

BTB Increasing Milk Supply

Whether mothers find their newborns in NICU, or feel that they are not producing enough breast milk, it is vital to address the situation during the first few weeks of baby's life. The following are some steps that may help to increase your supply:

1. Put baby to the breast often, at least every three hours.
2. If you are separated from baby after birth, pump as soon as possible (preferably in the first hour).
3. Get the best latch possible (probably using the football hold).
4. Manually massage your breasts towards the end of nursing. See: <http://newborns.stanford.edu/Breastfeeding/HandExpression.html>
5. Offer both breasts at each feeding.
6. Double pump with a hospital grade pump for at least 10 minutes after each feeding.
7. Wear your baby, if possible skin-to-skin, even when not nursing. Keeping baby close can help stimulate hormones to make more milk.
8. Take herbal supplements: Fenugreek and blessed thistle capsules at the maximum dosage. There are also a number of mother's milk teas containing raspberry leaf available at PCC and Whole Foods.
9. Eat oatmeal and drink plenty of water.
10. Check with your provider about prescribing Reglan which has the side effect of increasing milk production: <http://www.breastfeeding.org/articles/reglan.html>
11. Conduct a 24 hour "laying-in" with your baby. Stay in bed, skin-to-skin, for as long as possible. Let baby nurse on demand and have all food, etc., brought to you. Many of my clients who missed some of their first bonding experiences report they wished they had done this exercise earlier.

Remember, any amount of breast milk that your baby receives provides valuable nutrition and immunological benefits. Please note that based on your pediatrician's recommendation it may also be important to seek the support of a certified lactation consultant (to find an IBCLC go to www.ilca.org/i4a/pages/index.cfm?pageid=3432)

Reviewed for accuracy by Kristina Chamberlain, ARNP, IBCLC