

Increasing your supply of breastmilk

Making breastmilk relies on the regular and effective removal of milk from the breast.

You will know your baby is getting enough milk if:

- They have at least six to ten breastfeeds within 24 hours.
- The release of the milk from the breast is known as the 'let-down' reflex. After your 'let-down', your baby's suck is slow and rhythmical and you are able to see swallowing.
- After the first few days they have six to eight wet cloth nappies or five to six heavily wet, disposable nappies.
- They are generally contented after most feeds.
- They have good skin tone.
- They show signs of growth or weight gain.
- Breastfed babies all have different bowel movements. They may have several bowel movements a day or only one every week or two. This is not a sign of constipation. Breastmilk is so good there is nothing to waste.

THINGS TO TRY

- Check that your baby is positioned and attached correctly.
- Increase how often you feed (or express), including at night time.
- Feed from one breast first until it is soft, then feed from the other breast. Offer both breasts a second time.
- Try a 'top-up' breastfeed if your baby is unsettled.
- Offer your baby a breastfeed rather than using a dummy.
- Encourage skin-to-skin contact.
- Avoid giving your baby other fluids or food unless it is necessary for their health.
- Try to be calm and relaxed when feeding, it will help your 'let-down'.
- Try to rest, drink enough water and have a well balanced diet.
- Limit caffeine (tea, coffee, cola, chocolate), nicotine and alcohol. Too much can decrease your milk supply.
- Accept practical help at home.

Talk to a healthcare professional or Australian Breastfeeding Association Counsellor about ways to increase your milk supply before trying medication.

Medication would only be suggested if other means haven't worked after the first week. Medication will have the best chance of working if you also continue increased breast stimulation and removal of milk.

Medications need to be prescribed by your doctor; it may be useful to take this sheet with you.

Ongoing support by your breastfeeding adviser is recommended.

MOTILIUM (DOMPERIDONE) TABLETS TO INCREASE LACTATION

Guidelines for use

- Take 1 x tablet (10 mg), three times a day, e.g. 6 am, 2 pm, 10 pm.
- After a few days, increase to 2 x tablets (20 mg), three times a day. Maintain this dose until your milk supply is well established.
- Once established, decrease to 1 x tablet (10 mg), three times a day, for one week before stopping the medication.
- There is little evidence to support prolonged treatment, i.e. more than one month.

How Motilium works

Motilium is normally used to treat nausea and vomiting, but it also increases the milk-producing hormone Prolactin. It may take a week before you notice an increase in your milk supply.

Possible effects on mother

A small number of mothers may complain of a dry mouth, skin rash, headache, thirst or drowsiness. If side effects are severe, stop the medication and seek medical advice.

Tell your doctor if you have any underlying medical conditions or if you are on other medications as there may be side effects.

Possible effects on baby

There is no record of harmful side effects for babies. However, a small amount of the Motilium will pass through to your milk.

Sometimes herbal or naturopathic methods may be suggested. There is little researched information available on dosage, effectiveness and safety for either mother or baby.

Contacts

- Your local Maternity Unit.
- Your Child and Family Health Centre.
- Australian Breastfeeding Association Helpline
Ph: **1800 686 268**, 7 days a week, or visit www.breastfeeding.asn.au
- For a Lactation Consultant (IBCLC)
www.lcanz.org/find-a-consultant.htm
- MotherSafe (Medications in Pregnancy & Lactation Service)
Ph: **(02) 9382 6539** or **1800 647 848** if outside the Sydney Metropolitan area.
- After-hours telephone advice lines are listed in your baby's *Personal Health Record* (Blue Book).

References

Eat for Health, NHMRC Infant Feeding Guidelines 2012.
The Academy of Breastfeeding Medicine Protocol 9. Use of Galactogogues in Initiating or Augmenting the Rate of Maternal Milk Secretion. *Breastfeeding Medicine*, Volume 6, 1. 2011.