

Hand Expressing

Important information for patients

Hand position

You can use one or both of your hands on one of your breasts. Hold your hand in the shape of a letter 'C', with your thumb and forefinger about 2.5cms behind the base of your nipple, feeling for the change in texture of your breast. Move your fingers closer to, or away from your nipple to find the best place for you.

To express



1. Start with the pad of your thumb at the top of your breast, and your finger pads below.



2. Support your breast, then press your breast towards your chest wall to put pressure on your milk ducts.



3. Now compress your breast between your fingers and thumb to move the milk forward towards your nipple.



4. Release and repeat rhythmically: press - compress - relax (like a baby breastfeeding) until milk flow stops.



5. Then rotate your hand around your breast a little and repeat. Do this for each section of your breast until it feels soft and comfortable. Keep your fingers and thumb opposite one another as you rotate.

Remember that when a baby breastfeeds, milk does not flow immediately, so it is normal for it to take a little time for milk to start flowing when you express. When the flow of your milk slows down, switch back and forth between your breasts to encourage the milk ejection reflex

More information can be found at:

<https://www.laleche.org.uk/hand-expression-of-breastmilk/>

UNICEF video to guide mothers through how to hand express:

<https://www.unicef.org.uk/babyfriendly/baby-friendly-resources/breastfeeding-resources/hand-expression-video/>