PREVENT ENGORGEMENT

♦ Nurse the baby often, 8-12 times each 24 hours.
♦ Avoid formula or water in the early weeks unless instructed by the doctor.
♦ Avoid pacifiers in the first few weeks.

IF ENGORGEMENT OCCURS

♦ Cover all of both breasts with an ice pack for 3-4 minutes. (Put crushed ice cubes in a plastic bag or use a package of frozen peas wrapped in a wash cloth to make an ice pack.)
♦ Massage the breast, then hand express or pump out milk to soften the breast. This will make it easier to latch the baby on.
♦ Try nursing the baby to help empty the fullness. Pump after every nursing if breasts feel full.
♦ After nursing repeat the ice packs every 2-3 hours until the breasts are softer.
♦ If engorgement occurs during weaning, slow down the weaning process. Give yourself a chance to adjust.

MORE TO KNOW:
Hand expression can quickly soften the nipple area of the breast for a better latch.

► Apply warm wet wash cloths to get the milk to flow.
► Massage around the breast and nipple.
► Place the fingers and thumb behind the nipple 1 to 1 ½ inches back from the end.
► Push the fingers in toward the chest. Slowly press the thumb and fingers together.
► Move the position of the fingers and thumb around the breast to express all parts.
► Use a bowl or cup to collect the milk.

For more information call:

Engorgement During Breastfeeding
(Full Hard Breasts)

Adapted from the Arkansas Department of Health WIC Program.