

Tips for Increasing Your Breast Milk Supply:

1. **Nurse Frequently:** Breastfeeding your baby is the best way to maintain a healthy breast milk supply. When baby nurses, it promotes breast milk production; so nursing your baby often is the best way to keep the milk coming. If baby seems to need to eat frequently, it isn't because you haven't supplied enough milk; babies simply digest breast milk faster than formula, so baby will need to nurse often in order to stay full. If you work during the day and cannot nurse baby at this time, try to find time to pump or express your breast milk. This way, you still maintain adequate milk production even if you aren't nursing all day long. You can save your breast milk in this manner so baby can drink it from a bottle when he has to be away from you.
2. **Use a breast pump:**
 - Use a hospital grade breast pump with a double kit
 - Pump after feedings or between feedings
 - Rest 10-15 minutes prior to pumping, eat and drink something
 - Apply warmth to your breasts and massage before beginning to pump
 - Try "power pumping". Pump for 15 minutes every hour for a day. Or try pumping 10 minutes, resting 10 minutes, pumping 10 minutes and so on, for an hour.
3. **Eat Well:** There are no specific foods you can eat to stimulate your breast milk production, but good nutrition does play a role in the process of producing breast milk. Since you are taking liquids out of your body when you nurse your baby, you need to replace those liquids in your diet. Drink extra fluids at this time; any healthy fluid will do (eg. milk, water, juice). Even if you do not feel thirsty, you should try to drink adequate fluids every day. Aim for half your body weight in ounces of fluid or more each day (so if you weigh 150 lbs., drink at least 75 oz. of water every day). Some people have thought that beer promotes breast milk production, but alcoholic in breast milk is unpleasant and unhealthy for babies. Caffeine can stimulate breast milk production, but also affects your baby negatively and stays in her system longer than it does in yours.
4. **Extra Caloric Intake:** Though you may be anxious to diet in order to lose weight from pregnancy, you should remember that while nursing you need an extra 500 calories per day in addition to your regular nutritional needs. Talk to your doctor about a healthy dieting plan that gives you sufficient calories while also helping you to live a healthy lifestyle and lose excess weight.
5. **Rest and Relax:** If you do not get enough sleep, it can affect your milk production. Likewise, high stress levels can lower milk production. Try to take time for yourself each day; ask your support person to watch the baby for a while so you can take a break, and take time to relax. This will help you produce the milk your baby needs.
6. **Avoid these things that are known to reduce breast milk supply:**
 - Smoking
 - Caffeine
 - Birth control pills and injections
 - Decongestants, antihistamines
 - Severe weight loss diets
 - Mints, parsley, sage (excessive amounts)
7. **Notes about supplementation:** If supplementation is needed (formula or additional breast milk), the first choice for delivery of supplementation is a Supplemental Nursing System. Ask your Lactation Counselor, Janis Wilbert, for help using this system.