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# **GUIDE**

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## **Breast Compression and Breast Massage**



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The Ottawa Hospital | L'Hôpital  
d'Ottawa



### ***Disclaimer***

*This is general information developed by The Ottawa Hospital. It is not intended to replace the advice of a qualified healthcare provider. Please consult your own personal healthcare provider who will be able to determine the appropriateness of the information for your specific situation.*

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# ***Breast Compression***

Breast compression is a technique made popular by Canadian pediatrician and breastfeeding expert Dr Jack Newman.

## **Breast compression may be used to help:**

- A sleepy baby start sucking
- A baby who has stopped sucking to start sucking again
- Encourage a preterm baby to continue sucking
- Stimulate a milk ejection reflex (let down)
- Increase the amount of milk your baby drinks

## ***How do I do breast compression?***

- Hold your breast with the thumb on one side and your fingers on the opposite side of the breast (a C or a U shape) and gently squeeze the breast.
- Move your hand to another place and gently squeeze again.

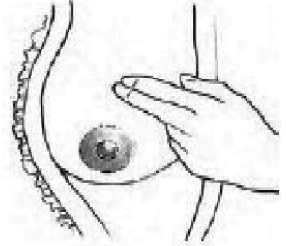
# ***Breast Massage***

Any form of massage encourages the mother to relax. Breast massage helps stimulate the milk ejection reflex (let down). Massage may be done together with relaxation techniques such as deep breathing and visualization. The use of massage may help relieve engorgement, a plugged duct or mastitis and may help with milk let down before putting baby to the breast.

# How to do Breast Massage

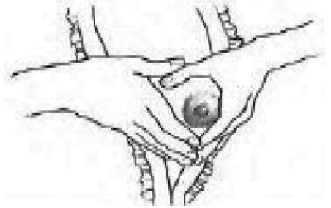
## Finger tip massage

- use two fingers
- press finger tips lightly into breast
- make small circles
- start from the back and move towards the areola
- cover the whole breast
- massage firmly, but gently



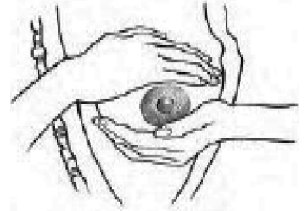
## Diamond hand position

- support breast with both hands
- thumbs on top, fingers below
- press gently as you move towards the nipple



## Parallel hand position

- place one hand above, one below
- gently press towards nipple
- rotate hands as they move forward



## Warm washcloth massage

- wet washcloth with warm water
- press firmly on breast, from back to nipple



*Illustrations reprinted with permission from Breastfeeding Basics, Nova Scotia Department of Health Promotion and Protection, 2007*