

3. Attach breastshield to adapter.
4. Attach clear tubing to adapter and the expressing pump.
5. Attach sterile bottle to connector.
6. Moisten breastshield with breast milk for better seal.
7. Make sure to adjust the vacuum strength according to level of comfort. When using the pump to express, the vacuum strength should be started on low and then slowly increased to prevent any discomfort.

#### Quick tip:

- Partners can assist in assembling expressing equipment.

### Cleaning of expressing equipment

1. Disconnect all parts of breast kit and place in expressing bucket.
2. Set clear tubing aside as this does not need to be washed.
3. Clean the breastshield and adapter under warm soapy water using the expressing bucket then rinse.
4. Make sure to dry all your equipment and bucket to reduce the risk of contamination.
5. Place your kit in the bucket and close lid.
6. Store in your parent cupboard.

### Common Questions

#### How long can expressed breast milk be stored in the refrigerator and/or freezer?

Chilled milk can be kept in the refrigerator for up to 2 days. Milk can be frozen for 2 weeks in the freezer compartment inside the refrigerator. If the freezer is separate, frozen milk can be stored for 3 months in the freezer section and 6 to 12 months in a deep freezer. You can store defrosted milk in the fridge for 24 hours then it needs to be discarded. Defrosted milk that you have warmed must be used within 1 hour. Milk should not be refrozen or reheated.

#### I have tried to express but I am not getting as much as other mothers?

Every mother is different and the amount of BM you express varies. If you would like some assistance, talk to your nurse, midwife, and/or lactation consultant.

### Information

Please speak to the nurse caring for your baby. They will be happy to answer your questions as well as organise a referral to meet with a lactation consultant.

#### Expressing equipment for home use:

Contact your local pharmacy or visit the Australian Breastfeeding Association Website on how to rent or buy expressing equipment.

#### Breastfeeding websites and helplines

Australian Breastfeeding Association:  
[www.breastfeeding.asn.au](http://www.breastfeeding.asn.au)

Healthdirect Australia – Breastfeeding

[www.healthdirect.gov.au/#!/breastfeeding](http://www.healthdirect.gov.au/#!/breastfeeding)

Breastfeeding Helpline 1800 686 268

#### Accessibility

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Interpreter

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# EXPRESSING AND STORING OF BREAST MILK

## Neonatal Intensive Care Unit & Special Care Nursery



## Why is breast milk important to your baby?

Breast milk (BM) contains nutritional and protective properties essential to the growth and development of babies. It is especially important to the health and well-being of premature babies, who are prone to disease and infection.

It is recommended that you begin expressing once your baby is born or as soon as you are

able. The Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) and Special Care Nursery (SCN) have the resources to assist you in expressing your breast milk.

## How often should you express?

To increase your milk supply, it is important to express every 3 hours for 10 - 20 minutes. You should expect a small amount of BM to begin with. Express regularly to increase your milk supply.

### Quick tip:

- A suggestion for overnight: Express before you go to bed, once overnight, and as soon as you wake in the morning.

## How can you increase your milk supply?

- Eating healthy foods
- Drinking lots of water
- Staying stress free
- Double pumping (expressing from both breasts simultaneously)
- Expressing regularly
- Kangaroo cuddles (placing infant on parent's chest for 1-3 hours depending on infant's condition)

## Expressing in the NICU/SCN

### Where do you express?

You can express at the bedside or in the expressing room in SCN.

### Expressing Room

When you enter the unit, the expressing room is in the second corridor on the right in SCN.

## Expressing Equipment

Each mother is provided with an expressing kit, sterile bottles, and an expressing bucket for cleaning and storage.

- **Expressing Kits:** Medela Breastshield kits that come in medium and large sizes. They are disposable and may be used for 24 hours.
- **Sterile Bottles:** The sterile bottles are kept beside the refrigerators in each room and once used must be placed in the basket underneath the washing area cupboard.
- **Expressing Bucket:** A bucket will be allocated to you when you arrive to NICU/SCN and should be used to clean and store your expressing kits.

## Labelling

<b>Doe</b> Baby of Jane 12/03/2015	<b>EBM</b> 12345678
Time: <u>1500</u>	Date: <u>14/03/2015</u>
Ward: <u>NICU/SCN</u>	
Signature: <u>J.Doe</u>	

You will be given a set of labels with your baby's name, birth date, and patient number. Check that all of your baby's

details are correct. Please write down the following: EBM (Expressed Breast Milk), the date and time of expression, and your signature. Refer to the image.

## Storage

Wash your hands thoroughly before handling your milk. Milk expressed for 24 hours may be poured into one container. You may store your milk in syringes or denture cups depending on the amount you express. Hand your milk to the nurse to place in the refrigerator.

### Quick tip:

- To transfer milk from your home to the unit, place milk in a thermo bag or esky with an ice brick to keep cold.

## Expressing Breast Milk

It is recommended that you stimulate your breasts before expressing. Hand express for the first 24-48 hours, then begin using the electric breast pump soon after. Once you are ready to express, inform the nurse caring for your baby and they will provide you with all the expressing equipment you need and explain how to use them.

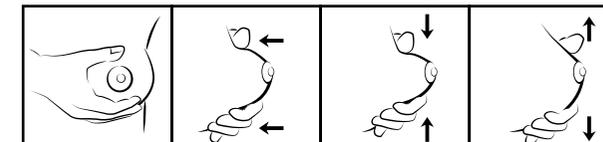
## How to stimulate breasts before expression

1. Find a comfortable position.
2. Start by gently massaging your breasts 2-5 minutes in a circular motion moving towards the nipple.
3. See image below.
4. Once your breasts are stimulated, you may express.



## Hand Expressing

1. Wash hands thoroughly and sit in a comfortable position.
2. Place clean towel under breast to collect any milk leakage.
3. Place clean syringe or container under breast to collect milk.
4. Place fingers under breasts with the thumb on top. Your thumb should be several centimeters from the nipple. Press thumb toward chest wall and squeeze toward your fingers.
5. Rhythmically squeeze breast until milk starts to flow, this may only be a few drops of colostrum.
6. Rotate hand around breast till milk flow lessens
7. Repeat steps 1 - 5 for each breast. See image below. Hand expressing shouldn't take longer than 10 minutes. If you have any questions, please talk to your midwife or the nurse caring for your baby.



## Expressing using the breast pump

1. Wash hands thoroughly and sit in a comfortable position.
2. Choose a breastshield kit; Medium or Large. The breastshield should closely surround your nipple but leave enough space so that your nipple is not rubbing against the wall of the shield. Your nipple should move freely back and forth, and should be at the centre of the breastshield.