



INCREASING MILK SUPPLY

RVA Pediatrics follows the recommendations of the Academy of Breastfeeding Medicine and International Lactation Consultant Association for increasing milk supply. These recommendations are based upon current evidence and apply to women experiencing difficulties with a low rate of milk production, and also help preserve an adequate milk supply.

- Skin to skin contact between mother and baby encourages frequent feeding and stimulates the release of hormones that help the milk to let down.
- Lactating women need to maintain adequate calorie and fluid intake and rest when baby is sleeping. Try to take in an additional 500 calories per day per baby. Drink to thirst but do not force fluids.
- Self breast massage, prior to feeding, and breast compression, while the baby is nursing, may help to increase the intake of breast milk. Massage, light stroking toward the nipple, and gentle shaking while leaning forward, when baby is not latched on, may help stimulate a second let down.
- Relaxation techniques, such as deep breathing, meditation, soft music and dim lighting, may help to facilitate let down.
- Increase stimulation and milk removal by feeding frequently and latching baby deeply to promote thorough drainage of the breasts. (Minimum 8 feedings in a 24 hour period and 12 times maximum.)
- Pumping for 10-15 minutes after breastfeeding with an automatic cycling breast pump that is capable of draining both breasts, hospital grade if available, will increase stimulation of the breasts and increase milk production. It may take several (2-3) days before you notice an increase. The pump should be adjusted to the highest maximum comfortable vacuum to enhance milk flow and milk yield. Flange size is important so your nipple can move freely in the flange as not to cause the nipple to swell. Graduate vacuum suction to feel like baby's suck. You can use the letdown button several times during your pumping session to promote more efficient drainage of the breast.
- Hand expression after pumping may increase milk yield and fat content of milk. You may find it helpful to view the video demonstrating several hand expression techniques found at: <http://newborns.stanford.edu/Breastfeeding/MaxProduction.html>
- Anemia, thyroid malfunction, polycystic ovary syndrome, and hormonal birth control, such as the mini pill or Mirena IUD, can impact production in some women and may need to be evaluated by your healthcare provider.
- If taking thyroid medicine, thyroid levels should be periodically checked and medicine adjusted as needed.
- Contact your healthcare provider regarding pharmacological or herbal products to increase milk supply.
- Avoid products that contain peppermint (Altoids, Starlight mints etc) and sage.