

Breastfeeding & Your Baby

INCREASING YOUR MILK SUPPLY



ACT
Government
Health

Most mothers do produce enough milk for their babies! If you feel like you are not producing enough milk for your baby, there are ways of increasing your supply.

What is low milk supply?

The breast works on a supply and demand system. The more the baby demands the more milk is supplied. Low milk supply happens when there is not enough breast milk to meet your baby's needs. The best way to produce enough milk for your baby is to breastfeed often or use a breast pump to remove milk from your breast.

If your supply of breast milk is not meeting your baby's needs, it is usually a temporary condition which can be improved quickly with the right Health Professional support.

How do I know if my milk supply is low?

Signs that your baby is not getting enough milk may include:

- Being unsettled between most feeds.
- Being sleepy at the breast even though they are hungry – they appear too tired to breastfeed.
- Less than 6–8 wet nappies in a 24 hour period.
- Slow or no weight gain (refer to 'What to expect from my baby' factsheet).
- Fussing at breast when feeding.



Why would I have low milk supply?

There can be any number of causes for a low milk supply. Some of the more common reasons include:

- Poor infant latch to your breast
- Infrequent, short, or interrupted breastfeeds
- Ineffective sucking (i.e. tongue tie, lip ties, prematurity)
- Complications of birth
- Replacement of any feeds with formula or a dummy (pacifier) as they can reduce number of breast feeds and milk production
- Early introduction of solids
- Smoking
- You may be overtired, anxious, unwell or dehydrated
- Hormonal changes (i.e. ovulation, menstruation, pregnancy, oral contraceptives containing oestrogen)
- Side effects of medication



How can I increase my milk supply?

- Feed your baby regularly whenever they demand a feed. (Most newborns will demand feeds 2 to 3 hourly around the clock)
- Have lots of 'skin to skin' time with your baby.
- Ensure your baby is latched correctly.
- Increase breast stimulation by offering both breasts twice at each feed (switch feeding) and/or expressing after each feed. A combination of hand and pump expressing can be more effective.
- The amount expressed is not an indicator of supply so don't worry if you can't express much milk.
- Massage your breasts gently before and during expressing.
- Your GP may prescribe a medication/ supplement to help increase milk supply.
- Herbal supplements have been used traditionally, to increase milk supply. These should only be used under the supervision of a health professional.
- Consult with a Lactation Support Service for additional help.

REFERENCES

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How can I find out more information

1. PHONE

Maternal and Child Health service by calling Community Health Intake (CHI) 6207 9977

Pregnancy Birth & Baby 1800 882 436

Australian Breastfeeding Association
1800 Mum 2 Mum or 1800 686 268

2. ATTEND

'Early Days' Group

(infants up to 3 months of age) for assessment and ongoing breastfeeding information and support.

Contact Community Health Intake (CHI) for locations and times.

3. VISIT

ACT Government Health Directorate website:
www.health.act.gov.au/breastfeeding

4. SEE YOUR GP

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