



Breast Massage and Compression

Breastmilk flows easily when a let-down reflex occurs and slowly between these reflexes. The first one usually occurs within 2-3 minutes of the start of the feeding. The baby may stop sucking when the milk slows down. Breast massage and compression can encourage your baby to continue feeding.

Breast Massage and Compression is Useful for:

- A sleepy, sluggish baby
- When your baby does not routinely empty your breast
- When your baby stops suckling before the feeding is finished
- Poor weight gain
- When you are pumping
- If you experience plugged ducts or mastitis



Lactation Education Resources. This handout may be freely duplicated



Massage

Firm but gentle massage can be done in the way most comfortable to you:

- Finger tip massage in circles
- Flat of the hand from the outer towards the center of the breast
- Side of the thumb from the outer towards the center of the breast

Compressions

Firmly and gently squeeze the breast near the chest wall, not near the nipple.

Compress when the baby pauses feeding or is suckling but not swallowing. Release and return to massage when your baby begins suckling again.