

Hand Expressing Breast Milk

What is hand expression?

- Involves massaging your breasts with your hands and fingers to stimulate the release of milk.
- You can start hand expressing either before or after you have your baby. Please consult your healthcare provider if you want to hand express before your baby is born.

Why hand express?

- To increase your supply of breast milk.
- To relieve hard (engorged) breasts.
- To collect milk before your baby is born to help avoid using formula in the hospital.

How do I get started?

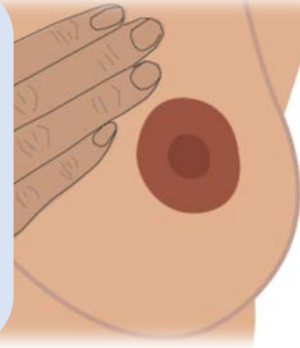
- Pick a place where you feel relaxed.
- Wash your hands before you start.
- Sit up straight and try leaning forward.
- Follow the instructions in the diagram.
- It may take a few squeezes before you start to see drops of milk.
- Remember hand expression will get easier with practice!

How do I hand express?

1

Gently massage the breast.

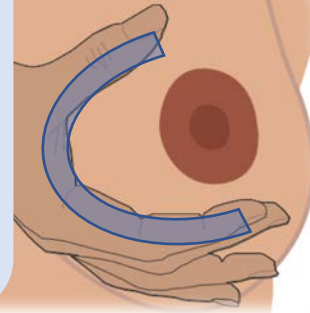
Start at the top of your breast and move your hand down toward the nipple.



2

Cup the breast in a C-shape.

Place your thumb and fingers 1-2 inches away from the nipple, on opposite sides.



3

Push back towards your chest.

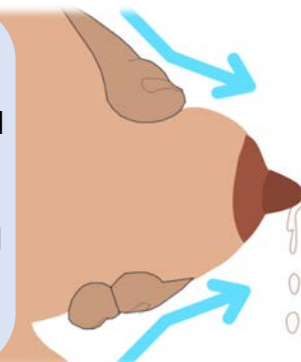
Keep your thumb and fingers cupped in a C shape around the nipple.



4

Express milk.

Bring your thumb and fingers together. Roll forward toward but not on the areola and then release. Repeat right away.



Can I store the milk I collect?

- Collect the breast milk in a clean container (e.g. cup, syringe) and store in the fridge for up to 4 days or in the freezer for up to 12 months.
- Remember to seal the container and label it with the date the milk was first expressed.

[Click here for a video tutorial](#)