

PROVIDING COLOSTRUM FOR YOUR BABY

Colostrum is the first milk your body makes. Acting ‘like a medicine’ it can help their immune system, gut and brain and protect from infection. It starts to work as soon as it is given.

Even very small, sick or early babies can have colostrum as soon as they are born. We will show you how to express it.

Your colostrum is unique, made by you especially for your baby’s needs and expressing it may help you feel close to them.

The earlier you express after delivery, the sooner your baby can have colostrum and the more milk your body will make overall. Ideally express within 2 hours of your baby’s birth.

In some circumstances you may be advised to begin expressing your milk before your baby is born, if it is expected your baby will arrive within a few hours, but please speak to a member of your medical team before starting to do so.

At first you will produce very small amounts – every drop is precious and will help your baby. We know this can feel difficult, especially if your baby is not with you. Staff are here to support you.

HOW TO EXPRESS COLOSTRUM

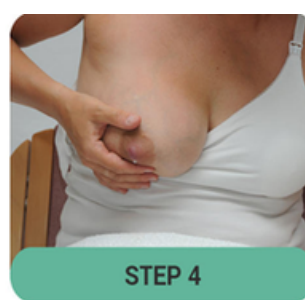
Being close to your baby may help expressing or look at a photograph or inhale their scent. Skin to skin contact will help – ask your nurse about this.

HAND EXPRESSING VIDEO

Scan the QR code: you will be taken to a video showing you how to hand express colostrum (watch from 31 seconds)



- Gently massage the breast and stimulate the nipple.
- Have the little purple colostrum syringe to hand
- Make a C shape with your hand and place your thumb and forefinger 2-3 cm behind your nipple.
- Gently squeeze and release. Press back while doing this if you can and try not to slide your fingers along the breast. Compress and release – it shouldn't hurt.
- Repeat and build up a rhythm. A few drops may appear – if not re position your fingers and do it again - it often it takes a little while.



- Drops will appear and this will increase over time. Once this stops, rotate your fingers around the breast so that every part of the breast is expressed.
- Do both breasts each time
- LABEL the syringe and buzz the midwife and ask them to take the milk to Neonatal unit, if your baby is there, or help you give it if you have your baby with you
- Aim to hand express colostrum 8-10 times in 24 hours.
- Even if you get nothing or the tiniest drop please continue to massage and express every 2-3 hours – it will come

Ideally your milk can be given straight to your baby but in some circumstances, it may be necessary to store your milk.

Your milk can be stored in the back of a fridge for up to 48hours or in a freezer for up to 3 months.

Advice

*Your own milk is the best for your baby and made just for them.
Please do not source milk from anywhere else as it may not be safe.
Hospital donor milk is specially screened and treated.*