

Baby's First Milk: **COLOSTRUM**

Right after birth, you will produce a special milk called colostrum. This first milk provides a concentrated form of nutrition for your newborn.



What is unique about colostrum?

- It helps protect your baby against infection and disease.
- It is gentle on your newborn's tummy.
- It provides the nutrition your newborn needs in just the right amount.
- It helps your baby pass her first stool and forms a protective barrier in her gut.

Important Tips:

- Place your baby skin-to-skin right after birth and snuggle with her until she finishes her first feeding.
- Nurse your baby at the first signs of hunger – she may suck on her hands or search for your breast with her mouth open.
- Keep your baby near you to make breastfeeding easier.
- The more you breastfeed, the more milk you will make. Nursing when your baby shows hunger cues will help to set your milk supply.
- Your breasts will NOT feel full during the first few days. This is normal.
- If breastfeeding is uncomfortable or painful, get help from a lactation consultant right away.

As your baby's tummy grows, she will nurse more frequently. After a few days, the colostrum will change into mature breastmilk.

If you are separated from your baby or she is not breastfeeding well, hand expression allows you to collect colostrum so that she does not miss out on the benefits.

To Hand Express:

- Wash your hands before expressing your milk.
- Use a clean container with a wide opening or a spoon to collect your colostrum.
- Massage your breast in a circular motion. You may feel warmth or tingling as this stimulates the let-down reflex.
- Hold the container or spoon near your breast. With your other hand, place your fingers and thumb about 1-2 inches behind the nipple.
 1. Gently press your fingers and thumb back toward your ribs.
 2. Press your fingers and thumb together.
 3. Relax your hand but keep it in place.
 4. Repeat the process, trying to empty all areas of the breast.
- Be patient. It may take a few minutes of repeating this process before you see any colostrum. This is normal. Ask a nurse or lactation consultant to help you feed colostrum to your baby.

In the first days, hand expression is preferred over pumping. Colostrum is thick and sticky and may stick to the pump parts causing the loss of precious drops.

Scan this QR code to see a hand expression animation. For free, 24/7 breastfeeding support, call the Texas Lactation Support Hotline at 855-550-6667 or visit BreastmilkCounts.com.



This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

© 2014 All rights reserved. Stock no. 13-06-11549 Rev. 3/24