

## How Do I Choose a Breast Pump?

Not all breastfeeding mothers will need to use a breast pump. However, if a mother and her baby will be separated for more than a few hours, or the baby or the mother is hospitalized, then using a breast pump will be very important. Selecting the right pump for your circumstances is important and you may wish to ask the advice of a lactation consultant or other knowledgeable health care provider. You should remember that breast pumps are personal use products and most cannot be returned once the package has been opened. So it is important to make sure you select the most appropriate breast pump the first time.

### A Breast Pump Should Mimic Baby's Suckling.

Research has shown that most healthy, full-term, breastfeeding babies breastfeed with a suction level ranging between 50 and 155 mm/Hg, with a maximum suction level of 220 mm/Hg. These same babies typically will suckle the nipple at a rate of about 40-60 times per minute. You will want your breast pump to be able to replicate these levels as closely as possible.

Choose your breast pump carefully. Some pumps are ineffective because they do not achieve the appropriate suction levels. Others may be painful because they take too long to achieve maximum suction and, therefore, put unnecessary tension on the nipple.

### Types of Breast Pumps

**Hospital Grade Breast Pumps.** These are the pumps of choice for mothers who are separated from their babies due to prematurity or illness. Mothers working lengthy, full time hours may also choose this type of pump. This type of pump is usually rented by mothers, not purchased. These pumps are the best at providing the appropriate breast stimulation necessary to establish and maintain an adequate milk supply when your baby is not breastfeeding. They are also often recommended by lactation consultants for certain medical problems such as engorgement or to increase breast milk supply.

A hospital grade breast pump will achieve the suction levels and cycling rates similar to a baby at the breast. In addition, it uses a milk collection kit that can pump both breasts simultaneously. At first you may feel strange about "double pumping", but you will quickly realize how fast and efficient it is. If you prefer to pump your breasts individually, the kit can be switched to single pumping.

### The Ameda Elite Breast Pump

offers state-of-the-art features combined with excellent effectiveness and reliability. Weighing about 6 pounds, the Elite Breast Pump offers the combination of independently adjustable suction levels (up to 250 mm/Hg) and cycle speeds

(30-60 cycles per minute) allowing you to mimic your baby's nursing pattern and create effective stimulation. It has dual bottle holders for convenience and operates on AC power, car adapter and some models have a built-in rechargeable battery.



Ameda Elite Breast Pump

### The Ameda Lact-e Electric

**Breast Pump** is also a hospital grade pump. This quiet, 11 pound, piston driven pump cycles at a consistent speed of 48 cycles per minute and offers adjustable suction levels between 50-250 mm/Hg.

When renting a breast pump, you will also need to purchase your own milk collection kit for use with the breast pump. If you used a milk collection kit for pumping in the hospital, that one may be able to be used with the pump you rent.



Ameda Lact-e Breast Pump



Ameda Purely Yours Breast Pump

### Personal Consumer Breast Pumps.

Mothers with a milk supply established by their breastfeeding baby might try a portable, personal breast pump. The **Ameda Purely Yours Breast Pump** is a value-packed, portable breast pump that offers eight adjustable suction levels and four cycle speeds to create a stimulation that feels both

natural and comfortable. It provides numerous settings to mimic baby's suckling, even as your baby matures and grows. It operates on three power sources, including AC adapter, AA batteries, or a car adapter. Weighing only one pound, Purely Yours fits into your choice of 2 discreet, stylish bags designed to hold the pump and all accessories. It safely stores collected milk for up to 10 hours in the removable insulated cooling tote.

**Small Electric and Battery Powered Breast Pumps.** Useful for mothers who wish the convenience of a motorized pump but will not be using it often. Most of these pumps do not achieve the recommended suction or cycling levels for regular use. Be sure to get advice from a board certified lactation consultant or other knowledgeable health care provider before selecting a pump from this category.

A small, inexpensive, electric pump that can provide the appropriate suction and pumping frequency standards is called the Nurture III. This manually controlled electric breast pump is small but effective for

short-term intermittent use. You can cycle as often as every 2½ to 3½ seconds by lifting your finger off the vent at the top of the milk collection unit. Suction strength can be adjusted with the four-level adjustment knob located on the pump.

**Manually Operated Breast Pumps.** These pumps require you to manually create the source of suction. Although most of the pumps in this category can achieve proper suction levels, you may find that you tire from the repetitive hand movement needed to operate this type of pump.



The **Ameda One-Hand Breast Pump** with its patented easy-to-use handle design, is an option for the mother who is looking for an inexpensive, yet effective, pump for infrequent use. This pump is so compact it fits into most purses or tote bags. It provides control and flexibility simply by varying the frequency and degree of

handle squeeze. The one-handed operation allows you to pump one breast while your baby breastfeeds from the other. Unlike other manual pumps, you can also use two units simultaneously to double pump!

### Features to Look For in a Breast Pump

- ♥ **Comfort.** You should be comfortable using the pump even during frequent use. The flange should give your breast good support and fit loosely around your nipple. You should be able to see your nipple being stretched a bit during the suction phase.
- ♥ **Ease of Use.** The pump you select should be convenient and easy to use. An easy to understand instruction booklet should accompany the pump.
- ♥ **Adjustable Suction.** Some mothers are sensitive to the suction created by the pump. The pump should be able to be set for a range of suction levels to help ensure comfort.
- ♥ **Adjustable Cycling (speed).** Your baby varies his suckling pattern during the feeding. He starts out quickly (~60 sucks per minute) to stimulate your let-down reflex. Then he will slow down into a deep regular pattern (approximately 40 sucks per minute). It is important to have the ability to mimic these changes in pattern with your breast pump.

- ♥ **Protection from Contamination.** Check the manufacturers claims for prevention of cross-contamination. Only the **Ameda HygieneKit Milk Collection System** has a patented silicone diaphragm that creates a barrier to protect both the pump and tubing from penetration of bacteria and viruses\*. It also helps protect the pumped breast milk from backing up into the kit tubing – a very tricky component to clean.
- ♥ **Portability.** Consider where and when you will be using your pump. If you will need to carry it back and forth from work or school, select a pump that is lightweight.
- ♥ **Noise Level.** Consider where you will use your pump and how much noise is acceptable. Ask for a demonstration of the pump so you can listen to the pump before you rent or purchase it.
- ♥ **Cost.** Choose a breast pump that fits your budget, but do not base your decision solely on price. If you need a pump only for short term use, a rental pump may be the most cost-effective choice. If you are given a pump kit in the hospital, take it home with you. It may be able to be used on the pump you rent. Take it with you when you rent the pump to ensure you have all the parts necessary.
- ♥ **Ease of Cleaning.** Choose a pump or kit that has a only a few parts that need to be washed after each use. They should be made from a material that is safe for boiling and autoclaving (if necessary in the hospital). Choose a milk collection kit that protects against milk from backing up into the kit tubing. It is very difficult and time consuming to clean and dry collection kit tubing.
- ♥ **Adjustable Sized Breast Flange.** The size of breasts and nipples vary from mother to mother. Some breast pumps have inserts or different size flanges to accommodate different size nipples and breasts. Ask your lactation consultant to help you choose the appropriate flange and or insert that fits you.
- ♥ **Durability.** Choose a pump that will meet your needs now and possibly for use with any additional babies you may have in the future. Breast pumps and milk collection kits should not be shared between mothers. Only hospital grade pumps, intended for use by multiple mothers, are acceptable for sharing since each mother must have her own personal milk collection kit.
- ♥ **Versatile Power Source.** Most pumps are operated by an electrical adapter; however, pumps with batteries or a car adapter option are very handy. You will be able to use your pump without connecting to an outlet!

\* For more information on the Ameda HygieneKit Viral Barrier Claim, please visit our Web site at [www.ameda.com](http://www.ameda.com).

*Please remember that this is general breastfeeding information only and does not replace the advice of your health care provider. If you have a problem that you are unable to resolve quickly, seek help immediately.*

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References on File.

# Ameda

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