

“I have to return to work. How do I keep providing breastmilk for my baby? “

Congratulations! You have made the choice to breastfeed your baby. You may be concerned that returning to work means that you will have to stop breastfeeding. That is not true. Today many women balance a job outside the home and a family. Breastfeeding can be a part of that balance, it just requires some planning. There are many advantages for you and your baby to keep breastfeeding. Breastfed babies are healthier and require fewer trips to the doctor. Breastfeeding is much cheaper than buying formula and that allows you to spend the money elsewhere like on child care. And breastfeeding is a great way to reconnect after a day at work and daycare. Sit and relax with your little one for a few minutes before starting supper and evening activities.

OPTIONS

There are many choices for feeding your baby when you return to work.

- Try to find a day care provider close to your work so you can breastfeed on regularly scheduled breaks.
- If this is not possible, you can breastfeed when you are together and use your break times to express your milk and bring it to the child care provider for feeding the following day. This will require pumping and storing the milk in a cool place like a refrigerator or an insulated bag with a cooler pack.
- breastfeed your baby when you are together and use expressed breastmilk or if not available, formula when you are separated. The number of times you will need to pump your milk while at work

will depend on the length of time you are away and the age of your baby. In general, you will need to pump as often as you would breastfeed.

If you breastfeed often when you and your baby are together, your breasts will adjust to the daily separation and you should have enough milk for the evenings and weekend.

TIPS

Some tips for returning to work include:

- ✓ practice expressing or pumping your milk before you return to work
- ✓ breastfeed your baby before you leave and when you arrive home
- ✓ talk to other women who have combined work and breastfeeding
- ✓ choose a caregiver who understands the importance of breastfeeding
- ✓ begin work on a Thursday or Friday if you can
- ✓ offer breastmilk by a spoon, cup or bottle frequently *before* you return to work until baby learns to drink well
- ✓ two piece outfits will make pumping easier while at work
- ✓ wearing patterns, jackets or vests will hide any evidence of leaking
- ✓ wearing washable or disposable breast pads will prevent leaking particularly in the first weeks back to work
- ✓ discuss your plans with your employer and negotiate a quiet, comfortable place to express your milk

YOUR EMPLOYER

- workplaces that support staff who are breastfeeding will reap the benefits
- employees will be more likely to return to work from maternity leave
- employees are absent less often and less likely to leave their positions
- employer-employee relations will also be improved.

How can a workplace become Breastfeeding Friendly?

Create policies which promote and support breastfeeding and the expression of breast milk by employees who are breastfeeding when they return to work. These policies should include management support by determining mutually agreeable hours, work assignments and flexible breaks as well as providing a clean, comfortable, private space at or near the workplace for breastfeeding or expressing breast milk.

“Returning to work” can be interchanged with “returning to school.”

YOUR CHILDCARE PROVIDER

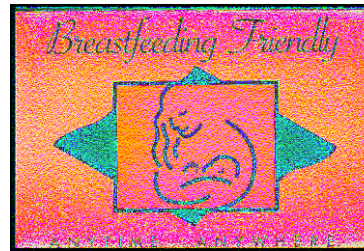
The following is some information to share with your childcare provider. Try to choose a caregiver who shares your beliefs about breastfeeding.

- Breastmilk might look different. It may be a slightly different colour and separate into layers. Shake gently to mix.
- Breastfed babies don't usually take as much milk at a feeding as a formula fed babies. Start with 2-4 ounces until you have an idea of how much the baby will take at each feeding. Add more if the baby will take it. Don't keep milk that is left over after a feeding. We don't know how well it will keep after being warmed.
- Suggest that milk be stored in 2-4 ounce servings. It is faster to warm/thaw and reduces waste. Fresh milk is easier to warm and less likely to develop a soapy or "off" smell or taste that sometimes happens with freezing.
- Thaw or warm milk to room temperature by holding under cool running water and gradually adding warmer water. Test temperature before feeding. **Don't use the microwave or heat on the stove.**
- Wash hands and use hot soapy water, rinse well and air dry all storage containers, cups, spoons, bottles and nipples to avoid bacterial contamination.
- Breastmilk can be stored in a regular fridge. Ask mothers to label each container with baby's name and date the milk was expressed. Thawed frozen milk can be kept in the fridge for 24 hours. Fresh milk can be kept in the fridge for 8 days.
- No special precautions are required when feeding a baby breastmilk.
- Try offering the bottle before the baby is too hungry. If the baby is fussy, gently rock or walk and try different positions. If the baby doesn't take a bottle, use a cup, spoon or eyedropper.
- Create a welcoming atmosphere for breastfeeding mothers. Display positive messages about breastfeeding. Have a comfortable space for mothers to breastfeed.

If you have questions about breastfeeding contact these community resources

Thunder Bay District Health Unit 625-5972
Breastfeeding Connection in the District only
La Leche League Canada (local)
Breastfeeding Clinic 625-5916
Maternity Centre Support Services 684-6228
24 hour referral line 211
Toll free 1-877-586-5638

visit www.tbdhu.com



*Health Canada recommends
breastfeeding up to 2 years and
beyond.*



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Breastfeeding & Returning to Work or School



A GUIDE FOR MOTHERS