Problem Solving: Low Milk Production Handout**:** Low Milk Production Summary

Level 2

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| **Issue** | **Signs** | **Causes** | **Questions to Ask** | **Tips/Solutions** | **When to Yield** |
| **Perceived Insufficient Milk** | * Baby stools often (3 or more stools every 24 hours in early weeks).
* Baby gains around 1 ounce per day during the first 6 months.
* Baby breastfeeds 8-12 times every 24 hours.
* Mother’s breasts feel full before feedings and softer afterwards.
* Baby may be fussy.
* Negative comments from family and friends.
* Mom used a breast pump and expressed only a small amount.
* Baby was given a bottle of

formula and drank it all. | * Lack of knowledge about milk production.
* Misunderstands baby’s

behaviors.* + Feeding frequency
	+ Cluster feedings
	+ Growth spurts
	+ Overstimulation
 | * How often does your baby breastfeed and for how long?
* How do you know when

it’s time to feed the baby?* Why do you think you are not making enough milk?
* How does your baby act after feedings?
* What else does your baby receive besides breastmilk?
* What are others telling you about your milk production?
 | * Educate and reassure mom about normal infant feeding patterns.
* Share visual examples of ways to know they are making enough milk (e.g., wet/dirty diapers, weight gain).
* Give information on how the breast makes milk.
* Inform mother about feeding cues and other normal infant behaviors.
* Share ideas for calming a fussy baby and waking a sleepy baby.
 | * Yield to CPA or DBE if:
	+ Mom reports signs of delayed or low milk production.
	+ Mom continues to feel she is not making enough milk.
	+ Parent requests formula for their baby.
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| **Issue** | **Signs** | **Causes** | **Questions to Ask** | **Tips/Solutions** | **When to Yield** |
| **Delayed Milk Production** | * Baby is not back to birth weight at 2 weeks.
* Baby is stooling less than

3-4 times in 24 hours in the early days.* Baby is still passing meconium stools after day 3.
* Mom perceives her breasts are not full.
* Baby is jaundiced.
 | * Baby did not go to the breast 8-12 times in 24 hours in the early days.
* Baby is not positioned to latch well to transfer milk.
* Parent is replacing feedings at the chest with formula or water.
* Lactating parent did not hold baby skin to skin in the first hour or beyond.
* Delaying the first breastfeed.
 | * Tell me about your baby’s first feedings. When did they occur and how did feedings go?
* How often do you hold your baby skin to skin?
* How often did you feed your baby in the early days?
* How often are you feeding your baby now? How do you know when it’s time to feed the baby?
* How does your baby act after feedings?
* How do your breasts feel before and after breastfeeding?
 | * Educate parent prenatally and early postpartum about how the breast works and early practices to get a great start.
* Support parent with help positioning and latching.
* Remind lactating parent to feed or express milk 8-12 times in24 hours.
* Express milk after feedings helps speed up production.
 | * Yield to CPA or DBE if:
	+ Mom does not feel fullness in her breasts after day 3.
	+ Baby is not stooling 3-4 times in 24 hours in the early days.
	+ Report that baby is continuing to lose weight.
	+ Baby’s skin or eyes are

yellow.* + Lactating parent may be obese and/or reports that she has diabetes or other medical concerns.
	+ Parent has begun supplementing.
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| **Issue** | **Signs** | **Causes** | **Questions to Ask** | **Tips/Solutions** | **When to Yield** |
| **Low Milk Production** | Baby:* Continues to lose weight beyond the first few days or does not regain birth weight by 2 weeks.
* Stools less than 3 times in24 hours in the early weeks.
* Is sleepy or feeds less than 8-12 times in24 hours.
* Gains less than 1 ounce perday in the first 6 months.

Mother:* Breasts do not feel fuller before feedings.
* Has sore nipples.
* Is separated from the baby

and not expressing milk often enough. | * Ineffective positioning and latch.
* Delaying feedings.
* Limiting the baby’s time at

the breast.* Not offering both breasts at feedings.
* Supplementing with other foods.
* Unresolved engorgement.
* Medical concerns (e.g., prior breast surgery, hormonal conditions, medications, diabetes, obesity, pregnant while breastfeeding)
* Infant concerns (e.g., Down syndrome, prematurity, tongue tie, cleft lip or palate)
 | * What makes you concerned about your milk production?
* How do you know it’s time

to feed your baby?* How often is your baby breastfeeding each 24 hours?
* How would you describe your baby’s behaviors most of the time?
* Tell me about your baby’s wet and dirty diapers.
* What do your family and friends tell you about your milk production?
* What do you know about how the breast makes milk?
 | * Assist with positioning and latch.
* Hold baby skin to skin.
* Feed the baby often - at least 8-12 times in24 hours.
* Provide comfort measures for engorgement.
* Connect parent to support.
* Make proactive phone calls.
 | * Yield to the CPA or DBE if:
	+ Parent reports baby is not gaining weight or stooling appropriately.
	+ Lactating parent reports medical issues for low production.
	+ Mom reports medical concerns of her baby.
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