

Mister Lactation Doctor

Increasing Your Breastmilk Supply

One of the most common questions I get from parents is about how to increase the milk supply. There are a number of ways that this can be accomplished, but there are a few important things to remember.

When a breast is emptied, the lack of milk stimulates our body to increase the rate of milk synthesis. When a breast is full, the rate of milk synthesis slows down as our body detects the milk and this slows down milk production. This is important to remember when considering ways to increase your supply.

The following are different approaches to increasing your supply:

1. Baby having a good latch with good positioning is essential to effectively draining the breast. This will efficiently drain the breasts during each breastfeeding session.
2. Increasing breastfeeding frequency:
 - If you are going long durations between feeds, especially early in the baby's life, you might be keeping your breasts full for an extended period of time. Remember, frequent and effective breastmilk removal will trigger a more rapid rate of milk synthesis. If your breasts are drained consistently, it cues your body to produce more milk.
3. Pumping after feeds:
 - As stated before, the more frequently milk is removed, the more quickly it will be synthesized by the breast.
 - Adding in pumping between breastfeeds may help keep the breasts drained and promote your body to produce more breastmilk.

- If your breasts aren't drained after a feed, pump immediately after the feed (i.e. after the first morning feed). If you aren't getting much milk from pumping after a feed, try again an hour after the feed.

4. Consider a galactagogue:

- A galactagogue is a substance that increases the amount of breastmilk you produce. These can be herbs or medications.
- Throughout history, there have been a vast number of reported galactagogues, but I will highlight the ones I have had the most success with:
- **Fenugreek**. This has a distinct smell and if you don't smell it on yourself, you probably aren't using enough of it. This is best combined with **Blessed Thistle**.
- **Moringa** (or Milk Aplenty).
- **Goat's Rue**. I mainly use this when a patient has underdeveloped breasts, as it is believed that this herb promotes breast tissue development.
- There are also medications you can try. In the U.S., they use **Metoclopramide**. Here in Canada, we use **Domperidone**.
- Domperidone has an FDA warning as it was given intravenously to chemotherapy patients and caused cardiac events. However, when we use it for breastfeeding purposes, it is given as a pill and we screen patients for a personal or family history of heart issues and will generally avoid this medication with these individuals.
- Of course, before starting either herbs or medications, it is best to talk to a lactation consultant or doctor for advice and guidance, as these substances can potentially interact with medications you take or be contraindicated in certain medical conditions.

Always remember, you are doing a wonderful job!

Take care,



Mister Lactation Doctor
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