



BREASTFEEDING: RETURNING TO WORK OR SCHOOL

Breastfeeding is a special time for mother and baby. Breastfeeding when you get home from work or school is a relaxing way for you and your baby to stay close. Many working mothers consider breastfeeding easier than bottle feeding.

WHEN YOU ARE PREGNANT:

- Talk to your supervisor or school counselor about locations for pumping and if you can extend your breaks if you need to.
- Check out the place where you will be pumping.
- Find a childcare provider who will support you in breastfeeding. Consider sharing information on paced bottle feeding with your childcare provider to reduce overfeeding.

1 TO 2 WEEKS BEFORE RETURNING TO WORK OR SCHOOL

- Begin pumping to have some frozen milk on hand and to get used to the pump. Freeze milk in one or two ounce amounts.
- Have someone other than mom give your baby a bottle of pumped milk. If he does not take the bottle, try a different nipple or a cup.

AT WORK OR SCHOOL:

- Pump as often as your baby feeds. For a young baby this may be every 2 or 3 hours. As your body adjusts and your baby grows, you may not need to pump this often.
- Feeding your baby right before work and right after work will reduce the number of times you need to pump at work or school.



Call WIC, your lactation consultant, or health care provider if you have any questions or concerns about breastfeeding.



BREAST PUMPS

- Ask WIC about types of pumps and resources for obtaining a pump.
- A breast pump should have pressure that is not too high or too low.
- Manual or hand pumps are portable and useful for occasional pumping.
- Personal electric breast pumps are often used by women who are returning to work or school.
- Pumping both breasts at once or using “hands-on pumping” can make pumping faster and may bring in more milk.
- In some situations, a health care provider may recommend a multi-user electric breast pump. Wait until after the baby is born to see what type of breast pump will be best.
- NOTE: MN provides a breast pump with each pregnancy.

PUMPING TIPS

- Expressing your milk by hand is good to learn and will come in handy if you forget your pump.
- Keep a picture or a piece of your baby’s clothing with you. This can help you “let down” your milk.
- Start on the lowest pressure and adjust up as needed.
- When you first start pumping, you may not get much milk. This is typical. It takes time to get used to the pump.
- “Hands on pumping” or breast massage can help you pump more milk.
- Most breast pumps are not meant to be shared.
- Label and date your milk. Store up to 4 days in the refrigerator and 6 months in the freezer.

RESOURCES

- Click here: [Pregnant Workers and New Parents](#)
- Click here: [“Hands-on pumping”](#)
- Click here: [Solutions for different workplaces](#)
- Click here: [Going back to work](#)
- Click here: [Pumping and hand expression](#)
- Click here: [Finding a pump through insurance or MA](#)

