



Collecting & Storing Colostrum

- Ask your healthcare provider about colostrum collection kits.
- Colostrum can be collected 2 - 3 times a day in the same syringe. Store the capped syringe in the fridge between uses.
- At the end of the day, place your syringe in a sealed plastic bag in freezer. Label the syringe and bag with your name, date of birth, and current date.
- Bring your colostrum with you when you give birth. Keep frozen.
- Follow guidelines for breastmilk storage in Baby's Best Chance. www.healthlinkbc.ca/babys-best-chance
- Usually 0-5 mL (1 teaspoon) is all that will be collected in total during your pregnancy. Some people can get more, and others less. Even if you do not get a drop you are still getting your body ready to make more milk sooner after birth.

Hand expression is a skill that takes practice. It gets easier over time. Don't worry if you only get drops.

Safety Information

Speak with your health care provider to discuss if hand expression during pregnancy is safe for you and your baby.

If you notice any cramping during expression, stop and discuss with your health care provider whether you should continue.

For More Information

- Speak with your health care provider
- Go to these websites



moremilksooner.com



firstdroplets.com

Hand Expression of Colostrum during Pregnancy

How to collect breastmilk for your baby before birth



What is Colostrum?

- Colostrum is the milk that your body makes during pregnancy and for the first few days after your baby's birth.
- It can be clear to golden yellow in colour and is very thick.
- Colostrum is naturally made to be a perfect first food for your baby and is very easy to digest. This is why it is called 'liquid gold'.

Why is this important?

Hand expression in late pregnancy helps make more colostrum for your baby in the first few days of life. You also learn how to hand express before the birth so you already know how to do it afterwards.

Some babies need extra milk in the early days. Your colostrum will be ready to give to your baby right away. For example, if you:

- have diabetes
- a cesarean birth
- a history of low supply with other babies
- multiple babies
- a small or very sleepy baby

How to Hand Express

1. Start with a gentle massage of your breasts.
2. Put your hand in a C-shape on your breast.
3. Gently push your thumb and fingers back towards your chest.
4. Press, hold, and release.
5. Move your fingers around the breast and repeat.
6. As drops of colostrum appear, put the syringe tip under the drop and pull back the plunger to collect.
7. It is sometimes easier to collect the drops on a clean spoon first then use the syringe.

Watch these videos on **how to hand express and collect colostrum**. Scan the QR codes or follow these links:

HealthLink BC
www.healthlinkbc.ca
Search 'Getting Started on Expressing Breastmilk'



Colostrum Collection in Pregnancy
www.youtube.com

Search 'Colostrum Collection in Pregnancy: When to start and how to do it'



How Often to Hand Express

- Start expressing at 36-37 weeks for 5 minutes daily.
- At 37 weeks you can increase to 3 times a day for 5-10 minutes.
- Use each breast 2 or 3 times each session. Switch between breasts frequently.
- Do not start colostrum collection earlier than 36 weeks or express more frequently.

If Your Baby Needs Supplementation

Your colostrum is the first choice if your baby needs extra milk.

Pasteurized Donor Human Milk is the next best choice when it is available.

Formula is safe and most available when neither of the above is an option.

