

# Breastfeeding Multiples

While feeding two or more babies takes more time and organisation than feeding one, we hope to support you to enjoy your time with your new babies. However you decide to feed your babies, our service is here to provide information and support you. If you decide to formula feed, please do ask for our advice on formula and bottle feeding.

## Antenatal Hand Expressing

It could be helpful to store some colostrum during pregnancy (your first milk), if your babies are expected a little earlier than normal or are smaller in weight. Ask your midwife if this is an option for you.

## Skin to Skin Contact

Skin to skin contact with your babies will help to protect them, by covering them in your good bacteria that lives on your skin. Skin to skin also helps to keep your babies warm and will help to settle their breathing and heart rate. You can provide a relaxing environment for you and your babies during skin to skin, easing into a calm start for early feeding.

## Hand Expressing

If your babies are reluctant to feed well in the beginning, then hand expressing at least eight times in a 24 hour period, will help to maintain and protect your supply. If your babies are in the neonatal unit, we recommend hand expressing in the first couple of hours after birth, to provide colostrum for your babies and switch on your milk making cells early.

## Feeding Both Babies Together

Although the thought of breastfeeding two or more babies may be daunting, being able to feed multiple babies at once can make things simpler for you.

There are various positions where you can feed two babies at once. Watching videos on the internet of other mums tandem feeding can really help too. Visit: [bestbeginnings.org.uk/fbtb-twins-or-more](http://bestbeginnings.org.uk/fbtb-twins-or-more)

## Expressing Breast Milk

If you choose to express and give your milk via a bottle ask your midwife about paced, responsive bottle feeding.



See the breastfeeding network web page about safe storage of expressed milk. Visit: [breastfeedingnetwork.org.uk/breastfeeding-help/expressing-storing/](http://breastfeedingnetwork.org.uk/breastfeeding-help/expressing-storing/)

## Handy tips if you need to exclusively express

**Day of delivery:** Hand expressing within two hours of the birth can really kick start your supply. Continue hand expressing at least 8 to 10 times in a 24 hour period, until milk comes in on day three to four.

It is good to use a breast pump from birth for 'breast stimulation', but your hands will be best to gently squeeze out the colostrum until your milk comes in.

**First two weeks:** This is when your long term supply is set up. You will need to continue expressing at least 8 to 10 times in a 24 hour period. This includes during the night when your milk making hormones are highest. Try once between midnight and 4am.

**Double pumping (expressing both breasts at the same time):** This helps to produce more milk. You will also get more milk in less time, meaning more time spent with your babies. Hospital grade pumps will help you.

**Expressing on the go:** Some pumps are portable and run on batteries. Don't be afraid to express on trains, planes or wherever you need to. Pumps can be concealed under clothing for discretion - single pumping may be easier for this.

**Mind over matter:** Try not to think of expressing as something 'extra' for you to be doing. Making formula up as an alternative is neither easy or quick. Expressing may seem boring, so make sure you have something to read or your favourite box set to watch.

**Enough for two or three:** If you do all the things mentioned above and are still struggling, there may be a few reasons why you aren't able to produce enough for your babies. Remember the first two weeks determines your supply. The first two weeks requires early, frequent and effective expressing.

**Help and support:** Mothers who are expressing need just as much support as those who are breastfeeding. Contact any breastfeeding group, phone lines or relevant health professionals for anything you may be concerned about.

**Breast pump hire:** Take a look on the internet, you can hire or buy pumps directly from the manufacturers.

## Useful websites

### NHS

[nhs.uk/conditions/pregnancy-and-baby/feeding-multiples/](https://nhs.uk/conditions/pregnancy-and-baby/feeding-multiples/)

### Association of Breastfeeding Mothers

[abm.me.uk/breastfeeding-information/breastfeeding-twins/](https://abm.me.uk/breastfeeding-information/breastfeeding-twins/)

### La Leche League

[laleche.org.uk/twins/](https://laleche.org.uk/twins/)

### Twins Trust

[twinstrust.org/](https://twinstrust.org/)

ELHT/Maternity Services/Baby Friendly Team/  
Breastfeeding Multiples V1  
Issue: August 2020 | Review: August 2023

Safe | Personal | Effective

