

## Trouble-Shooting Breast Pump Problems

An electric breast pump should only be used in a dust-free environment. Do not use or set the pump where it is exposed to direct sunlight or any other source of heat. If a pump does not appear to be working properly, try to diagnose the problem.

1. *If the pump does not run when it is switched on:*
  - Check whether the breast pump is properly connected to the electric supply.
  - Check the fuse.
  - Be sure that the pump is plugged in.
  - Make sure that the white membranes are on the yellow disks inside the bottles.
  
2. *If the pump suction is too weak even after adjusting the vacuum regulator dial, check whether:*
  - The vacuum regulator ring has been turned beyond the stop, has been displaced, is no longer a close fit or is dirty on the inside.
  - The rubber seal of the piston is seating correctly and is in good condition. The valve has been correctly fitted to the flange. Is the valve membrane clean and closing properly when in resting position?
  - The cylinder has been screwed tightly into the cylinder holder.
  - There is no leak in the tube connection between cylinder holder and flange.
  - The flange fits closely to the breast.
  
3. *If the suction on one side of the pump is different from the other side (when testing a pump in style):*
  - The problem is likely to be with the kit. Check the condition of the membranes to see if they are torn or dirty.
  - Ask the participant if breast milk ever backed up into the tubing. This can affect the suction, and could lead to mold growing inside the pump.
  - Do **not** attempt to remove the face plate to clean the pump. It is very easy to damage the prongs of the face plate, or to damage the diaphragm under the plate. The participant (or agency staff) may contact the manufacturer's customer service to learn what can be done.
  
4. *If the vacuum cannot be regulated:*
  - The two holes in the cylinder under the vacuum regulator ring may be blocked with dirt. Clean them using a brush and soapy water. The points listed above should also be checked.
  
5. *If the vacuum is not released at the end of the suction stroke:*
  - The ventilation hole at the bottom of the cylinder may be blocked with dirt.
  
6. *If the piston does not return after the suction phase:*
  - Check whether the suction circuit is blocked.
  - There may be a kink in the tubing.