

Making it Work

Combining Breastfeeding with Work or School

When you go back to work or school you do NOT have to stop breastfeeding. There are options for working moms or students to continue breastfeeding. Providing your baby with breast milk while you are at work or school can help you feel close to your baby even when you are apart.



Ideas While You're Away

- Use a pump. You may be able to use a breast pump at work or school. Your partner or a child care provider can feed your breast milk when you are away. Many WIC clinics provide breast pumps to mothers.
- Adjust feeding times. You may be able to adjust when you feed your baby to better fit your work or school schedule. Your baby may prefer to eat less when you are away and more often when you are together. **Ask for Help** from one of the people listed in the circle below.
- It is possible to combine formula feeding and breastfeeding. If you cannot express breast milk for your baby to eat when you are away, it may be necessary for the caregiver to feed formula. Be sure to tell the caregiver not to feed your baby too close to the time you will pick her up. You will want to breastfeed her as soon as you can. Breastfeeding whenever you and baby are together still provides important health benefits not found in formula feeding.



Develop a Plan

To continue breastfeeding, you will need to make a plan before you return to work or school. **Ask for Help** to create this plan. Below are the kinds of things you might include in that plan for both before and after your baby is born.

Before your baby is born

Talk to your boss or someone in the human resources department about your plan to return to work and keep breastfeeding. If you are a student, talk to the school counselor. Tell them breastfeeding is important to you. Let them know what you will need.

Ask these questions:

- What is the policy for maternity leave?
- Do they provide any support services for new mothers?
- Where is a private place available for you to breastfeed your baby or pump milk? Are there policies about where and when you can breastfeed or pump?
- How can they help you arrange a flexible schedule that allows you to continue breastfeeding?

Ask for Help

There are people who can help you find the best way to continue breastfeeding. People you might want to ask for help are:

- *Your WIC nutritionist or breastfeeding peer counselor*
- *A lactation consultant*
- *Your baby's doctor or nurse*

While you are home with your baby

- Relax and enjoy your baby! Focus on getting comfortable with breastfeeding.
- **Ask for Help** if you have any questions or concerns.
 - *After a few weeks, you can begin to learn how to express breast milk, either by hand or with a breast pump. You will also need to learn how to safely store the pumped milk in a refrigerator or freezer and how to defrost the breast milk when you need it.*
 - *If your baby will need to drink formula while you are away, ask your doctor or WIC nutritionist the best formula to use for your baby, and how to safely make, store and carry the formula.*

A few weeks before going to school or work

- Have your partner, child care provider, or a friend try feeding your baby the pumped milk or formula using a bottle or cup. That way, your baby will continue to expect that when with you, he will breastfeed.
- Talk to your child care provider about how you would like him/her to feed your baby while you are away.
- Make sure you have the supplies you need to express milk such as bottles or bags for the milk, ice packs, and a carrier or cooler.

While at school or work

- Many mothers express milk during their breaks and their lunch hour. It is important to have a private place which is not a restroom to pump. Wash your hands before you pump and clean your pump supplies after pumping. While pumping, try to relax to allow for the breast milk to flow. It can be helpful to have a picture of your baby to look at while you pump.
- Breast milk can be held at room temperature up to four hours, if needed. If there is a refrigerator to keep the milk cold, then refrigerate it as soon as possible. If not, you can also keep it cold in an insulated lunch bag with an ice pack. Breast-feed your baby as soon as you can, and continue to breastfeed while the two of you are together.

What You'll Need to Express Milk

- *Clothing that is easy to open or lift*
- *Breast pump (if using one) and collection kit and bottles*
- *Sink to wash hands and pump parts*
- *Bags or bottles made for storing breast milk*
- *Cooler or refrigerator for storage at work*
- *Carrier bag and ice packs for taking milk home*
- *Picture of baby*
- *Breast pads, if needed*

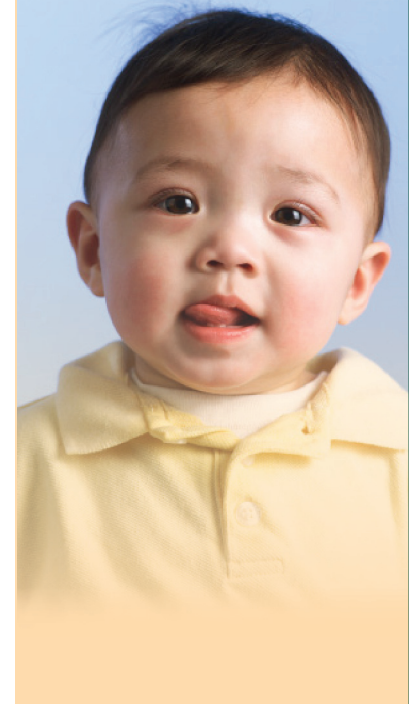
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Revised 2022



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DCH-3909**