the nipple. Your fingertips should be at the edge of the darker area around the nipple (areola).



7. Gently – but firmly – press your fingers against your breast. Think: “Press inwards”.



8. Squeeze your fingers together, then release. Think: “Press and squeeze”.



9. Repeat the "Press inwards" and "Squeeze and release" technique. Move your fingers slightly to empty all milk ducts. If necessary, use the other hand to reach all sides of your breast.
10. When your milk no longer flows, you can repeat the stimulation (step 4 and 5) and continue. Switch to the other breast of you like.
11. Express for about 10 minutes on each breast.

Other resources

Watch this video (in English) of how to express the first milk:

<https://globalhealthmedia.org/video/expressing-the-first-milk>

Kvindesygdomme og Fødsler

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