



## Your important health information

# Making more breastmilk

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Although nearly all mothers can and will make enough milk for their baby, many worry that they are not making enough and think they are not able to meet their baby's needs.

Gaining confidence with breastfeeding and your milk supply will help you achieve your breastfeeding goals.

The best way to know if your baby is getting enough milk is by looking at the nappies and baby's weight gains.

### Your baby is getting enough milk if they

- Have 5 or more very wet nappies in 24 hours (after the first week).
- Pass at least one soft yellow poo every day (if under 6-8 weeks old).
- Are having 8 or more breastfeeds in 24 hours.
- Are active and mostly happy and relaxed after feeds.
- Are back to birth weight by approximately two weeks of age and are gaining about 150 grams or more a week in their first three months of life.

### Common concerns mothers have about their milk supply

- **"My baby feeds often"** It is normal for young babies to feed 8 to 12 times in 24 hours and to have some wakeful times.
- **"My breasts have gone soft"** This can happen when your breasts have worked out how much milk your baby needs (this may occur anywhere between three to 12 weeks).
- **"My baby has started feeding more often"** Your baby will feed more often for a few days, when your baby needs you to make more milk.
- **"My baby only feeds for a short time"** Older babies will take less time to feed and still get what they need.
- **"I'm not eating the right foods or drinking enough"** There is no proof that any special foods will help you to make more milk. Eating enough of your normal diet and drinking to thirst will give you energy to care for your baby.
- **"I think my baby needs formula as well as breastfeeding"** Speak with your Maternal & Child Health nurse, GP or a Breastfeeding Counsellor if you think you need to offer formula. This is because your baby may breastfeed less and you will make less milk. If your breasts are not fed from as often, you may get sore breasts or inflammation in your breast (mastitis).

### How to make more milk

- The more often you feed, the more milk you will make.
- Hold your baby skin-to-skin before breastfeeds or expressing.
- Feed your baby when they are showing early feeding cues and are still calm.
- Breastfeed more often – two to three hourly, a total of 8 to 12 breastfeeds each 24 hours.
- Make sure baby is well attached to the breast and is sucking and swallowing well with some short rests.
- Allow baby to decide the length of the feed.

- Offer both breasts at each feed, offering each breast twice for some feeds, swapping to the other breast when baby's sucking slows.
- Change the nappy after the first breast to wake baby.
- Give baby more breastfeeds each day.
- Offer a top-up or snack breastfeed if baby hasn't settled.
- Offer an extra night feed at the breast.
- Express your breasts after some/most breastfeeds including at least once overnight.
- Use gentle pressure on your breast while you are feeding or expressing (called breast compressions), this can help with milk flow.
- Sometimes prescription medicines are used to help increase milk supply, these are available from your doctor.
- Try not to give baby formula unless advised by your lactation consultant or other health carer.

### If you are fully/mostly expressing

- Add more expressions over the day and night.
- Aim for 8 to 10 expressions in 24 hours including at least once overnight.
- Use a hospital grade breast pump – these can be hired or purchased.
- Try 'power pumping' once per day, in place of an expression – this is 10 minutes on the pump then 10 minutes resting, repeating for up to an hour.

**Remember: more milk removed = more milk made**  
**It can take a few days for you to make more milk**

### Other helpful information

- Mercy Breastfeeding guide
- Mercy patient information handout – Expressing breastmilk
- Mercy patient information handout – Expressing breastmilk in neonatal nurseries
- Mercy patient information handout – Domperidone for increasing breastmilk supply

#### Further Information

If you have any questions regarding this information, please contact:

**Mercy Hospital for Women**  
 Breastfeeding Support Service  
 Phone: 8458 4677

**Werribee Mercy Hospital**  
 Breastfeeding Support Service  
 Phone: 8754 3407

#### Australian Breastfeeding Association

Helpline      Phone 1 800 686 268  
 Website      [www.breastfeeding.asn.au](http://www.breastfeeding.asn.au)

**Maternal & Child Health Line**  
 Phone: 13 22 29

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