



A breast pump is a machine that helps you express (remove) your breastmilk. This allows you to save and store your breastmilk for when you are unable to breastfeed. By removing breastmilk, it stimulates your breasts to make more milk.

Before you pump

- 1 Request the following supplies from your nurse or a staff member:
 - Clean breast pump accessory kit
 - Clean plastic containers (30 mL Colostrum Containers, 80 mL or 150 mL bottles)
 - Pre-printed breastmilk labels with your child's name, date of birth and medical record number
 - Hospital wash basin
 - Liquid Dish soap
 - Quick Clean Micro-Steam Bag
 - Ballpoint pen and paper, notebook or pumping log
 - Breastfeeding Information sheet: ["Instructions for Labeling and Storage of Breastmilk"](#)
- 2 Wipe down the outside of the breast pump with a disinfecting wipe before each use. Also wipe down any surfaces that your equipment may contact.
- 3 Wash your hands carefully with warm water and soap before touching your clean equipment.

Preparing to pump

- Assemble your breast pump kit as directed.
- Choose a breastmilk container size that will hold the amount of milk you express.
 - If you have just had your baby, use Colostrum Containers for your early pumping sessions. You may not get much milk at first, especially if your milk has not "come in" yet.
- Keep pumping and you will get more milk each time. Change to a larger container if you are able to pump more than the amount that fits in 1 container.
- Massage your breasts. This helps stimulate the hormones that make milk and release it from your breasts. Use 2 or 3 fingers to rub gently in a circular motion all around your breast. Stroke towards the nipple. Then hand-express some milk onto your nipple.
- If your breasts are very full or engorged, try putting moist cloths on your breasts before you pump. This can help your milk to flow more easily.

- Try to relax before and during pumping. This will help your milk flow. It might help you relax to pump at your baby's bedside or look at a picture of your baby.
- You can "double-pump" both breasts at the same time to make pumping faster.

Using your pump

- Place the center of the breast shield (funnel) over your nipple. The nipple should be able to move in and out without rubbing against the sides of the shield.
 - If the shield is uncomfortable or fits tightly, you may need a larger shield. Ask your nurse or lactation specialist for help.
- Turn the pump on **after** you have placed your breast in the shield.
- When using a Medela Symphony PLUS Breast Pump, there are 2 different programs to help you make milk: the Initiate Program and the Maintain Program.
- Pump 6–8 times a day **or more** if you are only pumping and not breastfeeding your baby.
- Pump once every 3–4 hours you are away from your baby if you are breastfeeding your baby regularly.

Symphony Plus Initiate Program

Use the **Initiate Program** right after having your baby.

For the first 5 days or until you have pumped at least 20 mL in each of your last 3 pumping session:

- When the pump screen displays "INITIATE PRESS 🌊" press the button with drops of milk on it.
- The screen will display "INITIATE Running."
- Turn up the suction to your level of comfort by turning the knob.
- The pump will run 15 minutes. It will change between fast cycles, slower cycles and pauses. Pump for the whole 15 minutes.
- The pump will shut off automatically when the program is done.

Symphony Plus Maintain Program

Use the **Maintain Program** after your milk has come in.

Once you have pumped at least 20 mL in each day of your last 3 sessions or on day 6, whichever comes first:

- Wait 5–10 seconds. When the pump screen displays "INITIATE PRESS 🌊" the screen will display "MAINTAIN Running."
- The pump will begin in a Stimulation Phase. It will last 2 minutes.

- As soon as your milk begins to flow (milk ejection or “let-down”), press the button with drops of milk on it (Let-Down button) and continue pumping in the Expression Phase.
- If you do not press the Let-Down button, the pump will automatically change to the Expression Phase after 2 minutes.
- Turn up the suction to your level of comfort by turning the knob.
- Pump for 10–15 minutes or until your breasts are well drained.
- If milk flow has slowed, you can press the milk drop button “👉” again to return to stimulation phase to help the milk release again.

Cleaning your equipment

It is very important to completely clean the pieces of your breast pump kit that touch your milk after each time you pump. Many germs can grow on the equipment. Proper cleaning can keep germs from getting into your baby’s milk.

After pumping

- Keep the breast pump power turned on.
- Remove breast shields from your breasts.
- Disconnect the tubing and place the tubing over the top of the pump.
- Allow the pump to keep running while labeling your milk. This will get rid of any moisture in the tubing.
- Label your milk according to hospital policy: [“Instructions for Labeling and Storage of Breastmilk”](#)

Pump tubing

- After several minutes, turn off the pump.
- Open the top of the pump and take off the round caps and tubing.
- Check the tubing to see if it is dirty. If it needs cleaning, wash in soapy water and rinse in cold water. Shake the water out.
- Reconnect the tubing to the pump and allow pump to run for several minutes until the tubing is dry.
- If you cannot clean the tubing completely, replace or sterilize it in a Quick-Clean Micro Steam Bag.
- If the tubing needs to be sterilized, place it **by itself** in a Micro Steam Bag. Follow Tubing Instructions on the bag.
- After sterilizing, repeat the drying process. Reconnect the tubing to the pump and run the pump for several minutes until the tubing is dry.

Breast pump kit

- Take apart all pump kit pieces that touch the milk, including the small yellow valve and white membrane.
- Place pump kit parts in a wash basin.
- Rinse the pieces with cold water to wash off milk residue.
- Use clean hot water and dish soap to wash the pump kit.
- Take care to clean the hard-to-reach areas, like the funnel piece, connector grooves and small valve with white membrane.
- Using a bottle brush to clean pump parts is NOT recommended unless the brush can be sanitized daily in a dishwasher.
- Rinse all parts with warm water to remove soap.
- Drain the wash basin. Dry with paper towels. Wipe down the **outside** of the basin with a disinfectant wipe.
- Place the pump parts in the basin on dry paper towel. Cover with another dry paper towel.
- Wipe up any spills and surfaces with a disinfecting wipe. Wash your hands.

Sanitizing equipment

Breast pump equipment should be sanitized once a day while your baby is in the hospital.

- At home, it can be sanitized in a dishwasher that has a special hot-water sanitizing cycle. Or you can boil the pieces in a large pot for 10 minutes.
- In the hospital, you can sanitize your equipment using Medela Quick Clean Micro-Steam Bags.
- Write your name on your Micro-Steam Bag in the space on the back.
- Each bag can be used for 20 microwave sanitizing sessions. Check off a box each time you use the bag.

If your child is on precautions, ask for a new Micro Steam Bag each day.

- Wash your equipment as described above.
- Place all of the pump parts except the tubing into the bag.
- Add 2 oz (60 mL) of water to the bag and close it securely.
- Place it in the microwave and set the timer according to the instructions on the bag (about 3 minutes).
- When the microwave stops, take out the bag using paper towel because the contents in the bag are hot.

- **Allow the bag to cool** before opening.
- A pour spout will open on 1 side of the bag. Be careful not to spill the hot water. Pour the remaining water into the sink.
- Place pump parts in hospital wash basin on dry paper towel. Cover with another dry paper towel.

If your child is on precautions equipment

- Items that have been in your child's room on bed space cannot enter the kitchen. Do not bring the steam bag into your child's room before using it.
- Get a new Micro Steam Bag on your way to the lactation room.
- After washing your breast pump kit, place the pump parts inside the Micro Steam Bag and seal it closed.
- Keep this clean bag separate from your wash basin and other equipment.
- Wipe down the breast pump and any surfaces your equipment touched using a disinfecting wipe. Wash your hands.
- Return your supplies to your room. Do not take the Steam Bag into the room.
- Take a new Micro Steam Bag to the kitchen microwave and finish the sanitizing process.

Using a breast pump at the bedside

- After washing your pump kit, ask a staff or family member to hold open the new Micro Steam Bag outside of the room/at the door.
- Place your kit parts into the bag. Staff or the family member will seal the bag.
- Wash your hands.
- Bring the bag to the kitchen microwave and sanitize.

Micro Steam Bags cannot be re-used in the hospital microwaves if your child is on precautions. You are welcome to save your used steam bags to use at home.

Taking home your milk

- When you are ready to go home, you may have breast milk stored at the hospital. Remember to bring it all home with you.
- Read all labels before taking your milk home to make sure your baby's name is on all containers.

This Family Education Sheet is available in [Arabic](#) and [Spanish](#).