

# Low Milk Supply

## What causes a low milk supply?

When a baby or breast pump removes milk from a breast, a hormonal signal is sent to the mother's brain to make milk. The more a mother breastfeeds or pumps, the more milk her body will make. A mother not breastfeeding or pumping enough is the most common reason for a low milk supply. Other causes for a low milk supply include a baby not emptying the breast well or if the mother has an underlying medical condition.



## What are the signs and symptoms?

### For the baby:

- Might look hungry around the clock instead of calm and relaxed after breastfeeding. Hunger cues include moving hands or fists to his mouth, making sucking motions, looking for the breast or crying.
- Is very sleepy or sluggish and does not wake up to eat at least eight times in 24 hours.
- Has a diaper count below what is expected for the baby's age.

### For the mother:

- Saw little or no breast changes during pregnancy.
- Had little or no breast changes 3-5 days after delivery. Around this time, breasts should become fuller, warmer, and even start leaking. It is normal not to feel breast fullness on days 1-3.

***If you think you are not making enough milk, contact your pediatrician immediately, followed by a lactation consultant.***

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# What might help?

- Breastfeeding or pumping is the best way to increase milk supply. Aim for removing milk at least 8 times in 24 hours.
- Work with a lactation consultant who can make sure your baby is latching deeply and drinking well.
  - If your baby is not being fed directly from the breast or not breastfeeding well, use a double electric pump for 15-20 minutes 8 times a day. Contact your health insurance or WIC office for help in getting a breast pump.
- Some mothers believe there are foods, drinks or supplements that can increase their milk supply. While some ingredients can give a very slight boost, they will not fix a low milk supply. Talk to a health care provider before taking any herbal supplements.
- **Please note:** It is normal for it to take several days of extra breastfeeding and pumping before you notice an increase in milk supply.

**Find more tips at [BreastmilkCounts.com](https://BreastmilkCounts.com).**

**For free 24/7 information and support, call the  
Texas Lactation Support Hotline at 855-550-6667  
to speak with a lactation consultant.**

**WIC has resources, healthy foods and more. Apply here:**



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