

# Managing Too Much Milk

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Sometimes, there can be *too much milk* early on in breastfeeding after your milk has come in. Many women who experience this want to pump their breasts to remove the milk and relieve the discomfort that comes with very full breasts. Unfortunately, when you pump your breasts to remove this milk, it signals to your body to continue making too much milk. This can lead to an oversupply, which is associated with other breastfeeding issues such as plugged ducts, mastitis, forceful letdown, and constant breast fullness/discomfort.

## Steps for Managing:

### 1. Try to Leave the Milk in Your Breasts

Ideally, you will be breastfeeding every 2–3 hours. If you are able to **comfortably** make it to the next feeding, try to just leave the milk in your breasts.

### 2. Take the Edge Off

If you can't comfortably wait until the next feeding, **take just a little milk out** to “take the edge off.” Try hand expressing or using a manual hand pump to carefully remove a little milk until you feel comfortable enough to make it to the next feeding. If you have a Haakaa or similar silicone pump, you can use this to help remove just a little milk. *It is best to avoid using an electric breast pump, as they can remove a lot of milk very quickly.*

### 3. Keep Yourself Comfortable

Apply cold compresses to your breasts (like a bag of frozen vegetables wrapped in a towel) for 20 minutes on/20 minutes off between feedings. Ibuprofen 600 mg every 6 hours can also help with discomfort and swelling.

### 4. See Us for an In-Person Appointment

We can assess your milk supply and develop a personalized plan to ensure you are able to manage your milk supply long term.

## Note:

Sometimes, when breasts are very full, it is more difficult or painful to latch your baby. If your baby has difficulty latching or the latch is uncomfortable due to breast fullness, try taking the edge off BEFORE you latch your baby.

Sometimes, when breasts are very full, your baby can be overwhelmed by the flow of milk (coughing, gagging, popping off the breast). If this happens, let your baby unlatch and let the milk spray (catch it in a burp cloth). Once milk stops spraying, re-latch your baby. You can also try taking the edge off prior to latching to prevent this overwhelm.

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