

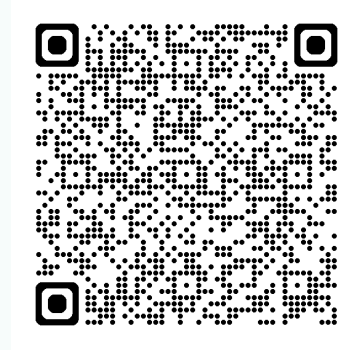
### If you wish to continue to produce breast milk:

- Contact your local infant feeding team for expressing advice and your local Milk Bank.

### If you wish to stop producing milk:

- Wear a well supporting non wired bra;
- Wear breast pads and change regularly;
- Sleep on your back, pillows may be used to support your breasts if you sleep on your side;
- Use of cold compress/towel/gel packs for 15-20 minutes, if you feel any engorgement;
- When showering, turn your back to the shower head, to avoid hot water on your breasts as this might increase blood flow to the breast;
- Take pain relief (paracetamol and Ibuprofen, check with a professional if you can take these);
- If you have been breastfeeding/ expressing, it is recommended to gradually reduce the period of time you express for, and reduce the number of times you express each day;
- Your local infant team can be contacted for an individualised care plan to reduce/stop milk production.
- It is not recommended to bind your breasts to stop breastmilk production, as this can cause blocked ducts and mastitis.

Please scan the QR to access the “Sources of Support Guide



Please reach out to your local infant feeding team, if you need extra support.



If you have a specific requirement, need an interpreter, a document on Easy Read, another language, large print, Braille or audio version, please contact your healthcare professional.

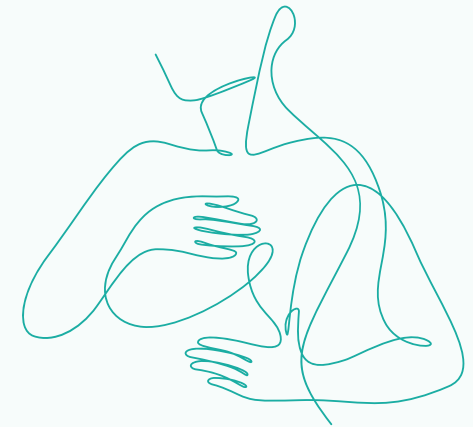
The links on this leaflet lead to external websites, so we have no control over their content.

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<https://eooneonatalpccsicnetwork.nhs.uk/>



With acknowledgement to Catarina Cerqueira (Neonatal Nurse, IBCLC) for her kind permission to adapt from an original design.

## Care of your breasts following the loss of your baby



We are very sorry for your loss, please accept our deepest sympathies.

We hope the information on this leaflet will help you make informed and individual decisions about your breast milk and breast care.

You can use this leaflet to discuss with your healthcare professional what is best for you. You don't need to make any decisions right away.

## Possible options

When your baby has died, your body continues to make milk. This can be very upsetting and difficult for some mothers, whilst others find the presence of milk very comforting. There is no right or wrong ways to feel at this time.

### Stopping

- The amount of milk produced in the breast will vary from person to person, but it may take several weeks or more for your breasts to stop making milk.
- Only hand express to relieve discomfort (do not aim to empty the breast).
- If your milk supply is established, you can stop your milk production by slowly reducing the removal of milk from your breasts to the point of comfort, either by hand expressing or with a breast pump. You can slowly decrease the frequency and duration of your expressing sessions according to your comfort and health.
- Medication is also available to suppress your milk production, but expressing is still necessary to avoid engorgement and mastitis. Check with your healthcare provider regarding side effects and cautions.

### Continuing expressing and milk donation

- Some families find comfort by donating their milk and do it in memory of their baby. Donated milk can be used to help other baby/babies or to help with research.
- Milk donation can be done once or many times.
- You may feel that you can't decide what you wish to do now, but you can continue expressing for as long as you like while you decide.
- There are sometimes reasons while you might not be able to donate your milk (e.g. if you are taking certain medication) - contact the milk bank in your area to find out if these might apply to you.
- Ask your local infant team if they can arrange for your milk to be collected and taken to your local milk bank directly.

### Using your breastmilk for older children

- Some mothers with older babies/ toddlers/ children choose to feed or bathe them in their milk.

## Milk banks available in the East of England

### **Hearts Milk Bank:**

<https://humanmilkfoundation.org/hearts-milk-bank/>



### **Rosie Milk Bank:**

[cuh.rosiemilkbank@nhs.net](mailto:cuh.rosiemilkbank@nhs.net)

### **UKAMB:**

<https://ukamb.org/>



## Milk memory making

Expressed milk/colostrum can be made into keepsakes such as beads, candles and jewellery - there are many companies that offer this service for a fee.

You can also keep your breast milk for as long as you like.



## Possible problems and complications

It is important that if you choose to stop breastfeeding/ expressing, you don't stop suddenly as you may experience engorgement and mastitis.

Engorgement – can happen if you stop breastfeeding/ expressing suddenly. Your breasts can become very full, feel firm, leak, tight and painful. Engorgement can help to suppress milk production, if that is what you wish to do, but painful engorgement can be avoided.

Mastitis – is a painful swelling of the breasts where they became sore, lumpy and warm. You may see reddening in lighter skin tones, or darkening of skin in brown or black skin tones, or none at all. You may feel flu-like symptoms (chills, temperature above 37.5C, tired, achy). Symptoms can start suddenly and progress very quickly, so don't hesitate to seek advice promptly from your local feeding team, or 111.

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/mastitis/>

