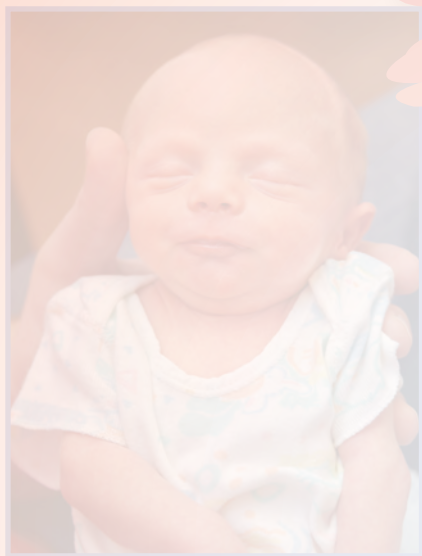


Mother's Milk for



Premature
Babies

Three blue daisy-like flowers with yellow centers are positioned to the right of the text. One flower is at the top right, another is below it, and a smaller one is at the bottom left of the group.



Babies who are born three or more weeks before their due date need their mother's milk to help protect them from disease, help them grow and develop, and help with digestion. Only your milk can do all that. Here are some tips to help you give your premature baby the best possible start.



"I know my breastmilk is the reason my premature twins are alive and well today. I know it."

Susan Millea
mother of Hillary and Hope

Your Premature Baby Needs Your Milk

Your Baby's Health Challenges...	How Your Milk Helps...
Your premature baby is at higher risk for medical problems than a full-term baby.	Your milk is the only food that contains antibodies and other substances that protect your baby from disease.
Your premature baby needs different nutrients than a baby who is carried to term.	Your milk has the special nutrients your baby needs and will help your baby get out of the hospital sooner.
Your baby's digestive system may not be fully developed.	Your milk is easy for your baby to digest — less tummy aches — and will help complete the development of your baby's digestive system.

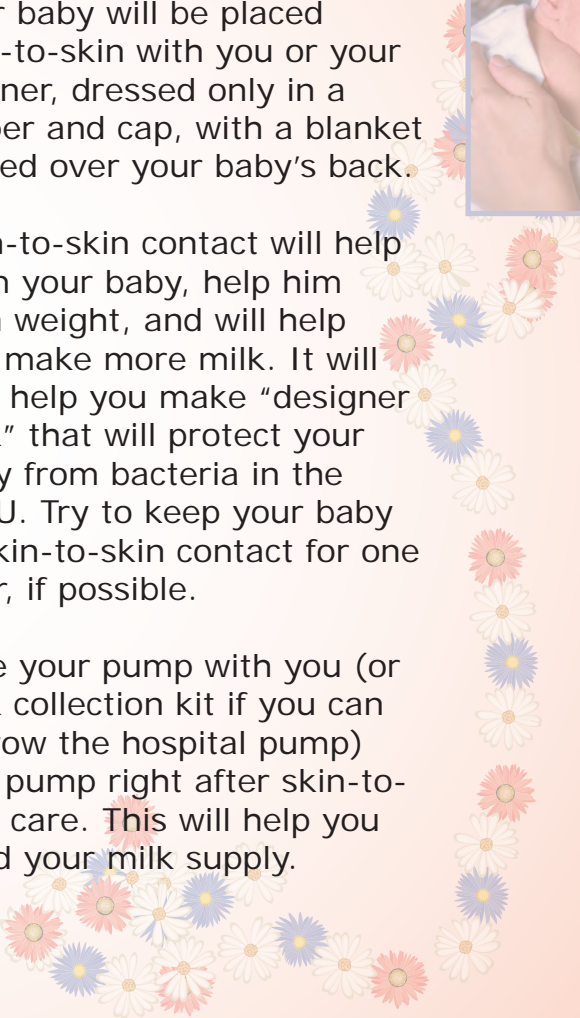


What if my baby is too small to breastfeed?

- Your baby may be able to breastfeed right after birth — or he may need to be fed through a tube until he is stronger. Your doctor will let you know. If your baby cannot breastfeed at first, you should pump both your breasts using an electric pump.
- Whether you feed your baby directly from the breast or pump your milk, it's important to start as soon as possible and to do it often. The more you breastfeed or pump, the more milk your body makes.

Skin-to-Skin Care

- Ask the hospital staff if you can practice skin-to-skin care (or kangaroo care) with your baby when visiting the NICU. Your baby will be placed skin-to-skin with you or your partner, dressed only in a diaper and cap, with a blanket placed over your baby's back.
- Skin-to-skin contact will help calm your baby, help him gain weight, and will help you make more milk. It will also help you make "designer milk" that will protect your baby from bacteria in the NICU. Try to keep your baby in skin-to-skin contact for one hour, if possible.
- Take your pump with you (or milk collection kit if you can borrow the hospital pump) and pump right after skin-to-skin care. This will help you build your milk supply.



Preparing to Pump Your Milk

- Apply a warm moist towel over your breasts or lean forward into a sink of warm water for several seconds.
- Massage your breasts gently from the chest wall toward the nipples before pumping, covering all areas of both breasts. Warmth and massage will help with your milk flow and supply.



Set a goal to be pumping a total of 25 ounces a day (per baby) by the time your baby is 14 days old. This will ensure plenty of milk for your baby.

Pumping Tips

- Start pumping within six hours after your baby's birth, if you can. Ask the hospital staff to help you get started.
- Plan to pump 8-10 times throughout the day and night or every 2-3 hours for the first two weeks.
- Pump both breasts at the same time for 10-15 minutes each session or at least 100 minutes a day (per baby).



- You may only get a few drops of milk at each pumping for the first few days. That's OK. Your baby only needs tiny amounts of your milk in the first few days and any amount will be helpful for your baby.
- When your mature milk comes in, pump your breasts until your milk flow has stopped for 1-2 minutes. Then massage your breasts for 1-2 minutes, concentrating on the areas of your breasts that still feel "full." Then pump both breasts again for 1-2 minutes. Complete emptying of your breasts will help you make more milk.
- If you pump more milk than your baby needs, you are doing a great job! Store it and use it later.
- Follow the guidelines for breastmilk handling and storage issued by your hospital or neonatal intensive care unit.



**Pumping schedule
for a mother with a premature baby
unable to latch onto the breast**

	How often?	How long?	Amount expected at each pumping
Colostrum	Every 2-3 hours (8-10 times a day)	10-15 minutes	A few drops to ½ oz.
Mature Milk	Every 2-3 hours (8-10 times a day)	Until milk flow has stopped for 1-2 minutes	½ to 2 oz.



Help With Breastfeeding or Pumping

- If you are already enrolled in WIC and your baby must stay in the hospital, call your local WIC clinic as soon as possible for a breast pump — before you leave the hospital, if you can.
- You will probably need extra breastfeeding help when your baby is strong enough to feed at your breast. Call your local WIC clinic and ask to make an appointment with a breastfeeding counselor.
- If you would like to see if you qualify for WIC, call 1 (800) 942-3678 to find the WIC clinic closest to you.
- For general breastfeeding help and information call 1 (800) 514-6667.

