



Hand Expression

Accessible link: www.cdc.gov/nutrition/emergencies-infant-feeding/hand-expression.html

Expressing breast milk by hand is an important skill for lactating women to learn, especially in case of an emergency. Hand expression can be helpful in emergency situations when you may not have access to a breast pump, electricity for a breast pump, or if you are away from your baby unexpectedly.

Expressing milk by hand:

- May be more comfortable for some parents who experience pain when using a breast pump.
- Does not require equipment, water, or electricity.
- Can relieve engorgement (by releasing some milk to soften your breasts) and help your baby to latch on more easily.
- Encourages milk production early in lactation.
- Is a safe and effective way to express milk during emergency or natural disaster situations.

A lactation support provider can help you to learn how to hand express. Hand expression gets easier with practice and you can experiment to find what works best for you. Practicing in the shower or other private space can be a good way to learn.

Before you get started:

- Wash your hands well with soap and warm water, or use hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.
- Use a clean, disposable container with a wide mouth to collect the milk.
- Find a comfortable position and lean forward slightly to let gravity help.
- Massage your breast to help stimulate the milk to release.

