

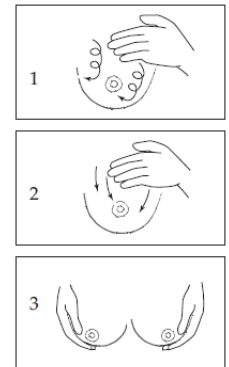
Hand expressing milk

Before you start:

- Wash your hands
- A hot pack or moist warm facecloth may be applied to warm the breast
- You can do this under a warm shower or at home in a bath

Hand massage

1. Gentle circular movements; with each hand start at the top of the breast and press inwards with the finger tips, moving your fingers in a circular motion on one spot for a few seconds, moving around the whole breast
2. Gentle massage of each breast, stroking the breast towards the areola, working around the breast with a tickle-like stroking action using all your fingers
3. You may shake the breast while leaning forward, using gravity to help the milk ejection or let-down reflex



Expressing by hand

Expressing breastmilk by hand is a skill and you may need to practice. Not everyone manages to obtain milk immediately. You may ask your midwife to show you how.

There are different ways to express. The aim is the same - to assist the let down and drain the milk ducts emptying the 10-12 separate lobes containing the special milk-producing glandular areas of the breast.

1. Place your thumb above and fingers below your nipple, towards the edge of the areola or brown area, several centimetres away from your nipple
2. Gently push your fingers and thumbs back into the breast and feeling the thicker breast tissue between your fingers and thumb, commence gentle squeeze and release action. Go gently. This should not cause pain or discomfort or damage your breast
3. Repeat this action, working all the way around the breast. Express from one breast until milk appears, to tempt baby to feed. If collecting breastmilk - continue until the flow slows down. Switch to the other breast and repeat



Take care not to squeeze the breast too close to the nipple, there are no collecting ducts located here. The nipple area is well supplied with nerves and can be very sensitive to pain.

When to express

Timing will be different for everyone

- If your baby is unable to suckle at the breast
- As soon as possible after the birth of your baby
- In the absence of a baby suckling at the breast, the breasts need to be stimulated 8 or more times in 24 hours