

# Breast Compressions

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A breast compression is a **gentle squeeze** of your breast(s) while breastfeeding or pumping to increase the flow of milk.

## **Breast Compressions Could Help:**

- Keep your baby actively drinking rather than sleeping while breastfeeding
- Decrease the duration of a pumping session or breastfeeding session
- Increase the volume of milk your baby drinks during a breastfeeding session
- Remove more milk from your breast(s), preventing plugged ducts and mastitis
- Increase the volume of milk you collect during a pumping session

## **How To Use Breast Compressions:**

1. Once your baby is latched, watch for active, productive drinking (your baby should be swallowing with every 1–2 sucks).
2. When your baby slows from this drinking pattern or stops swallowing, make a C-shape with your hand and gently squeeze and hold a section of your breast.
3. Watch to see if this compression helps your baby return to active drinking. If so, hold that spot. If your baby doesn't begin to drink, try compressing a different section of your breast.
4. When your baby slows or stops drinking again, move your hand to a different section. Continue moving to different areas of your breast to encourage your baby to keep drinking.
5. Once you can no longer encourage drinking after compressing several areas of your breast, unlatch your baby, try for a burp, then offer your baby the other breast and repeat.

## **Notes About Breast Compressions:**

- Experiment with how you hold your hand and squeeze your breast. If your breasts are very firm, it can be difficult to squeeze with a C-shape. Try running your flat hand down your breast from chest wall toward your nipple.
- When you are pumping, watch for the milk to spray. When this spray slows or stops, begin doing compressions. Anytime you see sprays, hold that compression until the spray stops. Then move to a different section of your breast and repeat.