



Coping With Breast Milk After the Death of Your Baby

Most mothers who deliver a baby over 20 weeks gestation will produce breast milk. It may take up to 10 days for breast milk to fully come in. This can be emotionally and physically painful. Physically, you may experience breast engorgement when your milk comes in. The following comfort measures may help relieve the physical discomforts from breast engorgement:

- ❖ Take a hot shower and a small amount of milk generally leaks out, providing some relief. You may also manually express milk until pressure is relieved.
- ❖ Place ice packs or cold cabbage leaves on the breasts.
- ❖ Take Ibuprofen as directed for pain
- ❖ Wear a well fitting bra or sports bra

If these comfort measures do not work, you may choose to pump periodically to reduce pressure. If you have an abundant milk supply already, you should periodically reduce the amount of time you spend pumping and lengthen the intervals between pumping sessions to gradually reduce milk supply and prevent engorgement.

Some mothers choose to continue to keep a milk supply up and donate it in honor of their baby. The Milk Bank is an organization that accepts breast milk donations and provides it to premature infants. Milk in any amount can be donated in your babies honor. You can contact them at themilkbank.org or call (317) 536-1670.