

The infant feeding team

If you have any queries or concerns regarding feeding your baby or hand expressing colostrum, please contact:

Whiston Hospital on 0151 290 4166 or email:
InfantFeedingTeam@MerseyWestLancs.nhs.uk

Ormskirk Hospital on 01695 656502 or email:
lesley.fawcett@merseywestlancs.nhs.uk

Please be aware that our phone line and email addresses are not accessible to us outside of normal working hours, if your query is urgent please contact ward 2E (Whiston Hospital) or maternity ward (Ormskirk Hospital) or the maternity bleep-holder via switchboard (24 Hours).

Alternatively, you can attend our infant feeding drop in clinic (Whiston Hospital) where we will be happy to help you.

Where: Whiston Hospital, parent education room, Level 2
(just past maternity scan department)

When: Every Friday, between 10.00am - 12.00 midday
(except bank holidays)

Whiston Hospital
Warrington Road,
Prescot, Merseyside, L35 5DR
Telephone: 0151 426 1600

St Helens Hospital
Marshall's Cross Road,
St Helens, Merseyside, WA9 3DA
Telephone: 01744 26633

Southport Hospital
Town Lane, Kew,
Southport, Merseyside,
PR8 6PN
Telephone: 01704 547 471

Ormskirk Hospital
Dicconson Way,
Wigan Road,
Ormskirk, Lancashire, L39 2AZ
Telephone: 01695 577 111

Information on breastfeeding and hand expressing colostrum (first milk)

A guide for parents

If you need this leaflet in a different language or accessible format please speak to a member of staff who can arrange it for you.

اگر به این بروشور به زبان دیگر یا در قالب دسترس پذیر نیاز دارید، لطفاً با یکی از کارکنان صحبت کنید تا آن را برای شما تهیه کند.

Jeśli niniejsza ulotka ma być dostępna w innym języku lub formie, proszę skontaktować się z członkiem personelu, który ją dla Państwa przygotowuje.

Dacă aveți nevoie de această broșură într-o altă limbă sau într-un format accesibil, vă rog să discutați cu un membru al personalului să se ocupe de acest lucru pentru dumneavoastră

如果您需要本传单的其他语言版本或无障碍格式，请联系工作人员为您安排。

إذا احتجت إلى هذه النشرة بلغة أخرى، أو بتنسيق يسهل الوصول إليه، يرجى التحدث إلى أحد الموظفين لترتيب ذلك لك.

Feeding your baby

You have probably already thought about how you will feed your new baby. You will have the opportunity to discuss this with your midwife throughout your pregnancy.

We do not expect you to make decisions about this straight away. We will provide you with the best information we have to help you to make informed choices about feeding and caring for your baby.

Breastfeeding

- Research evidence shows that exclusive breastfeeding – not giving your baby any other foods or drinks for around the first six months – has many health benefits. For example, a baby who is exclusively breastfed is less likely to develop a wide range of infections such as ear, tummy, urine and chest infections.
- If you have a family history of allergies, such as eczema and asthma, and your child is breastfed, he or she is less likely to develop similar allergies. Children who do develop allergies tend to develop milder symptoms, occurring later than children fed on cow's milk formula.
- In addition, research suggests that exclusively breastfed babies are less likely to develop childhood diabetes. Studies show that it is the cow's milk antigen that may act as a trigger for diabetes.

Hypoglycaemia (low blood sugar)

Most babies have no difficulty in adapting to life outside the womb. However, some babies have an increased chance of developing low blood sugar (hypoglycaemia) and will be carefully monitored for a longer period.

The amount of colostrum will vary for every pregnant person. It can range from a few drops to as much as a teaspoonful or more. If you prefer, you can collect your colostrum directly into a small, clean container and then draw this up with the syringes provided. If you are going to express more than once a day, then place the cap on the labelled syringe and place in the coldest part of the fridge (usually the back of the fridge) and add to it later in the day. At the end of that day place the syringe in the freezer.

Storing colostrum

If you are expressing colostrum at home from 37 weeks of pregnancy and you do not know when you will deliver your baby, once you have finished expressing for that day, correctly label the container and place it in the freezer.

Please complete the expressed breastmilk log sheet with each individual syringe and bring this with you into hospital (provided in your expressing kit).

Transporting colostrum to the hospital

- When you go into labour, take your milk from the freezer and pack it in a cool bag with ice to take to the hospital
- Give the milk to your midwife on arrival at the hospital for storage in the hospital freezer.

Please do not bring in colostrum that is not in the colostrum storage syringes that you have been provided by this hospital or that has not been correctly labelled as it cannot be stored in our freezers. This should include name, unit number, DOB and date and time of expressing.

How do I hand express colostrum?

- Gently squeeze with your thumb and index finger, rhythmically compressing and releasing the breast
- Small drops of colostrum may appear at the end of your nipple and if you do not see colostrum, reposition your thumb and finger either forwards or backwards on your breast and try again
- Move your thumb and finger around your breast and repeat the process to ensure stimulation and drainage of the whole breast
- You may need to swap hands to express colostrum from the other side of the same breast
- Continue the rhythm until the drips stop. When the flow completely subsides, move to the other breast
- Do not be disheartened if you do not see any colostrum on your first attempt.



UNICEF baby friendly –
hand expressing video

Collecting the colostrum

We will give you the equipment needed for collecting and storing your colostrum. These will be small sterile syringes with caps which you can use to collect the colostrum directly from your nipple. We will give you pre-printed labels to label your expressed colostrum. When you have finished collecting colostrum carefully replace the cap, label the syringe with your name, date of birth, date and time of expressing and place the syringe in the freezer.

Babies with an increased chance of low blood sugar include:

- Early or premature babies (born before 37 completed weeks of pregnancy)
- Babies who are lighter in weight than expected for the number of weeks of pregnancy (SGA – Small for Gestational Age)
- Babies who needed help to breathe at birth
- Babies who are ill
- Babies whose mothers had diabetes during pregnancy
- Babies whose mothers have taken medicine for blood pressure (beta blockers)
- Babies who have a family history of metabolic disorders

If this applies to you or your baby, it is important that your baby is breastfed as early as possible after birth, and then to breastfeed often, at least every two to three hours. This will help to prevent low blood sugar in your baby. There is a separate leaflet entitled “Protecting your baby from low blood sugar” to advise you.

Your expressed colostrum can also be given to your baby after breastfeeds. Your baby will be carefully monitored and we will check his/her blood sugar regularly.

Colostrum

Your breasts start to produce colostrum during pregnancy and continue through the early days of breastfeeding. This special milk is yellow to orange in colour and is thick and sticky. It is low in fat, and high in carbohydrates, protein and antibodies to help keep your baby healthy.

Expressing colostrum

Your breasts start to produce colostrum from about sixteen weeks of pregnancy onwards. Sometimes, as early as 28 weeks of pregnancy women find that they leak colostrum from their breasts.

Do not worry if you do not leak colostrum, this is not an indication that you will not be able to breastfeed. The amount of colostrum will vary for every pregnant person. It can range from a few drops to as much as a teaspoonful or more.

When do I start?

A good time to start expressing colostrum would be when you reach 37 weeks of pregnancy. If you are having an elective caesarean section, it would be advisable to only express in the 24 hour period before your operation as there is a small risk that it might induce your labour.

If you notice an increase in tightening of the uterus, or contractions, you should speak with a midwife on:

Whiston Hospital: 0151 290 4489 (Triage - 24 hours)

Ormskirk Hospital: 01695 656604 (Triage - 24 hours)

How often can I express?

You can express colostrum 2-3 times per day for about 10-15 minutes each time. A good time to have a first practice is when you are relaxed in the bath or shower.

When should I not express colostrum in the antenatal period?

Antenatal expressing colostrum is contraindicated in the following circumstances:

Any history of bleeding during pregnancy (antepartum haemorrhage) or placenta praevia (with or without any antenatal bleeding). If you have a history of threatened and/or premature labour, cervical incompetence or cervical suture in situ.

There may be other reasons why you should not express your colostrum before you have had your baby, so please discuss with your midwife or obstetrician before you start.

How to express and store your colostrum

It helps to be warm and relaxed!

Prepare: wash your hands and massage the breasts gently to help colostrum to flow. You do not need to drag the skin. Gentle nipple rolling may also help.

Find the right place: in order to find the right spot, cup the breast in your hand and make a "C" shape with your thumb and first finger. Feel back from the nipple until it feels different from the surrounding tissue (approximately 2-3cm from the tip of the nipple).