

COLOSTRUM - HOW TO USE

After the birth of your baby, you will be transferred to the postnatal ward. Please ask a member of staff to collect your colostrum from the *Colostrum Freezer*. The Midwives will give your colostrum to your baby as per hospital policy to reduce the risk of aspiration. The colostrum should be given to your baby as a 'top up' after each breastfeed as long as colostrum is available.

- Colostrum can be defrosted by placing the syringe in a cup of hot water or simply by holding the syringe in your hand.
- Once the colostrum has defrosted, it will need to be given to your baby within 24hrs. If it is not used it will need to be discarded.
- Sometimes the FULL volume of your collected colostrum will need to be used in one session – especially if your baby has a low blood sugar.
- Remember if breastfeeding is going well and it has not been essential to use your frozen colostrum, you can always use it to give baby a little extra anytime at home. You can ask a staff member to collect your colostrum from the freezer.
- If you have not used your colostrum by discharge, please take it with you and use at home. Any frozen colostrum left in the freezer will be discarded one week after a patients discharge.



The National Maternity Hospital
Vita Gloriosa Vita ~ Life Glorious Life

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www.nmh.ie



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Please scan QR code to take
part in our NMH Patient
Experience Survey



FURTHER INFORMATION

Please visit

www.nmh.ie/elearning.

Sign up and be invited to “*Preparing to Breastfeed*” webinar.

These webinars take place monthly on:

- The first Friday at 12.30pm
- The third Wednesday at 6pm

Please email sdoyle@nmh.ie in the Antenatal Education Department to book your place.



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EXPRESSING COLOSTRUM ANTENATALLY

INFORMATION
LEAFLET

WELCOME

Congratulations, you are starting your breastfeeding journey on the right path. Antenatal Expressing of Colostrum is the hand expression and collection of colostrum during pregnancy.

This information leaflet aims to help provide you with details about how to collect colostrum during the antenatal period and why it is so important for your baby. The harvested colostrum will then be available for your baby in the early days following birth.

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF HARVESTING COLOSTRUM ANTENATALLY?

Harvesting of colostrum helps to prepare for your baby's arrival if you have any of the following conditions:

- Gestational Diabetes
- Type 1 Diabetes
- Type 2 Diabetes.

This group of babies are more at risk of low blood sugars after birth. The skill of hand expressing is beneficial to learn before you have your baby.

Women who do not have diabetes may also like to harvest colostrum in the antenatal period.

A big advantage of antenatal hand expressing is that you learn how to hand express in your own time. This is a great way to stimulate milk production and prevent breast engorgement.

COLLECTION OF COLOSTRUM

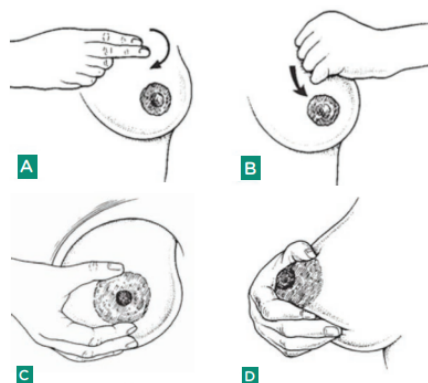
When? After 37 weeks' gestation or in consultation with midwife or obstetrician in charge of your care.

Why? Colostrum is formed in the breast from 16 weeks' gestation.

How? Morning and evening collection of colostrum drops can be saved in one sterile syringe with a sterile cap. The syringes containing colostrum can then be placed in a plastic container with a lid in your home freezer. Label and date the syringes with your name and hospital number, if known.

ANTENATAL HAND EXPRESSION TECHNIQUE

How to massage your breast and hand express your milk



For further information, please see HSE Mychild.ie

An Information Session on Colostrum Harvesting is held at 9.30am every Friday, in the Outpatients Dept at The National Maternity Hospital. No booking is required. Free Colostrum Harvesting Kits are available at this session.

ANTENATAL HAND EXPRESSION

Please scan QR code to view HSE video - Midwife Rebecca O'Donovan shows Mums how to hand express milk



IF NO COLOSTRUM APPEARS WHAT DO I DO?

Don't worry. Some women only produce colostrum / breast milk after their baby is born.

Is information available on line? Yes, please watch Hand Expressing Technique: www.mychild.ie search 'hand expression'

No contractions should occur. Stop if contractions do occur. IMPORTANT- Never use a breastpump antenatally.

TRANSPORT AND STORAGE OF COLOSTRUM

When you are coming to the hospital please bring your frozen colostrum with you in a cool bag with ice packs (labelled clearly with your name, date of birth and hospital number).

Immediately after admission to a ward, please inform your midwife that you have frozen colostrum with you. When you have been admitted to a ward in the hospital, please ask the midwife to ensure your colostrum is placed in the Colostrum Freezer on the Fitzwilliam Wing.