

Building Your Milk Supply



Here are steps to take to help you have a good milk supply for your baby.

I am getting ready to have a baby

Ask your health care provider:

- What kind of lactation support do you provide and how can I get access to it?
- What type of lactation support does my health insurance provide?

Call your health insurance provider to get a breast pump – they can help you get a breast pump if you need to build your milk supply in the early weeks or maintain your milk supply when you go back to work or school.

I just delivered a baby/ I have a newborn



In the hospital:

- Hold baby skin-to-skin as much as possible.
- Try to breastfeed as soon as possible after birth, ideally within the first hour.
- Ask for a lactation consultant to meet with you after delivery.
- Ask nurses to help you with breastfeeding and chestfeeding – they are there to help.

WIC provides lactation support and pumps to WIC participants.

You are eligible for WIC if:

- You are pregnant, breastfeeding, or just had a baby in the past 6 months; **or**
- Parent or caregiver with a child under the age of 5; **and**
- Have low to medium income, **or** receive Medi-Cal, CalWORKS, or CalFresh benefits; **and**
- Live in California

Find out if you're WIC eligible:
MyFamily.WIC.ca.gov



I want to get breastfeeding off to a good start



The more often you breastfeed or pump, the more milk you'll make. Newborns eat often. In the early weeks, breastfeed at least every 2-3 hours throughout the day and night, 8-12 times in 24 hours. Do not restrict feedings.

- Feed your baby when they show signs of hunger (rooting, sucking on hands, increased alertness, become fussy). Crying is a late sign of hunger.
- Avoid using bottles and pacifiers in the early weeks, unless medically indicated.
- Hold your baby skin-to-skin and massage your breasts before feeding to encourage your milk to let down.
- Make sure your baby is latching well. A good latch will help prevent nipple pain, help baby gain weight, and help you make more milk. A few signs of a good latch include baby's chest and stomach are facing your body, baby's head is not turned to the side, baby has a mouthful of breast not just the nipple, baby's chin and the tip of their nose touch your breast, baby's lips are turned outward (fish lips), baby's tongue cups under the breast and you hear or see swallows.
- Offer both breasts at each feeding. Let baby finish the first breast before offering the second. Massage your breast to keep your milk flowing when baby is only sucking and not drinking. This will help your baby grow and help you make more milk.
- Increase your milk supply by continuing to feed frequently, pump or hand expressing after breastfeeding. Continue to pump when you are away from your baby.
- Get plenty of rest, eat well, drink enough fluids, and let others help you.