

There are many reasons why you may choose to express your milk. You may be returning to work, or want to leave your baby with someone else, or perhaps enjoy a night out. Expressing allows you to continue to give your baby all the nutritional benefits of your breast milk, even when you can't feed your baby yourself.

What does expressing mean?

Expressing simply means removing milk from your breasts, so that it can be given to your baby by someone else, usually in a cup or a bottle.

Unless your healthcare professional recommends it, it is not advisable to express milk until your baby is about four to six weeks old. This gives you plenty of time to establish breastfeeding and to resolve any little difficulties that may crop up.

Remember, expressing successfully does need a bit of practice, so relax, take your time and don't worry if things don't go to plan straight away. It is important to find a routine that suits you, and if you are unsure in any way, ask for help from your healthcare professional.

What about dad?

Although dad can't breastfeed, he plays a key role in the success of breastfeeding. As well as supporting and encouraging you through the breastfeeding experience, it is important for dad to have skin-to-skin contact with his baby. Feeling his father's heartbeat will encourage your baby's temperature, breathing and heart rate to settle, and give dad and baby the same closeness as you feel during breastfeeding.

Throughout the leaflet we've referred to your breastfeeding advisor as a healthcare professional. This term covers both a midwife and health visitor, as well as a maternity support worker, breastfeeding counsellor and nursery nurse.



Storing your breast milk

You can store milk either in the fridge or freezer. In both cases, be sure to use a sterilised airtight container. Always remember to:

- Label the container with the date and time before storing.
- Refrigerate expressed milk immediately. Make sure it is kept in the main part of the fridge and not in the fridge door. If you express more than once a day, you can combine the amounts but remember to put it back in the fridge each time.
- Store milk in the fridge for up to 24 hours or in the freezer for 3 months.
- You will notice that stored milk separates into layers. Shake to remix thoroughly before feeding.
- When freezing milk, allow space at the top of the bottle for expansion.
- Thaw frozen milk in the fridge or by standing the bottle in lukewarm water. Do not microwave it! If the milk has been defrosted in the refrigerator but not warmed, it can be stored in the fridge (but not re-frozen) for another 24 hours. If it has been thawed outside the fridge, it can be kept in the fridge (but again not re-frozen) for another 4 hours.



Freedom to Express™



A parent's guide
to expressing
breast milk

Tommee Tippee is offering a 25% discount on its Closer to Nature Freedom Breast Pump when ordered online. Visit www.tommeeippee.co.uk for further information, and quote discount code PP01 when ordering.

For further advice on breastfeeding your baby, contact your healthcare professional, or any of the following associations:

La Leche League	0845 456 1855	www.laleche.org.uk
National Childbirth Trust	0870 990 8040	www.nct.org.uk
Association of Breastfeeding Mothers	0870 401 7711	www.abm.me.uk

For more copies of this leaflet, go to www.professionalpartner.co.uk

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How to express

You can express milk by hand or with a breast pump.

Get everything ready – breast pump or container, a drink – and a photo of your baby may help your milk to flow.

Wash your hands, find a comfortable position, and relax.

Gently massage the breast including the nipple area to stimulate the breastfeeding hormones before you start to express (diagram 1).

Then you can either use a breast pump or continue to express your milk by hand.

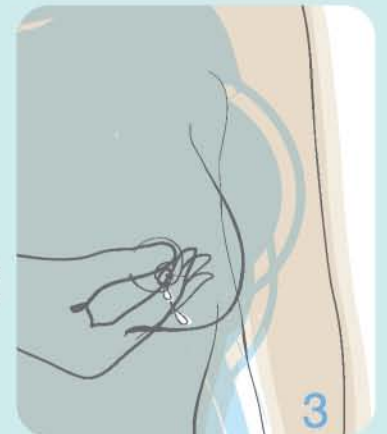
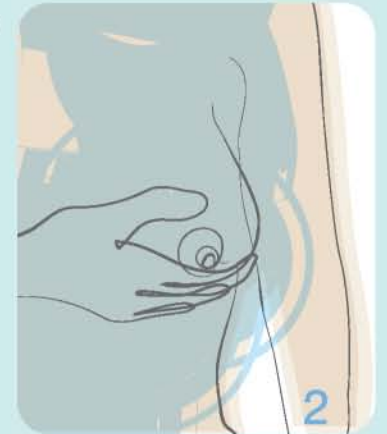
How to express by hand

- Cup your breast with the palm of your hand, then place your thumb just above your nipple (diagram 2).
- Compress and release the nipple until milk begins to flow. (diagram 3).
- Do this for about 5 minutes or until the milk flow stops, on each breast. Then go back and repeat again.
- Collect your milk in a sterile container, remembering to label it with the date and time.

How to express with a breast pump

- Sterilise all parts of your breast pump before each use.
- Assemble the pump according to the manufacturer's instructions.
- Start to express slowly at first, ensuring that the pump is in the correct position and comfortable.
- Pump for 5 minutes or until the milk flow stops on each breast.
- Repeat the cycle again on both breasts.
- Collect your milk in a sterile container, remembering to label it with the date and time.

Remember you are only trying to express milk from just behind the nipple, so strong suction is not necessary. Good breast pumps will aim to mimic your baby's sucking action and should not cause pain, so if it hurts to use the pump, stop and seek advice from your healthcare professional.



Choosing a breast pump

- Breast pumps can be operated by hand, by battery or by electricity.
 - Choose a breast pump that is straightforward to use with good clear instructions. Read the instructions first and get used to the feel of the pump in your hands and against your breast.
 - Go for a pump that takes into account the shape of your breasts and nipples. If you want a manual pump, look for one that you can use one handed, which may be easier and more comfortable.
 - Some pumps come with their own sterilising equipment which is simple to use. Or you can use your regular steam, microwave or cold water steriliser – check the instructions that come with your breast pump first. All equipment that comes into contact with breast milk or your baby's mouth must be sterilised before each use.
 - Consider how and where you expect to store your breast pump and the expressed milk. Some pumps come with all the accessories you need.

Going back to work

- If you are expressing because you are going back to work the best advice is to plan ahead and start building up your own bank of milk by expressing once or twice a day and storing the milk in the freezer.
- By expressing at the same time every day, maybe first thing in the morning when you are at your fullest, you will increase your milk supply, so that you can feed your baby and express some to be stored.
- When you return to work try to express to match your baby's feeding pattern and try to avoid getting too full.
- Ensure that your milk is stored in sterile containers inside a cool bag, and put it in the fridge or freeze it when you get home. Remember breastfeeding mothers have special rights at work, including time and a place to express.

How much milk can I expect?

The amount you express can vary from mother to mother. It may be as little as 5ml or as much as 200mls. As breast milk is so precious, every drop counts and storing it in small quantities allows you to use as much or as little as you want. An ideal way is to use a large sterilised ice cube tray. Each compartment holds about 25mls or 1 fl.oz. Alternatively you can freeze your milk in individual feed quantities of 60-125mls (2-4 fl.oz).

