

## Guide to Pumping Breast Milk

If mother must be separated from her baby, it is best to **start pumping within six hours of delivery**, or as soon as mother feels up to it.

- To help her do this, set up a electric breast pump in her room.
- Begin teaching her how to use it. **Start by pumping every two to three hours for at least 15 minutes at each breast.** If she like, she can pump both breasts at the same time.
- Keep in mind she may not get any milk from her breast the first few times she pumps. It is completely normal to only have a few drops the first day – that is still a good start. Reassure mothers that that does not mean the baby is not getting any milk at the breast. The pump does not function like a baby at the breast. Colostrum comes in small quantities and is thicker than mature milk so it is unusual to get early results with the pump. Manual expression may be more effective in expressing colostrum.

In choosing to provide breast milk for her baby, she giving her child a special gift. This guide provides helpful information about how to begin pumping breast milk.

- First, give mother an accessory kit. Next, provide mother with collection containers (bottles) and labels with her child's name. Instruct mother to use a new container each time she pumps and to always put a label on the container with the date and time of the pumping.
- Be sure to instruct wash breast daily with mild soap and water as she normally would when taking a shower or bath. Remind her to rinse well. Also, instruct her not to use perfumes, lotions, and powders. It's important she wash her hands well with soap and water before each pumping.
- Instruct mother to be sure to ask for help when she is ready to begin pumping and follow the following steps.
  - Wash hands well with soap and water before each pumping.
  - First, plug in the pump. Next, put together the parts of the kit. The kit is already put together when you open it the first time. The only thing you need to do is connect the tubing to the pump. Next, start the pressure at the lowest setting.
  - Push the start button. Then, position the breast shield so the nipple is centered in the opening. There are two sets of breast shields in the accessory kit. Using the right size can make pumping more comfortable and effective in removing milk from the breast. They come is lots of sizes to match the nipple size. A lactation consultant can check for the correct fit.
  - You can turn the pressure knob to adjust the suction to the maximum level comfortable. **Remember that pumping should not be painful.**

- The goal should be to pump for 15 minutes on each breast. Mothers can save time by pumping both breasts at once. Once her mature milk “comes in”, she should pump until her breasts are empty and then for an additional couple minutes.
- When finished pumping, break the suction on the shield. Do this by pushing gently down on the breast at the rim of the shield. Remember to tilt the shield to catch every drop of milk.
- Be careful not to fill the containers above the marks on the side. This allows for space if the milk needs to be frozen.
- If any breast milk is left on the nipples, rub it into the skin. The antibodies in the breast milk can help prevent nipple soreness.
- Next, disconnect the collection containers. Then, screw on the container top tightly. Be sure to place a label on the container. Write the date and time of the pumping on the label. Keep a log of when mother pumps and how much milk is expressed. See the pumping log under printable resources.
- It’s important to wash all the breast pump parts that touch the breast or milk. Use hot, soapy water or a dishwasher once mother is home.
- **Remember that freshly pumped milk should be refrigerated as soon as possible after pumping.** When finished pumping, instruct mother to refrigerate the milk or give it to a nurse while she is in the hospital so that she can do so. Remind mothers to not forget to label her breast milk with her baby’s name and the time she pumped the milk.

#### **Follow these steps for cleaning**

**IMPORTANT:** Wash all the breast pump accessory kit parts that touch the breast or milk. Use hot, soapy water or a dishwasher once mother is home.

- First, take the parts of the pump kit apart.
- Remove the tubing from the back of the breast shield. **Be sure that not to put the tubing in water.**
- Wash all the parts. Then rinse them with clear water.
- **Be sure that not to store wet or damp parts.** Instead, let them air dry on a clean towel.