

Providing Milk for Your Baby

Why provide human milk for my baby?

Human milk is like medicine for a sick or premature baby. It helps babies fight infections and leads to shorter hospital stays.

You do not need to decide right away if you want to feed your baby at the breast. Right now, we just need you to pump your milk. After you get started, you can decide how long you want to pump and if you would like to breastfeed. Whatever you decide, by pumping your milk right now, you are giving your baby the best possible start in life.

How much milk should I get?

By the time your baby is 2 weeks old:

	Milliliters	Ounces
Ideal Supply	750-1000 ml/day	25-33 oz/day
Borderline Supply	350-500 ml/day	12-16 oz/day
Low Supply	Less than 350 ml/day	Less than 12 oz/day

Can I call and check on my baby?

Yes! Please feel free to call and check on your baby any time:

- NICU phone number: **608-890-9600**
- PICU phone number: **608-263-8049**

How do I begin?

- Pump as soon as you can after your baby is born. Within 6 hours is best. Ask your nurse to help you get started.
- Use a hospital-grade double electric pump whenever you can.
- Combine pumping and hand expressing to get the best milk supply.
- You can watch a video about how to hand express at:
<http://newborns.stanford.edu/Breastfeeding/HandExpression.html>
- Pump at least every 2-3 hours, at least once during the night. (8-12 times in 24 hours).
- Keep track of your pumping times and milk volume on your pumping log (see page 2).
- At first, you may only see a few drops. This is normal. It takes a few days for your milk to come in.
- The first milk you see will be thick and yellow. This is called “colostrum.” Colostrum is very important for your baby. Save every drop! Your nurse can help you collect it.
- Pumping should never hurt. If you have pain when pumping, please tell your nurse or lactation support person.

How do I store my milk?

These are the guidelines for when your baby is in the hospital.

	Room Temperature	Fridge	Hospital or Home Stand Alone Freezer	Home Freezer Compartment of Fridge
	<79°F (26°C)	<39°F (4°C)	-4°F (-20°C)	0°F (-18°C)
Freshly Expressed	4 hours	96 hours	6 to 12 months	3 to 6 months
Thawed	4 hours	24 hours	Never refreeze thawed breast milk	Never refreeze thawed breast milk

Your health care team may have given you this information as part of your care. If so, please use it and call if you have any questions. If this information was not given to you as part of your care, please check with your doctor. This is not medical advice. This is not to be used for diagnosis or treatment of any medical condition. Because each person's health needs are different, you should talk with your doctor or others on your health care team when using this information. If you have an emergency, please call 911. Copyright © 1/2024 University of Wisconsin Hospitals and Clinics Authority. All rights reserved. Produced by the Department of Nursing. HF#7633

