



Expressing & Feeding your Baby on the Neonatal Unit



NHS
Kingston Hospital
NHS Foundation Trust

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Hand Expressing

How many times a day should I express?

It is recommended to express **8 – 10 times per day**, not leaving gaps longer than 4 hours in the day and 6 hours at night. It is also important to express **at least once overnight**.

The skill of hand expressing

1. Ensure you have a clean, sterilized container to express into.
2. Make surrounding as relaxed as possible, stimulate hormonal response by touching / gentle massage of breasts
3. Locate your milk ducts by feeling your breast, work your fingers back from the nipple to where the texture feels different; this is where your milk ducts will lie.
4. Cup you breast in a 'C' shape (see picture).
5. Using your thumb and the rest of your fingers in the 'C' shape, gently, but firmly squeeze down.
6. Release your thumb and fingers and repeat the action of squeezing down and releasing, this action will enable you to express your colostrum. Please avoid sliding your fingers over your breast. At first, it is normal to see only a few drops of colostrum. However the more often you hand express, the more colostrum you will produce.
7. When the milk flow slows down, move your fingers and thumb around to a different area of the breast and hand express again.
8. When the flow begins to slow again, move onto the other breast and repeat steps 2-6.
9. Keep changing breasts until the milk flow is becoming slower or stops.



Hospital Breast Pump

Initiation Programme This programme is designed for mothers to use straight from birth depending on the clinical situation. If a Nurse or Midwife recommends you use the breast pump from birth, it is important to remember the breast pump is purely for stimulation purposes and to still hand express afterwards. Hand expressing is the most effective way to collect colostrum as it releases the hormones; prolactin & oxytocin.

As you continue to express on the initiate programme, you will start to collect small amounts of milk. It is recommended once you have expressed three consecutive amounts of 15- 20mls you can then move on to the maintain programme as your milk has now 'come in'. If you feel your breasts are changing or feeling fuller, please consider changing to the maintain programme even if you aren't getting these amounts.

Maintain Programme Once your milk has 'come in', you will switch to this programme. It is important to express until your milk flow has slowed down or stopped. The breast pump will automatically turn off after approx. 30 minutes if you haven't done so already. Research shows after 30 minutes, too much oxytocin is released which can then make you drowsy.

Breast Pumps for at home

Breast Pumps available for a donation to our Charity Born Too Soon

Medela swing single and Freestyle double breast pumps are available on NNU for a donation of;

£120 (single 'swing')

£190 (double 'freestyle') / £300 (double, 'freestyle flex')

Card, cash or cheques made payable to; 'Born too Soon'

Please speak to a Neonatal Nurse for more information

We have a small number of breast pumps available for loan.

Funded by our charity 'Born Too Soon', please ask staff for details.

If our breast pumps are not available, please call or visit these websites to hire a pump;

Medela Symphony Double Breast pump

0161 776 0400

www.medela-rental.co.uk

ARDO Carum & Elite Breast pumps

01823 336 362

www.ardobreastpumps.co.uk



RESPONSIVE BREASTFEEDING

Responsive breastfeeding involves a mother responding to her baby's cues, as well as her own desire to feed her baby. Crucially, feeding responsively recognises that feeds are not just for nutrition but also for love, comfort and reassurance between baby and mother.

Before your baby is ready to responsively breastfeed...

1

When a baby is admitted to the neonatal unit, in the early days and sometimes weeks they are proactively fed via a tube as they do not have the reflex's to breastfeed independently, this may be due to prematurity or being unwell.

2

Looking at your face is the best way for babies to learn. By talking, listening, smiling, enjoying skin to skin and containment holding, oxytocin is triggered and helps your baby's brain develop.

Beginning to responsively breastfeed...

3

Babies will experience procedures regularly on the Neonatal Unit, for example; blood tests. Breastfeeding your baby or giving them some expressed milk can comfort and help settle them.

4

Begin to recognise your baby's feeding cues, these include; head turning from side to side, rooting, opening their mouth, stretching, increased physical movement and the later cue of crying. Holding your baby close will help you to tune into your baby's cues.

Responsively breastfeeding...

5

It is important to remember...Whilst breastfeeding is (or becomes) very instinctive to many mums, the culture of the UK can have strong attitudes regarding what is a 'good' baby and the routines that should be achieved. Family & friends, baby care experts and the media may offer advice which in turn leads to mothers fighting their own instincts to respond to whenever their baby wants a feed but for many baby's it is normal for them to breastfeed more regularly. You know your baby better than anyone else.

6

You cannot overfeed or 'spoil' by 'too much feeding' and that breastfeeding will not, in and of itself, tire you any more than the normal tiredness that all mothers have when caring for their baby. Expect your baby to feed a lot; this is normal behaviour of a baby. Like us, we do not eat and drink at the same times as everyone else. Breastfeeding is about much more than food. It is also about love, protection, comfort, rest and relationship building.

Responsive feeding makes life easier- it is what babies and mothers are designed to do

Suggested Apps

Many expressing apps are available to download, we suggest finding one that works for you. It is a good idea to have one where you can track the volume of milk you are expressing as well as how many expressions you are achieving per day. Please remember it is recommended you express 8-10 times per day.



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