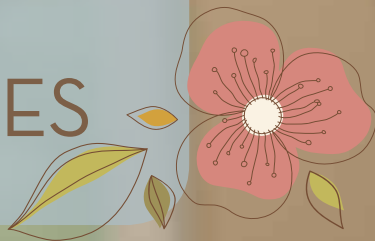
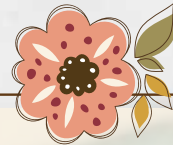




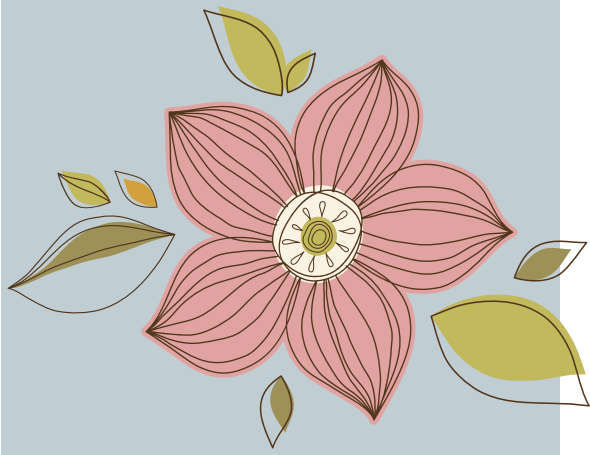
Mother's Milk for  
**PRETERM BABIES**





Babies who are born three or more weeks before their due date are called preterm. Preterm babies are usually cared for in a special nursery in the hospital. They need their mother's milk to help them grow and protect them from disease. Here are some tips to help you give your preterm baby the best possible start.





## Your Preterm Baby Needs Your Milk because:

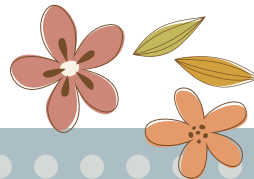
- Your milk is the only food that gives special protection to your baby. This helps your baby grow stronger and go home sooner.
- Your milk has special nutrients that your baby needs for brain growth and better vision.
- Your milk is easy on your baby's tummy.
- Your milk acts like medicine that only you can give.

## Skin-to-Skin Care for your Preterm Baby

Holding your baby skin-to-skin is good for you and your baby. Place your baby on your bare chest facing you, dressed only in a diaper and hat. Turn your baby's head to one side. Then cover your baby with two warm blankets. Fathers or other caregivers can do this too. Talk to the staff to let them know you want to have skin-to-skin contact as soon as possible. Try to have some skin-to-skin contact every day. A good time might be right before a feeding.

### Skin-to-skin contact:

- Helps calm your baby.
- Helps babies gain weight.
- Keeps your baby at a good temperature.
- Helps you make more milk.
- Helps your baby sleep better.
- Decreases crying.
- Encourages your baby to breastfeed.






## What if my baby can't breastfeed yet?

Your baby may or may not be able to breastfeed right after birth. If your baby is not able to breastfeed, the hospital staff will make sure your baby is fed. When your baby is strong enough, then you can both start learning to breastfeed.

- In the beginning your preterm baby is not expected to take a lot of milk directly from your breast. Preterm babies are often sleepy. They tire easily and don't have the strength to suck enough breastmilk. You might need to pump milk from your breasts to put into a feeding tube or bottle so that your baby can get plenty of your milk without struggling.
- Your baby needs to feed at least every three hours, day and night. But a sleepy preterm baby may only try to breastfeed two times a day.
- Pump after each feeding. It will build up your milk supply so you will have plenty of breastmilk as your baby gets bigger, stronger, and better at breastfeeding.

It is important to start pumping as soon as possible and to pump every three hours even through the night. Your pumped milk will be given to your baby as soon as possible.

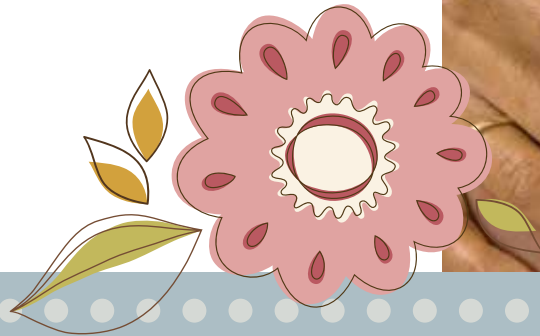
**Remember that every time you are near your baby is important — even short feedings together — helps you both learn how to breastfeed.**



**It is normal to feel sad or worried when things don't turn out like you planned. Share your feelings with your family and doctor. The resources on the back of this brochure can also help you.**

When you first use a breast pump, you may only get a few drops of milk. That is normal. Save the drops to take to the nursery. Usually in a few days you will feel heaviness and fullness in your breasts and you will get more milk when you pump. Any amount of your milk is good for your baby.

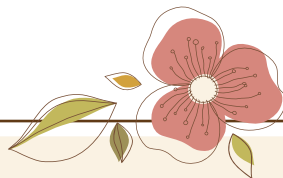
By about 4-5 days after the birth you may get two ounces each time you pump and by 7- 10 days you may get three ounces each time you pump. At first your new baby will take very small amounts of milk, but soon he will need at least two-three ounces at each feeding.



## Tips for Pumping Success

- If a pump is not offered right after your baby is born, ask for a hospital-grade double electric breast pump collection kit to pump both breasts at the same time. Take it with you when you leave the hospital. Double pumping is quicker, more efficient, and helps you to make more milk.
- Massage both breasts and hand express your milk before and after you use the pump. Hand expression helps you get more milk.
- Plan to pump 8-10 times every 24 hours. Ten times every 24 hours is better. That is about every three hours during the day and night. Do not go more than 4 hours between pumping sessions at night.

1. When you turn the pump on, start with a setting for very frequent suck and release cycles and light suction to help your milk let down.
2. Once your milk begins to flow, adjust the pump to a slower suck and release cycle (about one suck and release per second).
3. Turn up the suction, only to the point where it is still comfortable.
4. Make sure the plastic piece that goes over your breast fits well and has enough room so your nipple does not rub on the sides. If you think it is too small, ask your nurse to give you a larger piece.




Consider using or making a “hands-free” bra to assist you with pumping. Here’s a quick way to make one!

1. Take a regular, sports bra or firm tank top.
2. Cut two holes- one in the center of each cup of bra/tank.
3. Place the plastic part of the pump kit that goes over your breast through the hole and center it over your nipple.



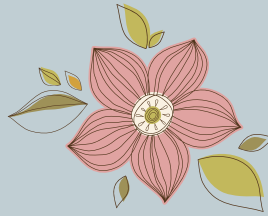
## Before you leave the hospital

Ask for help in getting a hospital-grade double electric breast pump to use at home, as soon as you think you might need one. You can get a pump through your health-care plan (private insurance, CHIP, or Medicaid). Your doctor will need to write an order for it. Call the number on the back of your health-care plan card if you have questions about how to get a pump. If you have trouble getting a pump from your health-care plan, call your WIC clinic for a pump. Ask if there is a room where you can stay while your baby is in the special care nursery. Ask if you can room-in with your baby before he or she comes home.



**Rooming-in is when you stay in a hospital room overnight with your baby. This usually happens right before discharge. The nurses will teach you about baby care and help you as needed. This gives you a chance to practice caring for your baby on your own before going home.**





Call your local WIC clinic to get quick answers to your breastfeeding questions or call the Texas Lactation Support Hotline at 1-855-550-6667 to make an appointment with a breastfeeding expert so that you can be successful with breastfeeding at home. A breastfeeding specialist will be able to tell you when your baby is strong enough to feed well at the breast.

To see if you qualify for WIC, call 1-800-942-3678 or visit [www.TexasWIC.org](http://www.TexasWIC.org)

**For more information about donor human breastmilk, contact:**

Mother's Milk Bank of Austin: 1-877-813-6455, [milkbank.org](http://milkbank.org)

Mother's Milk Bank of North Texas: 1-866-810-0071, [texasmilkbank.org](http://texasmilkbank.org)

Breastmilk Every Ounce counts: [breastmilkcounts.com](http://breastmilkcounts.com)

**Resources:**

Texas Parent to Parent: 1-866-896-6001 [www.txp2p.org](http://www.txp2p.org)



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Stock no. 13-46 rev.10/14