

Lactation after loss

Why am I still producing milk when I don't have my baby?

After childbirth your body prepares to make milk by undergoing hormonal and physical changes. After the loss of your baby, you have a choice. Do you want to stop or continue producing breast milk? There is no right or wrong answer. You should follow whatever path feels best for you.

I want to stop producing milk

Try these recommendations to find comfort

- Pump or hand-express just enough milk to relieve the pressure.
- If you have an established milk supply, gradually decrease the frequency and length of your pumping sessions.
- Wear a comfortable but supportive bra.
- Take a pain reliever, such as Acetaminophen or Ibuprofen.
- If you have an established milk supply, gradually decrease the frequency and length of your pumping sessions.
- It is **not** recommended to bind or constrict the breasts.
- Stopping milk production suddenly may make your breasts uncomfortable or painful. Instead, adjust your schedule so that over time you pump less and less.
- If you notice painful lumps in the breasts, red streaks across the breasts, or signs of fever, please contact a lactation specialist or doctor, as these are signs of infection.

I want to continue producing milk

Breast milk donation

- It is your decision how long you want to continue producing milk. Hand-expressing or pumping can be used to express milk on a schedule of your choice.
- Some grieving mothers choose to donate their breast milk to hospitalized babies. You may take comfort in knowing that your milk is helping sick or premature babies. Scientific evidence shows that the use of breast milk has very positive outcomes, both short and long-term, for medically fragile babies.
- To begin the donation process, please check out the Human Milk Banking Association of North America (HMBANA) hmbana.org.
 - The simple process includes a phone interview, written questionnaire, and blood test (paid for by HMBANA).
 - Depending on your location, milk can be dropped off at a donation site or shipped (paid for by HMBANA).

Please contact a lactation specialist or healthcare provider for more information.



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