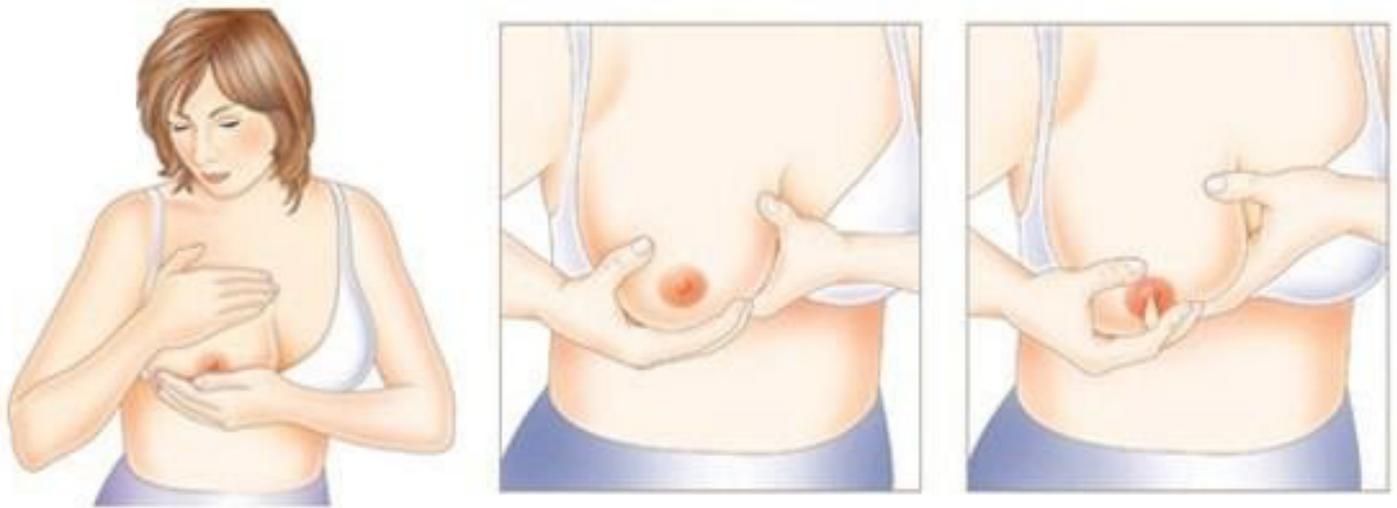


# Hand Expression

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For the first few days of baby's life, before your milk comes in (*around 72 hours after birth*), it is recommended that you **hand express after most breastfeeding sessions**. Feeding this expressed colostrum back to your baby prevents them from losing too much weight in the first few days. Also, women who hand express after most feedings during the first 3 postpartum days have better future milk supplies.



## Tips for Hand Expression:

1. Before you start, wash your hands. Gently massage your breasts to warm them up.
2. Hold your breast using your thumb and index finger about 1-inch beyond the edge of your areola.
3. Press back into your breast tissue, using your thumb and the rest of your fingers in a C-shape. *This shouldn't hurt. Don't squeeze the nipple directly, rather the tissue beyond the nipple.*
4. Roll your fingers forward. Release the pressure, then repeat, building up a rhythm. *Try not to slide your fingers over the skin. At first, only drops will appear. That's okay. Keep going for three to five minutes on each breast.*
5. When no more drops come out, move your fingers around and try a different section of your breast, and repeat.
6. When the flow slows down, swap to the other breast. Keep changing breasts until the milk drips very slowly or stops altogether.
7. If the milk doesn't flow, try moving your fingers slightly towards the nipple or further away. You are free to do this however it works, as long as it doesn't hurt!
8. Sit your baby up and very slowly tip just a drop or two into their open mouth. They will reflexively swallow this milk. *This is also a great way to wake a sleepy baby!*