

## Increasing Your Breastmilk Supply for a baby in the NICU

### ***Get off to a good start***

Pumping 8 or more times per day notifies your breasts that they need to start producing milk. The pump takes the place of your baby if he were able to breastfeed. He would be feeding 8 or more times each day. Use a bi-lateral pump kit. This stimulates your milk supply better than pumping each breast individually.

Pump for about 15 minutes each time. When the milk stops flowing do some hand massage to remove the remaining milk. Rotate your hands around the breast to empty all areas.

### ***Pump regularly***

Continue to pump 8 or more times per day: that is about every 2-3 hours while you are awake. Your sessions do not have to be on a schedule, pump whenever you can. If you miss a session, pump more often later in the day. If you can, pump even more: 10-12 times especially during the first 1-2 weeks.

When you visit your baby, use the breast pumps in the NICU so you won't miss a session. Just bring your own kit with you.

### ***Use the best kind of breast pump***

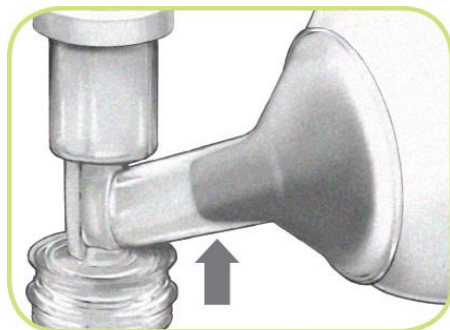
We recommend that you use a hospital grade breast pump when you pump. It is the only type that is designed to start your milk supply when you are not breastfeeding yet.

### ***Make sure that your flange fits***

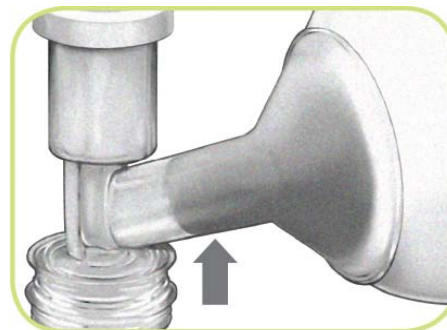
You will know it fits if:

- Your nipple stretches easily in the flange
- Only the nipple is pulled into the flange, none of the areola
- Your breast empties all over with no lumps or unemptied pockets of milk
- There is gentle motion of your breast tissue outside the flange during each suction cycle
- There is no pain, only a tugging sensation

Watch what happens during a pumping session. Your nipple size may change during a pumping session, or over the weeks that you use a breast pump. There are larger flanges sizes available if you find that yours is too tight.



**Good Fit**  
Space seen around nipple.



**Too Tight**  
Nipple rubbing along tunnel.

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## ***Pump like a baby feeds***

At the beginning of your pumping session, start your pump on low suction and fast cycles. Your baby will start sucking fast and light. Gradually turn the suction up over the first few minutes. Once the milk begins to flow (that means your let-down reflex has started) and this is the time that your baby would be sucking slow and deep. Turn your pump cycling down and continue increasing the suction until it begins to pinch. Then turn it back a bit. That will be the right suction level for you. Don't turn the suction beyond when it begins to feel uncomfortable. That can collapse your milk ducts and you will get less milk. There are some breast pumps that do these adjustments automatically.



## ***Massage your breasts while pumping***

Massage can make a tremendous difference in how much milk you obtain while pumping. For detailed instructions on how to do breast massage while pumping, view the video <http://newborns.stanford.edu/Breastfeeding/MaxProduction.html>. Massage until the milk stops flowing, then compress or gently squeeze the breast to remove even more.

To have one hand free while pumping, you can use one hand to hold both flanges, wear a tight camisole or purchase a special bustier.

## ***Keep track of your milk in a log***

Keep track of your progress on a pumping log. It will tell you if you are pumping the expected amount or if you need to do more pumping to keep up an abundant breastmilk supply.



## ***Stimulate your let-down reflex***

Let-down is when the milk is flowing easily. Stress is a major problem in the let-down reflex and is common, of course, among NICU mothers. Here are some suggestions to help

Hold your baby skin-to-skin

Massage your breasts

Look at a picture of your baby, smell baby smells, hold a baby toy or think of holding your baby

Relax your shoulders, do neck rolls

Use visualization; think about rivers of breastmilk or think of a peaceful place

Listen to relaxing music, sounds of ocean waves or recorded sounds of your baby

Eat and drink something while pumping

Pump prior to a stressful event

Don't watch the collection bottles

Get a back massage

Drink plenty of fluids

Caffeine, smoking and alcohol inhibit the let-down reflex

Wear a Rice Sock around your neck or lay it over your breasts



### **What is a Rick Sock?**



Fill a clean gym sock with uncooked rice and tie it shut. Some people add pleasant smells such as lavender or chamomile to aid in relaxation. Heat it in the microwave for a minute or two (make sure it does not get too hot) and wear it around your neck or lay over your breasts. This type of product is available in stores also.

### **Seek help from the Lactation Consultants**

Seek help from a knowledgeable nurse or lactation consultant in the NICU. Your needs are a bit different and they can give you advice based on your unique situation.

Please be aware that the information provided is intended solely for general educational and informational purposes only. It is neither intended nor implied to be a substitute for professional medical advice. Always seek the advice of your physician for any questions you may have regarding your or your infant's medical condition. Never disregard professional medical advice or delay in seeking it because of something you have received in this information.



## Sample Breast Pumping Log with Daily Target Goals

| Day             | Date | Time of Pumping / Amount Pumped |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | Daily Total | Daily Total Target Amount |                             |
|-----------------|------|---------------------------------|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|-------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Day of delivery |      |                                 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |             |                           | 0 – Drops                   |
| Day 1           |      |                                 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |             |                           | Drops                       |
| Day 2           |      |                                 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |             |                           | Drops                       |
| Day 3           |      |                                 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |             |                           | 25-75 ml<br>(1-2.5 oz)      |
| Day 4           |      |                                 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |             |                           | 75-150 ml<br>(2.3-6 oz)     |
| Day 5           |      |                                 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |             |                           | 150-225 ml<br>(6-7.5oz)     |
| Day 6           |      |                                 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |             |                           | 225-300 ml<br>(7.5-12.5 oz) |
| Day 7           |      |                                 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |             |                           | 300-375 ml<br>(10-12.5 oz)  |
| Day 8           |      |                                 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |             |                           | 375-450 ml<br>(12.5-15 oz)  |
| Day 9           |      |                                 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |             |                           | 450-525 ml<br>(15-17.5 oz)  |
| Day 10          |      |                                 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |             |                           | 525-600 ml<br>(17.5-20 oz)  |
| Day 11          |      |                                 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |             |                           | 600-650 ml<br>(20-22 oz)    |
| Day 12          |      |                                 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |             |                           | 650-700 ml<br>(22-23.5 oz)  |
| Day 13          |      |                                 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |             |                           | 700-750 ml<br>(23.5-25 oz)  |
| Day 14          |      |                                 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |             |                           | 750 ml<br>(25 + oz)         |

