Pumping Breastmilk

What is a full milk supply?

A full milk supply is 25 to 30 ounces per day by the time your baby is 4 to 6 weeks old (see chart). However, always remember ANY amount of breastmilk benefits your baby.

**Volume goals for 1 baby (double for twins)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day after baby’s birth</th>
<th>Milliliters (ml)</th>
<th>Ounces (oz)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Day 7</td>
<td>300-500 ml</td>
<td>10-16 ounces</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Days 10 to 14</td>
<td>500-750 ml</td>
<td>16-25 ounces</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 4 and beyond</td>
<td>750-900 ml</td>
<td>25-30 ounces</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

How often and for how long do I need to pump?

How many times a day you pump and for how long depends on your specific situation and your goals.

To build a full milk supply by the time your baby is 4-6 weeks, it is recommended you pump 8 times per day (about every 3 hours) from the time your baby is born through 4-6 weeks.

You will likely need to pump both breasts about 15 min with a hospital grade breast pump each time you pump.

Why do I have to pump so often when my baby isn’t eating at all or very much?

The first 2 weeks are crucial to building a good milk supply no matter how much your baby is eating. It is during this time that your body is learning exactly how much milk your baby needs now, or eventually.

Your body learns how much milk to make every time your baby breastfeeds, or every time you pump. For example, if you nurse or pump only 2 times per day, your body learns that your baby only needs to eat 2 times per day. Your body is smart and will adjust to making only that much milk. That is why newborn babies nurse 8-12 times per day – they are telling your body to go from making drops of milk (all they need in the first days) to bigger volumes every day until you reach a full supply of 25 to 30 ounces by the time they are 4 weeks old.

Frequent pumping is important and should match the usual feeding schedule of a newborn baby.

If my baby cannot eat after birth, how do I make sure I have enough milk?

If your baby cannot breastfeed, pumping should be started as soon as possible after birth, ideally within the first hour. The drops of milk you express in the first few days after your baby is born (called colostrum) often comes out very easily using your hands in the first hour after birth.

Pump both breasts at the same time, using massage and hand expression a minimum of 8 times a day (about every 3 hours). It is OK to pump more than 8 times a day and it is OK to pump less than 3 hours apart if you missed or are late to pump.

To Learn More

- Lactation
  206-987-1420
- Ask your child’s healthcare provider
- seattlechildrens.org

Free Interpreter Services

- In the hospital, ask your nurse.
- From outside the hospital, call the toll-free Family Interpreting Line, 1-866-583-1527. Tell the interpreter the name or extension you need.
### What's so special about colostrum?

The drops of milk you express in the first few days after birth is called colostrum. It is a thick, clear or golden fluid full of healthy antibodies and protein. This milk is very important and is like medicine for your baby.

Small volumes, even drops, can be stored in syringes provided by your baby’s nurse.

Even if your baby can’t eat, usually you or your baby’s nurse can put your colostrum on your baby’s lips or inner cheeks.

### Why do I have to pump at night?

During the first 2-4 weeks it is very important to pump in the night, ideally every 2 to 3 hours. Try your hardest not to go longer than 5 hours. After 5 hours, your milk making hormones drop and your body needs to work extra hard to increase them again.

### How often do I need to pump if my baby is also breastfeeding?

If your baby is also breastfeeding, but you need to pump to maintain or increase supply, pump right after baby feeds.

### How do I use the hospital pump?

The Symphony pump at the hospital has 2 programs:

#### The Initiate Program

- Use if you have just given birth to about 6 days after birth or until you are making 20 ml (combining milk from both breasts) for 3 sessions in a row.
- This program will run 15 minutes. It has a random pumping pattern and will have pauses. Wait to stop until you hear a beep.

#### The Maintain Program

- Use when your baby is 6 days old, or when you are making 20 ml per pumping session often.
- This program will run for 30 minutes and then stops, but you should time yourself and only pump about 15 minutes.
- If you still have milk coming at 15 minutes and you feel your breasts are not quite emptied, it is OK to pump 5 to 10 more minutes. You may want to pump 1 breast at a time for 5 minutes each using gentle massage. Breasts do not ever fully empty so your breasts may still feel like they have milk in them, especially in the first few weeks after birth.
- If you have no more milk coming at 15 minutes, press the droplet button and let the pump run for 2 more minutes.
Breast Pumping Log

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>12 MID</th>
<th>1 AM</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
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<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
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<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
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<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>10</th>
<th>11</th>
<th>Total # of times pumped today</th>
<th>Total amount pumped</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Adapted from UWMC Lactation Services with permission