

Expressing Colostrum in Late Pregnancy



Colostrum - They call it liquid gold for good reason. This amazing liquid contains everything your newborn baby needs to thrive in their first hours and days after birth. Apart from the birth, Colostrum is our earliest and most potent influence on gut health and bacterial composition and health across the lifespan.

- Colostrum production begins around 16-20 weeks of pregnancy
- Mothers will make colostrum for the first 3-4 days of life
- Contains nutrients, immunoglobins, antibodies and protein rich

Benefits of antenatal hand expressing

- It gets you familiar with your breasts
- It means you won't have to rely on a midwife to do this for them
- Can stimulate a mother's supply to start to flow (releases oxytocin)
- There is a supply available if special circumstances dictate baby requires EBM/top ups. (ie: Low blood sugars, anatomical issues such a cleft palate or tongue tie, or jaundice etc.)

It is safe to commence around 36-37 weeks.

Try expressing each breast with your hand for about 5-10 minutes, a couple times during the day.

HOW TO EXPRESS WITH YOUR HAND:

- Find a warm, private area where you will not be disturbed, and a comfortable chair to sit and relax in.
- Wash your hands
- Applying warmth to your breast, and then gently massage around your breast in a circular motion, towards the nipple, then stimulate your nipple by gently rolling it between your fingers.
- Place your fingers on one side of your breast and your thumb on the other side about 2-3cm away from the nipple (generally this is just before or just after the edge of the areola (dark area around the nipple)).
- Press your thumb and fingers back into your chest and gently squeeze your breast so that your thumb and fingers move back towards the chest behind the nipple. Then compress the thumb and forefinger together.



Press (back towards your chest)



Compress



Relax

- Keep repeating this action until a drop of colostrum forms on the nipple. Draw the colostrum up into a syringe, and continue expressing until more drops form.
- After a few minutes, once the flow slows, move your fingers around to a different part of your breast, or you can move back and forth between both breasts.
- If you would like to watch a video of hand expressing you can try the following websites.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q56QyDteGso>
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PnG4pW9z4Cc>

*Don't forget to put a label onto your syringe with your name, date, time and volume
Colostrum can be stored in the fridge for 2 days before transferring to the freezer.*

NB: You can use the same syringe for the 2 days before you need to store it in the freezer, unless you fill up the syringe first.