



Pumping guide for NICU parents

Ascension Sacred Heart Lactation 850-416-6378

Studer Family 
Children's Hospital
Ascension Sacred Heart



Breast milk is best

Breast milk is the most natural and nutritious way to encourage your baby's optimal growth and development. Breast milk contains more than 100,000 unique components that cannot be replicated, and are special for your baby. Breast milk provides a complete and optimal combination of nutrients and antibodies that are designed to meet your baby's ever-changing needs. Only you can provide the complete nutrition that meets your baby's needs.

The first milk you will produce is called colostrum. It is rich in proteins and antibodies, and helps to build your baby's immune system. It is often called "liquid gold" and is considered medicine for your baby. Your colostrum can be clear or cloudy, and vary in color. It is usually the consistency of honey.

Frequently, babies in the NICU are unable to breastfeed immediately after birth. By pumping, you can provide breast milk for your baby.

Hand expression and hands-on pumping

Sometimes our breasts respond best to hand expression. This can be used before a pumping session.

Always wash your hands before touching your breasts or pump kit.

Hand expression routine

- Have the sterile containers available to collect your milk.
- Massage, stroke breast.
- Position your fingers behind the areola (dark area around nipple).
- Compress fingers together.
- Relax and repeat, in rhythm.
- Move fingers to a different position.
- Continue to massage, and use compression.
- Express for 5-7 minutes.

Hands-on pumping

- Start pumping session, pumping both breasts.
- 5 minutes into pumping session, set one side down.
- Use fingers to gently stroke breast downward.
- Compress breast.
- Repeat on the other breast.
- Finish pumping session, pumping both breasts fully.
- Pump both breasts at the same time for 10-15 minutes each session, or at least 100 minutes a day per baby.
- Pumping both breasts at the same time is faster and easier, but more importantly it increases your prolactin levels and milk supply.
- You will be given sterile containers and labels with your baby's name and medical record number. Pump into these sterile containers. Place the label on the container after you have completed it with the date and time pumped.
- Bring your milk to the NICU within 1 hour after pumping. If you are unable, ask your nurse to bring the milk to the NICU. Every drop of milk is like medicine "liquid gold" for your baby.
- Visit your baby as often as you can, and pump immediately after returning to your room. You will have better let-downs and get more milk. Pumps are available to pump at bedside in NICU.
- Hold your baby as soon as he or she is medically stable. Do "kangaroo care," holding skin-to-skin. Within 24 hours after being with your baby, you will make milk that has special protective antibodies just for your baby.

Helpful resources:

Droplet: firstdroplets.com

Stanford Medicine Newborn Nursery:

med.stanford.edu/newborns/professional-education/breastfeeding

Cleaning your pump parts

- It is important to clean all your pump parts that touch your breast and milk after each use so that germs do not get into your baby's milk. Do not wash the tubing. If you notice moisture in the tubing, run the pump with tubing attached for 1-2 minutes or until dry.
- Take apart all the parts of your pump kit. Be especially sure to remove the yellow valve from the breastshield and separate the white membrane from the valve prior to cleaning. Rinse all parts that come in contact with the breast and milk in cold water. Then wash all parts using hot, soapy water. Rinse in clear water again, making sure to remove all of the soap.
- Place the parts on a clean towel and cover with another clean towel and air-dry.
- After you have gone home, you will need to sanitize your breast pump equipment except for the tubing once a day. This can be done in the top rack of a dishwasher or by boiling in a large pot for 10 minutes. If you have a microwave, you can use the special sanitizing bags by Medela-Quick Clean Micro-Steam bags. Each bag can be used 20 separate times.

Once you are home

- Make pumping a priority. Your body knows how premature your baby is and is making milk specific for your baby's gestational age.
- Make sure you are using the appropriate pump. Personal pumps purchased at a retail store are not designed for round-the-clock use.
- Continue with the goal of pumping 8-10 times in 24 hours.
- While pumping, close your eyes and think of your precious baby getting well and growing because of your milk. Put a picture of your baby on your pump so that you can think of your baby while pumping.
- Keep a record of how much milk you get per day. Your goal should be to produce at least 600-750 ml (20-25 ounces) of milk per day.

- If the 24-hour total starts to drop, ask for help immediately. Contact your OB-GYN or Ascension Sacred Heart Maternity at 850-416-8088.
- It is normal to get more milk at some pumpings and less at others. It is also normal to get more from one side than the other.
- Please do not compare how much milk you get with anyone else. Many things are different for each mother and baby. Many things affect how much milk you make. The most common causes of low milk supply are fatigue and infrequent pumping.
- The more you pump, the greater your milk supply.

NICU milk storage guidelines

- Freshly pumped breast milk should be refrigerated at 39°F (4°C) if it is not going to be used within two hours.
- Freshly pumped breast milk may be stored in the refrigerator for use within 1 hour of collection.
- When freezing breast milk, containers should be filled $\frac{3}{4}$ full to allow for expansion with freezing.

Breast engorgement — when your breasts are painful and full

- Avoid missing pumping sessions.
- Go above where you feel hardness and massage downward during the pump session.
- Apply warm compresses or shower before pumping session.
- Use ice after pumping for up to 20 minutes.
- If you experience fever, redness, streaking/swelling or flu like symptoms please contact your healthcare provider immediately.



Mother's milk diary

Date _____

	Start time	End time	Expressed amount			Total time	Pumping notes
			Left breast	Right breast	Total amount		
1							
2							
3							
4							
5							
6							
7							
8							
9							
10							
Total							

Colostrum, the first milk you produce, is considered medicine for your baby and is like giving your baby his/her first immunization.

Mother's milk diary

Date _____

	Start time	End time	Expressed amount			Total time	Pumping notes
			Left breast	Right breast	Total amount		
1							
2							
3							
4							
5							
6							
7							
8							
9							
10							
Total							

Pump at least 8-10 times per day. Your milk supply depends on regular and complete removal of milk from your breasts.

Panhandle breastfeeding resources

How to contact Ascension Sacred Heart lactation

Ascension Sacred Heart Pensacola 850-416-8088

Ascension Sacred Heart Emerald Coast Family Birth Place 850-278-3995

Hospitals

Andalusia, AL - Andalusia Regional 334-222-6915 (ext. 7100)

Brewton, AL - DW McMillan Hospital 251-809-8122

Dothan, AL - Southeast Alabama Medical 334-673-4141

Dothan, AL - Flowers Hospital 334-794-5000 ext. 1210

Eglin Air Force Base Hospital 850-883-8001

Fairhope, AL - Thomas Hospital 251-279-2004

Fort Walton, FL - Fort Walton Beach Medical Center 850-585-6870

Mobile, AL - USA Health Providence Hospital 251-633-1000

Pensacola, FL - Ascension Sacred Heart 850-416-7000

Pensacola, FL - Naval Hospital 850-505-7109

Panama City, FL - HCA Gulf Coast Hospital 850-747-7898

Florida WIC

Bay County, Panama City 850-872-4666

Calhoun County, Blountstown 850-674-5645

Escambia County, Pensacola 850-595-6500

Holmes County, Bonifay 850-547-8500

Jackson County, Marianna 850-526-2412

Okaloosa County, Crestview 850-689-7858

Okaloosa County, Fort Walton 850-833-9254

Santa Rosa County, Milton 850-564-2272

Walton County, DeFuniak Springs 850-892-8020

Washington County, Chipley 850-638-6240

Alabama WIC

Baldwin County, Foley 251-943-7260

Covington County, Andalusia 334-222-1175

Houston County, Dothan 334-678-2800

Pump rentals

Baptist Hospital Gift Shop 448-227-3001

Pensacola, Storkland 850-478-2633

Online resources

Infant Risk Center mommymeds.com

International Breastfeeding Centre ibconline.ca

Kelly Mom-Parenting & Breastfeeding kellymom.com

Stanford University-School of Medicine

newborns.stanford.edu/breastfeeding

US Department of Health & Health Services

womenshealth.gov/breastfeeding

La Leche League Groups (LLL)

24 Hour Helpline 877-4LALECHE (877-452-5324)

Find your local La Leche Leaders & meetings by going to llusa.org

Please call 850-366-8287 or e-mail a Leader with breastfeeding questions: pensacoLLLa@gmail.com

Support groups

Ascension Sacred Heart Mommy & Me 850-416-8088

Parents of Multiples: PensacolaParentsofMultiples@hotmail.com

Contact a hospital near you for local resources and support groups.

