

# Increasing your supply of breastmilk

Production of breastmilk relies on the regular and effective removal of milk and release of milk from the breast by the mother. This is known as the 'let-down' reflex.

## You will know your baby is getting enough milk if:

- They have at least six to ten breastfeeds within 24 hours.
- After your 'let-down', the baby's suck is slow and rhythmical and you are able to see swallowing.
- They have six to eight pale coloured, wet cloth nappies or five to six pale, heavily wet, disposable nappies over a 24 hour period after the first few days.
- They are generally contented after a feed.
- They have good skin tone.
- They show signs of growth or weight gain.
- Bowel movements vary greatly in breastfed babies, from several times a day to only every week or two. Infrequent bowel patterns in a breastfed baby are not a sign of constipation. Breastmilk is so good there is nothing to waste.

## Things to try

- Check that your baby is positioned and attached correctly.
- Increase breast stimulation by increasing how often you feed or the number of times you express, including night time.
- Soften the first breast well then offer the second breast. Offer both breasts a second time.
- Offer a 'top-up' breastfeed if your baby is unsettled.
- Use the breast to comfort, rather than using a dummy.
- Encourage skin-to-skin contact.
- Avoid giving your baby other fluids or food unless



it is necessary for their health.

- The 'let-down' works best when you are relaxed and calm.
- Try to rest, drink adequate fluids and have a well balanced diet.
- Limit caffeine (tea, coffee, cola, chocolate), nicotine and alcohol. Too much can decrease your milk supply.
- Accept practical help at home.
- Surround yourself with supportive people.

Before thinking about medication, talk to a health professional or Australian Breastfeeding Association counsellor about ways to increase your supply.

Use of medication to increase supply would only be suggested if other means have been unsuccessful after the first week. Medication will have the best chance of working if you also continue increased breast stimulation and removal of milk.

Medications need to be prescribed by your doctor; it may be useful to take this sheet with you.

Ongoing support by your breastfeeding adviser is recommended.

# MOTILIUM (DOMPERIDONE) TABLETS TO INCREASE LACTATION

## Guidelines for use

- ▶ Take 1 x tablet (10 mg), three times a day, e.g. 6 am, 2 pm, 10 pm.
- ▶ After a few days, increase to 2 x tablets (20 mg), three times a day. Maintain this dose until your breastmilk supply is well established.
- ▶ Once established, decrease to 1 x tablet (10 mg), three times a day, for one week before stopping the medication.
- ▶ There is little evidence to support prolonged treatment, i.e. more than one month.

## How Motilium works

Motilium is normally used to treat nausea and vomiting, but it also increases production of the milk producing hormone Prolactin. It may take a week before you notice an increase in your breastmilk supply.

**It is important to try to rest, drink fluids and have a well balanced diet and to continue regular breastfeeding and/or expressing to help your breasts make more milk.**

## Possible effects on mother

A small number of mothers may complain of a dry mouth, skin rash, headache, thirst or drowsiness. If side effects are severe stop the medication and seek medical advice.

Tell your doctor if you have any underlying medical conditions or if you are on other medications as there may be side effects.

## Possible effects on baby

There is no record of harmful side effects for babies. However, a small amount of the Motilium will pass through to the breastmilk.

Sometimes herbal/naturopathic preparations may be suggested. There is little researched information available on dosage, effectiveness and safety for either mother or baby.

## Contacts

- ▶ For **Early Childhood Centres** look under Community Health Services in telephone book.
- ▶ For your closest **Maternity Unit** look under Hospitals in telephone book.
- ▶ **Australian Breastfeeding Association Helpline**  
Ph: 1800 686 2 686, (i.e. 1800 mum 2 mum)  
7 days a week  
[www.breastfeeding.asn.au](http://www.breastfeeding.asn.au)
- ▶ **MotherSafe**  
(Medications in Pregnancy & Lactation Service)  
Ph: 02 9382 6539 or 1800 647 848 for callers outside the Sydney Metropolitan area.  
[www.mothersafe.org.au](http://www.mothersafe.org.au)
- ▶ After hours telephone advice lines are listed in or on the back cover of your baby's Personal Health Record (Blue Book).

## References

- NHMRC 2003. Infant Feeding Guidelines for Health Workers, p 362.  
Australian Breastfeeding Association 2006. Breastfeeding ... naturally, p 112-117.  
Hale TW, (2010) 14th ed. Medications and Mothers' Milk, Amarillo. Hale Publishing.

The Royal Women's Hospital Victoria Australia Fact Sheet. Domperidone for increasing breast milk supply. Accessed 04/09/2008, [www.thewomens.org.au/Breastfeeding](http://www.thewomens.org.au/Breastfeeding).  
The Academy of Breastfeeding Medicine Protocol 9. Use of Galactogogues in Initiating or Augmenting the Rate of Maternal Milk Secretion. Breastfeeding Medicine, Volume 6, 1. 2011.