

Information for breastfeeding military mothers



INCREASING YOUR MILK SUPPLY

The number one reason most military moms don't have enough milk? Not draining their breasts often enough. Breasts are like factories, they work on demand and supply. The more orders that are placed, the more milk that is put into production. When you leave the milk sitting in your breasts, that tells the factory to cease production and shut down. Frequent stimulation, by breastfeeding or pumping, will bring your milk supply back up within a few days to weeks. It may seem like a lot of work but it will be well worth the time and effort, and your baby will thank you for it!

Supply Busters

The following are known supply busters:

- Birth Control – especially those with estrogen
- Medications - decongestants, antihistamines
- Growth Spurts
- Illnesses
- Sage, Peppermint, Wintergreen
- Supplementing
- Overfeeding at the CDC or daycare
- Bottle preference
- Pacifiers – use only at work, or during commute
- Nipple shields (long-term)
- Menstruation
- Baby sleeping through the night
- Stress
- Smoking
- Caffeine
- Severe weight loss diets
- Malfunctioning pump
- Used pump
- Incorrect sizes flanges (shields)
- Medical issues (mom or baby)

This is just a small list of reasons. Please see an IBCLC for low milk supply issues to help determine the cause and provide you with a plan of care to increase your supply.

Supply Boosters

As long as it took to lower your supply, it may take as long to regain it. Don't expect results overnight. Here are some supply boosters that other mothers in the military have found helpful:

- Breastfeed often and exclusively - no bottles or pacifiers when off duty and at home.
- Breastfeeding vacation - super-charge your milk supply by breastfeeding your baby very frequently, pump often, and rest as much as possible over a 24-48 hour period.
- Cluster pumping – pump every half hour for several hours or during every commercial break of your fav show.
- Night pumping - Pump in the middle of the night when your milk-making hormone levels are at their highest.
- Double pump after breastfeeding.
- Tandem pump - Pump one breast while your baby nurses on the other breast.
- Switch nursing – switch breasts 3 or more times during a breastfeeding session.
- Galactogogues:
 - Fenugreek, Blessed Thistle, Oats, Goats Rue, Shatavari, Mulunggay
 - Motherlove tinctures (More Milk)
 - Reglan (prescription only)

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