

If you are having a baby and not planning to breastfeed or are unable to breastfeed, you may be interested in hearing the quickest ways to dry up your breast milk. Your milk will dry up on its own within a week or so if you do not nurse. You may, however, experience engorgement after your milk comes in. There are some things you can do to help relieve the discomfort of being engorged. If you have not made up your mind about breastfeeding, you may want to pump your breast milk until you decide. If you are sure that you do not want to breastfeed or if you cannot breastfeed, here are our best tips for drying up.

How to dry up breast milk and relieve breast engorgement

- Wear a snug fitting bra.
- Use cold compresses for twenty minutes a few times a day. Do not put ice or frozen veggies directly on your skin. Use a towel between the ice and skin. You may have used heat before to relieve discomfort; this is not advised for engorgement. Warm compresses may encourage your milk to let down and increase milk production.
- Use an anti-inflammatory medication, such as Ibuprophen or Naproxyn, as needed. Check with your OB/GYN or Family Practice Doctor.
- Do not pump. Pumping will signal your body to make more milk. Your body works on supply and demand. If you empty your breast, your body will think that it needs to make milk. When your breast becomes full it signals your body to make less milk. If you are very engorged, hand expressing milk is okay, but just empty enough to relieve discomfort. There is no point in being miserable while you are drying out.
- Drink a few cups of sage tea daily. Sage has properties in it that inhibit milk production.
- Do not restrict water intake. Some moms try to dry out milk by drinking less. Restricting your fluids will not reduce your engorgement and may lead to dehydration.