



**York and Scarborough
Teaching Hospitals**
NHS Foundation Trust

Drops of Gold for Your Baby



Information for patients, relatives and carers

Special Care Baby Unit

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Useful Contact Numbers

Infants Feeding Co-ordinators	Tel: 07788 227549 Tel: 07766 498290
National Breastfeeding helpline	Tel: 0300 100 0212
The Breast-Feeding Network	Tel: 0300 100 0210
La Leche League	Tel: 0845 120 2918
NCT	Tel: 0300 330 0700
Treasure Chest	https://treasurechest.org.uk

Best Beginnings

“For sick and preterm babies, the importance of breast milk cannot be over-estimated, supporting growth and providing protection from infection. Evidence suggests that the use of breast milk decreases the incidence and severity of the life-threatening disease Necrotising Enterocolitis (NEC)” (Baby Friendly Initiative, 2019)

Colostrum is concentrated breast milk packed with nutrition, anti-inflammatories, laxatives and protective factors which mature and protect your babies' gut (BFI, 2013).

How Collecting Drops of Gold is beneficial for you and your baby

Benefits for your Baby:

- For premature or sick babies, a reduction in gut inflammation, late onset sepsis, chronic lung disease, eye disease, sudden infant death syndrome, increased feed tolerance and improved neuro developmental outcomes.
- Premature babies miss out on the third trimester transfer of antibodies, nutrition, and iron which breastmilk can provide.
- Reduced hospital admission rates for respiratory infections, gastroenteritis infective and non-infective, eczema, asthma, feeding difficulties and intolerances.
- Longer term breastfeeding reduces the babies' chances of developing high blood pressure, obesity, and type two diabetes (BFI, 2013) in later life.
- Unique bonding and attachment between mother and baby.
- Breast milk provides real time antibodies for any pathogens inhaled or indigested by mother and baby.

Benefits for Mum:

- Reduction in breast and ovarian cancers
- Reduced risk of hip fractures
- Reduction in heart disease

For mothers who have caesareans skin to skin and early breast feeding is important as babies miss the exposure to microbiome (healthy bacteria) which they get during a vaginal birth.

Breast feeding and breast milk
are so much more than just food

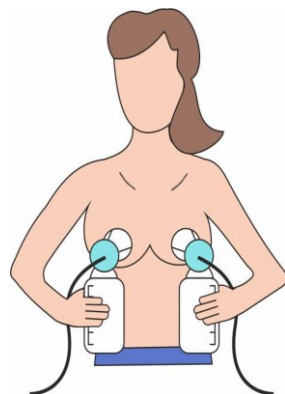
Nutrition - Protection - Comfort

Expressing Guide

- Start expressing within the first two hours of birth, the amount of colostrum you will get will be small.
- Use the breast pump from day zero and then hand express after. Colostrum packs and support with this are available from your midwife or SCBU nurse.
- Express 8-10 times in 24 hours, with no longer than a 4-hour gap, especially at night as this is when your hormones and fat content are at their highest.
- Lots of skin to skin with your baby releases calming hormones for both you and your baby. This will increase and help to establish your milk supply (See Bliss 'Skin-to-skin with your premature baby' leaflet for the other benefits of skin-to-skin).
- Always express next to your baby if possible. If not possible have something that smells of your baby, a picture or a video as this will help increase the oxytocin hormone and promote a letdown increasing milk supply.
- Breast massage, a warm shower or a hot drink before expressing can help with milk flow.

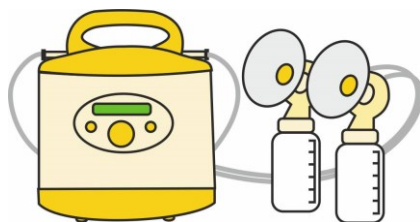


- Double pumping is recommended it will increase milk supply and save you time. Different funnel and cup sizes are available, speak to your nurse if there is any soreness to your breast or nipple area



- Turn the suction up on the breast pump until it pinches then turn it back down one, it should not be painful.
- When you are expressing a total of **20mls** in the last **three** expressions switch to the **maintenance** setting on the breast pump and express until there is no more milk flowing.
- Your milk supply should increase daily over the first two weeks and total 750-900mls in a 24-hour period, if this is not happening, please speak to your midwife or SCBU nurse for advice and support.

- Your SCBU nurse will speak to you about your expressing and complete a Frequency of expressing assessment (FoX) at least five times within the first two weeks.



- Using a 'pumping log' can help keep track of milk supply.
- The same equipment and support are available on the postnatal ward. You can borrow the breast pump to take home if your baby is in SCBU and you are discharged home.

Tips if struggling with breast milk supply

- Increase amount of skin-to-skin with your baby.
- Express next to your baby whenever possible.
- Check cup and funnel size is correct.
- Ensure suction level on the pump is optimal.
- The pump is set to maintenance setting, and you are expressing until there is no more milk plus an extra few minutes.
- Increase number of times you express in 24 hours.
- Try **Cluster Expressing**:

**Pump
on the
hour**

**Every
hour**

**For four
hours**

Complete this cycle
as **one** of your 8 to 10
expressions in 24 hours.
Repeat for
two to three days



Expressing log

Week 1

You may find it helpful to record the number of times you are expressing and the amount you express. You can use the chart on the next page to do this.

Remember in these early days the amounts you express will be small quantities but that's ok and expected, these small drops of colostrum contain everything your baby needs. As you continue to express in these early days you will start to see a small increase in the amount of milk you express.

Please remember we are here to help, so any questions and concerns are welcomed, and we will help and support you.

Week 1- Expressing log

Expressing Number	Date:	Date:	Date:	Date:	Date:	Date:	Date:
1							
2							
3							
4							
5							
6							
7							
8							
9							
10							
Daily Total							

Week 2

You have completed one whole week of expressing, well done you!

Every drop of milk is making a big difference for your baby. It can be a stressful and emotional time on the Special Care Baby Unit, spending time with your baby, especially in skin-to-skin contact can not only help to make you and your baby feel more relaxed but will also help stimulate your milk production.

So, take as many opportunities as you can to enjoy those special cuddles.

Remember, we are still here to help and support you in your journey, so please don't be worried about asking for help.

You can use the week two chart on the next page.

Week 2 - Expressing log

Expressing Number	Date:	Date:	Date:	Date:	Date:	Date:	Date:
1							
2							
3							
4							
5							
6							
7							
8							
9							
10							
Daily Total							

Week 3

You have completed two whole weeks of expressing, well done you!

You and your partner are the two most important people in your baby's life. Spending as much time as possible with your baby, being involved and doing as much as possible for your baby's care will help you feel closer to your baby and help you to get to know them and their cues better. Your baby will take comfort in knowing you are close, and this can also help increase the hormones needed for producing breast milk which will help with your milk supply.

Remember, we are still here to help and support you in your journey, so please don't be worried about asking for help.

You can use the week three chart on the next page.

Week 3 - Expressing log

Expressing Number	Date:	Date:	Date:	Date:	Date:	Date:	Date:
1							
2							
3							
4							
5							
6							
7							
8							
9							
10							
Daily Total							

Week 4

You have completed three whole weeks of expressing, well done you!

It is important to recognise that having a baby on the Special Care Baby Unit can be tiring so remember to be kind to yourself and to make sure you are looking after yourself as well as your baby.

Expressing is time consuming but by the end of this week you will have completed four whole weeks, that's amazing, well done and just look how far you have come from those first few drops in those early days.

You can use the week four chart on the next page.

Week 4 - Expressing log

Expressing Number	Date:	Date:	Date:	Date:	Date:	Date:	Date:
1							
2							
3							
4							
5							
6							
7							
8							
9							
10							
Daily Total							

Week 5

As your baby is getting older now, depending on their gestation, they will start to show those early signs of feeding, it is important to spend time close to your baby to help you to recognise and pick up on these cues. Skin to skin is perfect for this.

If your plan is to move onto breastfeeding staff on the unit will support you with this transition. Equally staff can support you with responsive bottle feeding with your expressed milk if this is the route you wish to take.

It is important to remember to continue to express frequently to maintain your supply, so your milk is ready for when your baby is ready to transition to oral feeding.

You can use the week five chart on the next page.

Week 5 – Expressing log

Expressing Number	Date:	Date:	Date:	Date:	Date:	Date:	Date:
1							
2							
3							
4							
5							
6							
7							
8							
9							
10							
Daily Total							

Tell us what you think of this leaflet

We hope that you found this leaflet helpful. If you would like to tell us what you think, please contact our Neonatal Clinical Educator on telephone 07552 854531.

Teaching, training and research

Our Trust is committed to teaching, training and research to support the development of health and healthcare in our community. Healthcare students may observe consultations for this purpose. You can opt out if you do not want students to observe. We may also ask you if you would like to be involved in our research.

Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

PALS offers impartial advice and assistance to patients, their relatives, friends and carers. We can listen to feedback (positive or negative), answer questions and help resolve any concerns about Trust services.

PALS can be contacted on 01904 726262, or email yhs-tr.patientexperienceteam@nhs.net.

An answer phone is available out of hours.

Leaflets in alternative languages or formats

If you would like this information in a different format, including braille or easy read, or translated into a different language, please speak to a member of staff in the ward or department providing your care.

Patient Information Leaflets can be accessed via the Trust's Patient Information Leaflet website:

www.yorkhospitals.nhs.uk/your-visit/patient-information-leaflets/

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