



Full breasts

Around the third or fourth day after you give birth, your breasts start to produce lots of milk. This is known as your milk 'coming in'.

When your milk first comes in

- Your breasts may feel warm and look pink but not reddened.
- Your nipple and the dark area around it (areola) may feel firm, and it may take a little time for your baby to attach to feed.
- Your baby may not take all your milk during feeds. Watch and listen for your baby swallowing during a feed.
- If you still feel too full after a feed, express a little milk to feel more comfortable.
- Some babies can be unsettled during this time. It's OK to feed them often.
- Your baby might have lots of loose, green-coloured bowel motions (poo).

All of this is normal.

Breastfeeding when your breasts feel full

- Hand express just before a feed to help soften your areola and move extra fluid that collects near your nipple in the first few days. This makes it easier for your baby to attach.
- Gently stroke your breasts to help your milk flow. Some people use a gentle warm pack to help milk flow, but cool packs after feeds usually work best.
- Offer your second breast to your baby after they finish feeding from the first.
- If your baby has fed from only one breast and the other feels uncomfortably full, try to express a little milk for comfort. Start the next feed with this breast.
- Swap breasts (left or right) each time you begin a new feed.

Between feeds

- If your breasts feel too full, offer your baby another feed or express a little milk until they feel softer.
- Put a cold pack on your breasts for a few minutes after breastfeeding. This helps you feel more comfortable and reduces any swelling (inflammation). This is normal.
- Some people find that a supportive but not too tight bra feels comfortable, while others prefer not to wear one.
- You can take ibuprofen or paracetamol for pain relief. Follow the instructions on the packet.

Full breasts usually settle down quickly. If you're concerned, feel unwell, or if your breast is red and painful, get medical advice.

For more information and advice

Contact your local Maternal & Child Health Nurse

Victorian Maternal & Child Health Line

Call any time of day or night to speak with a maternal and child health nurse.
13 22 29

Australian Breastfeeding Association Breastfeeding Helpline

Call any time of day or night to speak with a breastfeeding counsellor.
1800 686 268
Visit their website to learn about [engorgement](#).

Related fact sheets

- Breastfeeding: Expressing breast milk
- Breastfeeding: Using a breast pump
- Breastfeeding: Mastitis

Do you need an interpreter?



Interpreter

You can ask for an interpreter if you need one.

Family Violence Support

1800 Respect National Helpline

You can get help if you have experienced sexual assault, domestic or family violence and abuse.

You can call any time of day or night.

1800 737 732

1800respect.org.au

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