



# Reglan (Metoclopramide)

**Reglan is a prescription drug that may help improve a mother's milk supply.**

## What is Reglan?

Reglan (Metoclopramide) is a prescription drug that is used most often to improve esophagus and stomach function. Reglan also increases *prolactin*, the hormone responsible for milk production. Normally, a woman's prolactin increases during pregnancy and stays high after birth if the baby breastfeeds often (8 times a day or more).

## When is it needed?

Reglan can be useful for mothers who have been unable to make enough breast milk, even if they are breastfeeding or pumping often.

Before using Reglan, talk with a lactation consultant. She will look for other factors that might be causing your low supply and will usually suggest other ways to boost your milk supply. If your supply doesn't improve within 5 days, you may decide to try Reglan. Remember that even while taking Reglan, you must continue to breastfeed or pump at least 8 times a day.

Reglan works best for women who have low prolactin levels even when they are pumping or breastfeeding often. It is not yet common practice, but a blood draw to check your prolactin level might help determine if Reglan will work for you. Prolactin levels should be checked 3 hours after nursing or pumping.

## Where do I get it?

You need to get a prescription for Reglan from your primary care provider, such as your obstetrician, family medicine provider, or nurse practitioner. Most pharmacies carry Reglan.

## Questions?

Call 206-598-4628

Your questions are important. Call your doctor or health care provider if you have questions or concerns. UWMC clinic staff are also available to help.

Lactation Services:  
206-598-4628

*Weekdays:*  
9 a.m. to 9 p.m.

*Weekends and holidays:*  
9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

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## What is the dose?

Most women take one 10 mg tablet, 3 times a day for the first week. If your milk supply improves, you will take 1 tablet 2 times a day for the second week, 1 tablet once a day for the third week, then 1 tablet every other day for the fourth week, for a total of 46 tablets.

### *4-Week Course of Reglan*

Week 1	10 mg 3 times a day
Week 2	10 mg 2 times a day
Week 3	10 mg 1 time a day
Week 4	10 mg every other day

## How do I take it?

Take Reglan with water. It can be taken with or without food. You will usually see an increase in your milk supply within the first week.

## Are there any side effects?

Some side effects for the mother may be:

- Drowsiness.
- Diarrhea.
- Stomach upset and nausea.
- Depression.

Rarely, long-term and/or high-dose use of Reglan has been linked to *tardive dyskinesia*. Symptoms include involuntary and repetitive movements of the extremities or face. These symptoms may continue even after you are no longer taking the drug. They are rarely reversible, and they have no known treatment. The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) recommends that no one use Reglan longer than 3 months.

Some women have no improvement in their milk supply when they take Reglan. For others, their supply drops when they stop taking it.

Reglan peaks in breast milk 1 to 2 hours after an oral dose. The amount that a baby may get through the milk is minimal, and no side effects have been reported in babies.

## To Learn More

*Breastfeeding: A guide for the medical profession*, by Ruth A. Lawrence (2005).

*Medications and Mothers' Milk*, by Thomas W. Hale (2008).

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### Lactation Services

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