

LACTATION BASICS

Everyone needs education and support with lactation and infant feeding. Breastfeeding After Reduction (BFAR) has its own considerations, but we cannot forget that a parent's primary role in supporting their milk production is frequent and effective milk removal. This means that in your first 6 weeks, you are effectively latching or pumping 8-12 times/day, effectively stimulating for at least 15min/side, with no breaks longer than 4-5 hours.

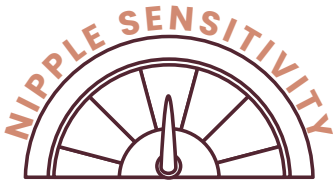
CONSIDERATIONS FOR BFAR

INTACT MILK DUCTS

Milk ducts may have been cut during surgery. It is important to understand that these ducts can regenerate during pregnancy and lactation, but every body is different and we won't know until we stimulate them and observe the results.



Although your mammary glands will make milk, there may be certain areas where the milk ducts are not connected to the nipple and the milk cannot exit. In this case, we want to manage symptoms, (with an anti-inflammatory Mastitis Protocol), while continuing to stimulate milk for the ducts that are still intact.



Reduced nipple sensitivity is common post-reduction. Nipple sensation plays a key role in stimulating the release of oxytocin, a hormone that triggers milk ejection. Interestingly, nipple sensitivity is not the only way to trigger these things, so we can explore ways of addressing this.

PREPARE FOR LETDOWN

Since oxytocin is a hormone used elsewhere in the body, there are several different ways to trigger its release. There is evidence that using mental strategies and hand manipulation can help a lot!



1. Train Your Brain for Letdown



- i. In as much detail as possible, imagine your baby suckling to release more milk. Think of romantic, positive experiences of the past while pumping. Visualize water flowing. Engage in box breathing to relax the body, allowing oxytocin to flow.

2. Use Your Hands with Pumping and Latching



- i. Engage in breast massage before pumping; Caress your breasts and/or do breast compressions while pumping; Do 2 minutes of hand expression after every feed/pump in the first 3 days and after half your pumping sessions in the first 4-6w.

Wanting to breastfeed now does not mean that a reduction was any less important in the past. BFAR has special considerations but valuing your health before will still help you to be your best parent now. In fact, studies show comparable rates of breastfeeding for parents with unoperated macromastia and those with breast reductions. You can define your own success.

RE-EVALUATING

Set timelines and boundaries with your personal & professional support team.

- ✓ At 2 weeks, we can assess if your body is responding to stimulation. Parents who keep up effective stimulation in the first 2 weeks *regardless of volume* have stronger milk output at 6 weeks.
- ✓ At roughly 4 weeks, your baby reaches their daily milk intake. Now we can put a number to the volume we are aiming for.
- ✓ Between 4-6 weeks, your body is still very adaptable in terms of increasing or decreasing milk supply, but after 6 weeks, you can still increase milk supply!