

Manual Expression of Breast Milk (Marmet Technique)

At some point, you may need to hand express your breastmilk in place of a full feeding or to establish, increase or maintain your milk supply when the baby cannot breastfeed.

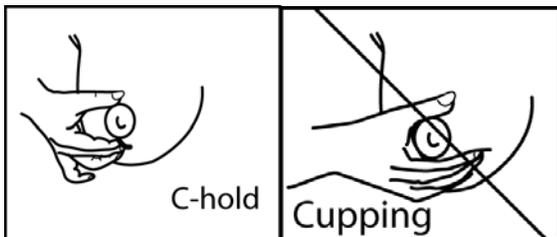
In these cases, you may want to follow the Marmet Technique for manual expression of breastmilk:

- Express each breast.
- Assist the milk ejection reflex (massage, stroke, shake). You can do both breasts at the same time within a minute.
- Repeat the whole process of expressing each breast and assisting the milk ejection reflex twice. The flow of milk most often slows down the second and third time as the ducts are drained.

How do you express each breast?

Position the thumb and first two fingers on the breast about 1 inch to 1 1/4 inch (2.5 to 3.10 cm) behind the base of the nipple.

- Use this measurement only as a guide. Your fingers do not have to touch the outer edge of the brown area around your nipples. This area varies in size from one woman to another.
- Place the thumb pad above the nipple at the 12 o'clock position and the finger pads below the nipple at the 6 o'clock position, forming the letter "C" with the hand, as shown. This is a resting position.



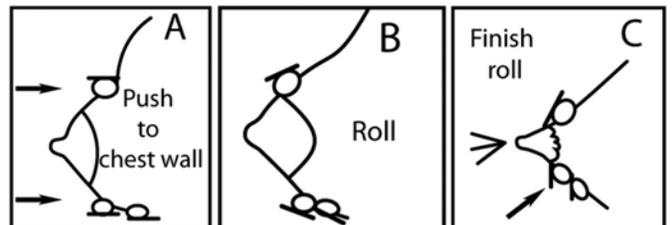
- The thumb and fingers are in line with the nipple.
- Avoid cupping the breast.

Push straight into the chest wall.

- Avoid spreading the fingers apart.
- For large breasts, first lift then push into the chest wall.

Roll thumb forward as if taking a thumbprint. Change finger pressure from middle finger to index finger as the thumb rolls forward.

- The rolling motion of the thumb simulates the wave like motion of the baby's tongue and the counterpressure of the fingers simulates the baby's palate. The milking motion imitates the baby's suck by compressing and draining the terminal milk ducts without hurting sensitive breast tissue.
- Note the moving position of the thumbnail and fingernails in pictures A, B and C.

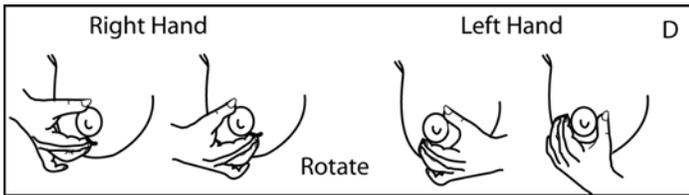


Repeat rhythmically to drain the terminal milk ducts.

- Position, push, roll
- Position, push, roll...

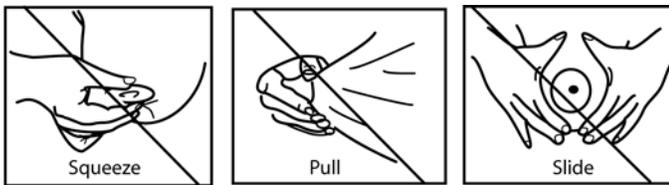
Rotate the thumb and finger position to reach other terminal milk ducts. Use both hands on each breast.

- Picture D shows hand positions on the right breast.
- Note clock positions of fingers in picture D: 12:00 and 6:00, 11:00 and 5:00, 1:00 and 7:00, 3:00 and 9:00.



Avoid these motions:

- Squeezing the breast can cause bruising.
- Pulling out the nipple and breast can cause tissue damage.
- Sliding on the breast can cause skin burns.



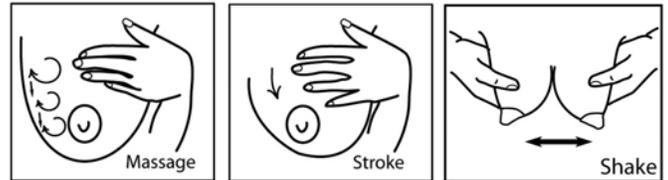
How do you assist the milk ejection reflex?

After you drain the terminal milk ducts, you will need to stimulate the flow of milk. Use this technique to bring on the milk ejection reflex:

Massage the milk-producing cells and ducts.

- Start at the top of the breast. Press firmly into the chest wall. Move fingers slowly, pressing firmly in a small circular motion on one spot on the skin.
- After a few seconds, pick fingers up and move to the next area on the breast. Do not slide on breast tissue.
- Spiral around the breast toward the brown area around the nipples using this massage.

- The pressure and motion are similar to that used in a breast examination.



Stroke the breast from the chest wall to the nipple with a light tickle-like stroke.

- Continue this stroking motion from the chest wall to the nipple around the whole breast.
- This motion helps with relaxation and encourages the milk ejection reflex.

Shake the breast gently while leaning forward so that gravity will help the milk eject.

How do you put it all together?

The entire technique should take about 20 to 30 minutes when hand expression replaces a feeding.

- Express each breast five to seven minutes.
- Massage, stroke, shake for about one minute.
- Express each breast three to five minutes.
- Massage, stroke, shake for one minute.
- Express each breast two to three minutes.

Note: If your milk supply is established, use the times given only as a guide. Watch the flow of milk, and change breasts when the flow gets small. If little or no milk is present yet, follow these suggested times closely. Any part of the process or timing may be used or repeated as needed.

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