

Hands-On Pumping Helps Mothers Make More Milk

Some mothers struggle to make enough milk. This is often true when a baby is not able to fully nurse and the mother needs to use a breast pump. When you combine hands on pumping and breast massage you can increase milk volume by 48%.

What is hands-on pumping?

Hands-on pumping is a method that helps the breast drain each time you pump. This leads to more milk and more of the fatty hind milk that your baby needs to grow.

How do I perform hands-on pumping?

- Start pumping with a hospital grade pump as soon as you can after your baby is born.
- Pump 8 or more times every 24 hours, even during the night.
Massage your breasts before pumping to help with let-down. Massage both breasts using small circles, like a self-breast exam. Pay extra attention to the outer part of your breast.
- **Stroke** both breasts from the outside in toward the nipples. Use a light touch to relax and help with your let down.
- Start your pump. Pump both breasts and keep massaging. A hands free pumping bra makes this easier.

- Adjust the suction to the highest level that is comfortable for you. It should not hurt! If you feel pain with pumping, ask to see the lactation consultant or breastfeeding resource nurse.
- Watch for sprays of milk and keep pumping until the sprays stop. If your milk does not spray, watch for when the flow slows down.
- Finish by single pumping with massage or hand expressing.
- Alternate sides and keep massaging. Keep working on firm or lumpy areas.
- You are finished when your breast feels soft and well drained.

Where can I learn more about hands-on pumping?

For a video of hands on pumping follow the link below:

<http://newborns.stanford.edu/Breastfeeding/MaxProduction.html>

For a video of hand expression, follow this link:

<http://newborns.stanford.edu/Breastfeeding/HandExpression.html>

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 © 1/2020 University of Wisconsin Hospitals and Clinics Authority. All rights reserved. Produced by the Department of Nursing. HF#7498