



Results Summary

Babies who are born very early (at less than seven months of pregnancy) can't drink milk directly from the breast or a bottle. Because breastmilk is the best milk for babies born very early, parents are asked to 'express' milk from the breasts to give to their babies down a tube into their tummies. We did a research study to see whether listening to a relaxing recording increased the amount of milk people could express, and/or made them less anxious and distressed.

Some people find it hard to express milk however hard they try, and others find it easier. We don't want people to feel judged about the amount of milk they can express or how they feed their babies. You can see more information about breastmilk and breastfeeding on the Bliss website: www.bliss.org.uk. To speak to someone about expressing and breastfeeding you can call the **National Breastfeeding Helpline on 0300 100 0212**.

What did we do?

132 people were in the trial.

We gave half the people a relaxing recording. We asked them to listen to it while expressing milk.

The other half of the people didn't have the recording.

We asked everyone to tell us about how they expressed milk and asked them to answer questions.

To download the recording you can scan the QR code or go to www.npeu.ox.ac.uk/express/download-relaxation



Did the relaxing recording help people make more milk?

People who had the relaxing recording made a little bit more milk (about 75ml more each day). The trial wasn't big enough to be sure if a difference of this size was because of chance or because of the recording.

A few trials have looked at breastmilk and relaxation. When you put all the results together it looks like relaxation helps people make more milk. Relaxation might have less effect when people have had a baby very early.

There was no difference in how many babies were getting breastmilk later on between the people with and without the relaxing recording.



Did the relaxing recording make people feel better?

There was no difference in how people felt between the two groups

People in the two groups were equally worried.

Three weeks after birth about half of the people in the trial were very worried (enough to be called “clinical anxiety”).



People in the two groups were equally distressed.

Three weeks after birth about two in 10 people had a lot of distress (enough to be called “post-traumatic stress”).



How did people feel about the recording?

Most people liked the recording and said it was relaxing.

About one in ten people didn't like the recording.

About one in ten people said they felt less relaxed after listening to the recording.

Some people thought the recording was boring.

Some people would have liked to listen to relaxing music instead.



Here are some things people said about the recording:

“When I start listening [to] the recording and meditating before expressing, milk starts falling down my chest from both breasts without me touching at all”

“The recording is very monotonous... I feel pressure about listening”

“It gives me more energy...”

Yes, the recording keeps telling me I can express more for my boys”

“It makes me anxious... I didn't find the voice very soothing”

“On stressful days it definitely makes me more calm.”

“Finding time to remember to listen is tricky”

You can find out more detailed results on our website www.npeu.ox.ac.uk/express

EXPRESS Chief Investigator
Ilana Levene

NPEU Clinical Trials Unit, National Perinatal Epidemiology Unit
University of Oxford, Old Road Campus, OXFORD, OX3 7LF

☎ 01865 289751 ✉ general@npeu.ox.ac.uk 🌐 www.npeu.ox.ac.uk/express

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