



# Where's My Milk?!

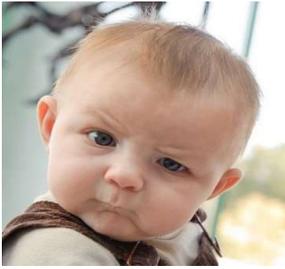
One of the biggest fears of a new mom attempting to breastfeed is that she isn't producing enough milk. For *most* moms, this worry is unfounded. Milk production kicks in full steam after the placenta is delivered, but your milk may not “come in” for approximately 2 to 4 days after giving birth. Again, don't worry!

In the meantime, your baby will get everything he or she needs from your “pre-milk” which your body produces first. Although it is low in volume, it's high in concentrated nutrition! Colostrum is often referred to as liquid gold because it's essentially a superfood for your baby and of course, because of its color! Colostrum contains many protective properties including antibacterial and immune-system-boosting substances that are not available in formula.



*Figure 1 Mature Breast Milk*

*Figure 2 Colostrum*



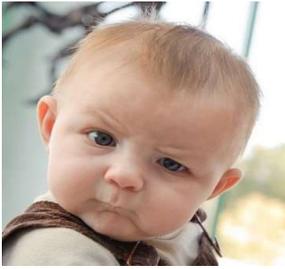
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Because this liquid gold is so nutrient dense, your new baby doesn't need as much as you might think.



The most important thing you can do to help your milk come in is to put your baby to your breast **at least** every two hours after birth. The more you breastfeed, the more your brain will make hormones that increase your milk supply and switch it over from drops of colostrum to larger volumes of mature milk. The larger the “demand” for milk, the larger the supply you will make. That is why frequent breastfeeding in those first days after birth are crucial! A general goal is 8-12 feeds during a 24-hour period. Your baby might even begin to cluster feed; spacing feedings closer together at certain times of the day and go longer between feedings at other times. Although it can be completely exhausting for mom, this is their way of getting your milk supply to come in. **They cannot overfeed at this stage.**

When your milk does come in, it will be creamy, fatty and white and more resemble cows' milk. Keep in mind that many women experience their milk coming in as a gradual change, rather than a sudden one. Research



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indicates that this timing is **hormonally controlled** – it does not require that baby be breastfeeding at all. Signs that your milk is increasing may include:

- breast fullness, swelling, heaviness, warmth, engorgement, tingling
- leaking milk
- change in baby's feeding patterns and behavior at the breast
- if you're expressing milk or leaking, you may notice the milk begin its gradual change in appearance from the thicker golden colostrum to the thinner, whiter mature milk

## Delayed Onset of Lactation

This is when a mother's milk supply does not undergo the expected increase of volume within 3 days of birth. Research indicates that this occurs in as many as 25% of mothers.

## What Do I Do If My Milk Has Not Come in By Day 4?

- Optimize breastfeeding management to make sure the breast is being emptied frequently and thoroughly; skin-to-skin contact with baby can also help with milk production
- Schedule a visit with a local board-certified lactation consultant to make a plan to increase your milk production and monitor baby's progress
- Monitor baby's weight to make sure he/she is getting enough milk – ***although case specific***, the providers here at SVPAM aren't concerned unless your baby loses more than 10% of his/or her birth weight at which point breastfeeding should be evaluated. If baby is not getting enough milk, supplementation may be warranted.
- **DO NOT** give your baby anything other than breastmilk or infant formula to drink; **NO WATER**



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## When Your Baby Is Losing Weight

First, don't panic! Some weight loss in the first days of life is normal. Your pediatrician will check the baby every day in the hospital and again a few days after leaving the hospital to make sure the baby's weight loss is in a safe range.

In addition to weighing, a good way to gauge if the baby is hydrated and getting enough from feeds is to check the number of wet diapers. Lots of full wet diapers means your baby is staying hydrated from feeds. Expect a steady increase in the number of wet diapers for each day of life (DOL 1 at least one wet diaper, DOL 2 at least two wet diapers, etc.) By DOL 5 most babies have 6 or more wet diapers a day. Stools should also be increasing in quantity and change from black to green to yellow in color. During the first few days of the life, your baby should have one stool per day. By day 4 or 5 through the first month of life, babies should be passing at least 3 stools a day.

SVPAM providers expect babies to rebound back to their birth weight by the time they are two weeks old.

If weight loss is beyond the normal range, your pediatrician will guide you through ways to help, which can include supplementing and/or pumping.

\*\*\*Written with info taken from:

1. [www.KellyMom.com](http://www.KellyMom.com)
2. An article written by pediatrician Rachel Hamilton of Fort Worth, TX:  
<https://www.checkupnewsroom.com/what-you-need-to-know-about-breastfeeding-and-your-baby/>
3. Office Version, 15<sup>th</sup> Edition, Barton Schmitt, MD, FAAP