

## Once baby arrives

- Keep baby skin-to-skin for as long as possible.
- Breastfeed as soon as baby shows an interest.
- You can use your colostrum anytime, even when breastfeeding is going well.



## Further information

Ask your lead maternity carer (LMC) for any of the following literature:

- Breastfeeding - Beginners guide
- Hand expression of breastmilk storing and using expressed breastmilk
- Advising women with diabetes in pregnancy to express breastmilk in late pregnancy  
Professor Della Forster – June 2017.

Talk to your LMC, Lactation Consultant or Midwife Co-ordinator - Diabetes for further information.



# Expressing and storing colostrum during pregnancy

*What you need to know*

## Reasons for expressing

Babies of mothers who have diabetes in pregnancy are more at risk of low blood sugar levels in the first few days. Colostrum (first breastmilk) available will reduce the chance of your baby developing low sugar levels (hypoglycaemia) and help get your breastfeeding off to a great start.

You may also be advised to start antenatal colostrum expression for reasons other than diabetes.

## When to start expressing

Start expressing when you are around 36 weeks pregnant, 3-5 minutes on each breast a few times a day.

Some women may only express a tiny amount of colostrum, while others may get a lot. The stimulation and practice is good for later on, regardless of the amount you express.

In the very unlikely event that you experience any abdominal pain, bleeding or contractions, stop expressing and contact your lead maternity carer (LMC).

## Hand-expressing breastmilk

- 1 Wash and dry your hands.
- 2 Make sure your storage container is clean and dry.

- 3 Use warm flannels or a wheat bag on your breasts for 3-5 minutes and massage them a little to encourage the milk flow.

- 4 Position your thumb and finger 2-3cms away from your nipple. Start in the 12 and 6 O'clock position.



- 5 Push back firmly against your chest wall. Lift then push into your chest if you have larger breasts.



- 6 Roll your thumb and fingers forward at the same time pushing the milk forwards rather than squeezing, continue in a rhythmic pattern.



- 7 Rotate your hand around your breast after a few minutes to soften it: 12 and 6 O'clock, then 2 and 8 O'clock, then 10 and 4 O'clock.
- 8 Avoid squeezing, sliding or pulling, expressing should not be painful.

## How to store colostrum

Use the syringe supplied to collect any drops of colostrum and secure the cap after expressing. You can use the same syringe again for up to 48 hours if it is kept in the fridge. Once the syringe is full or after 48 hours, store it in the freezer in a zip lock bag labelled with your name and the date the milk was expressed. If your colostrum flows more freely, a spoon or cup can be used to collect it. Make sure the spoon or cup is washed, rinsed and dried thoroughly before use. The colostrum can then be drawn into the syringe for storage in the freezer.

Bring your colostrum with you when you come to have your baby. The staff will put a special label on your containers and it will be stored until your baby is born.