

# Working and Breastfeeding Made Simple

**QUESTION:** What should I think about before I go back to work?

**ANSWER:** Think about your breastfeeding goals. The more mother's milk your baby gets, the better. But breastfeeding does not have to be all or nothing. Choices include:

- **Breastfeed.** This could mean going to your baby for feedings or having your baby brought to you. Some mothers keep their babies with them at work or use reverse cycle nursing. This means breastfeeding often at home and working during their baby's longest sleep stretch.
- **Express milk** for all missed feedings.
- **Leave both pumped milk and formula** for missed feedings.
- **Leave formula** for missed feedings and breastfeed when together.

Also think about finding a caregiver close to work rather than home. Keeping your baby close can reduce travel time, time apart, and your need to pump.

**QUESTION:** What do I need at work to pump and store my milk?

**ANSWER:** First, find a place where you can relax and have some privacy. Ask if your workplace has a lactation room. If not, ask about a private office, empty conference room, storage room or lounge. A bathroom can be a last resort. Even if there's no electrical outlet, some quality breast pumps can be battery powered.

If you'll be pumping, plan to get a quality breast pump. Keep in mind that formula costs nearly \$2,000 for the first year. A good pump saves far more money than it costs.

- Avoid used or borrowed mother-owned pumps, which may be worn out and unsafe to share.
- For moms working 30-40+ hours per week, the best choice is usually an automatic double pump

*Going back to work after having a baby takes lots of planning. Both working and caring for a baby are demanding, and many mothers rethink their priorities.*



that provides at least 40-60 automatic suction-and-release cycles per minute. This may be a rental-grade pump or a top-quality personal pump like an **Ameda Purely Yours Ultra™** breast pump.

- For moms working full time, using a manual pump or a motorized pump recommended for occasional use may result in gradually decreasing milk production.
- For moms working part-time and pumping once a day or less often, cheaper pumps may work well enough. Buy the best pump you can afford.

## PLAN AHEAD FOR PUMPING AT WORK.

- Find a place to wash your hands before pumping.
- If double-pumping, allow about 20 minutes, 10-15 min. to pump and 5 min. to wash and rinse your pump parts.
- To cut down on clean-up time, buy extra pump parts. With enough sets, you can wash them all in the dishwasher when you get home at night.
- How many times should you pump at work? Divide the number of hours you're away from baby (include travel) by three. Some mothers do fine with fewer.

## PLAN AHEAD FOR MILK STORAGE.

- If your milk is stored in a room that's 66-72° F (19-22° C), it can stay uncooled for 6-10 hours.
- To cool your milk, use an insulated pump cooler case, cooler bag or refrigerator

For how much milk to expect at a pumping and tips on milk storage and handling, see our sheet, "Storing and Handling Mother's Milk."

## QUESTION: Should I pump and store milk before I return to work?

**ANSWER:** Most mothers do. But keep in mind that once you're at work, the milk you pump one day can be left for your baby the next day. If you start pumping once a day about 3-4 weeks before going to work, you have time to practice with your pump and store a good reserve of milk. When you pump between breastfeedings at home, expect to get about half a feeding, which can be combined with other pumpings.

## QUESTION: How much milk should I leave for my baby?

**ANSWER:** For the average amount of milk needed at a feeding, see the chart below.

- Starting at about five weeks, most babies take the maximum 25-35 oz. per day. After that, daily milk intake stays stable until six months.
- After six months, when solid foods are added, milk intake goes down.
- Don't be surprised if your baby takes more milk from the bottle than you pump at a session. The more consistent flow of the bottle causes some babies to take more milk than needed.
- A slow-flow nipple can help prevent overfeeding and leave baby feeling full on less milk, making your life easier.
- If you're apart for 8-12 hours, most babies take about 10-15 oz. This is one-third to one-half of baby's daily intake. If baby takes more, try to find out why.

## AVERAGE FEEDING

Baby's Age	Average Intake Per Feeding	Average Intake Per 24 Hours
First week (after Day 4)	1-2 oz. (30-60 mL)	10-20 oz. (300-600 mL)
1 to 3 weeks	2-3 oz. (60-90 mL)	15-25 oz. (450-750 mL)
1-6 months	3-5 oz. (90-150 mL)	25-35 oz. (750-1050 mL)

## QUESTION: Once I'm back at work, how do I keep my milk production steady?

**ANSWER:** BEFORE YOU RETURN TO WORK:

- **Spend your time breastfeeding long and often.**
- **Count the number of times you breastfeed every day.**

This sets your milk production at "ample." Wait until you're back at work to worry about bottles and schedules.

This is your "magic number." Try to keep this daily number (breastfeedings plus pumpings) steady after you're back at work.

AFTER YOU RETURN TO WORK:

- **Remember: Drained breasts make milk faster. Full breasts make milk slower.** Every time your breasts feel full, this slows your milk production. The more times each day you drain your breasts well, the more milk you make. Don't go more than 8 hours, even at night, without breastfeeding or pumping.
- **Breastfeed often. Every breastfeeding reduces the amount of expressed milk needed.** From one to six months, the amount of milk your baby needs each 24 day stays steady. So if you breastfeed less when you're together, this increases baby's need for expressed milk when you're apart. In the morning, if you can, breastfeed once when you wake up and again just before you leave baby. Breastfeed as soon as you are reunited after work. If baby seems hungry just before you arrive, suggest giving as little milk as possible.
- **Pump as often as you can at work.** If needed, when home you can also pump after breastfeeding. (*Drained breasts make milk faster.*) If you can't pump often at work, keep milk production steady by breastfeeding more at home.
- **Keep in mind that "this too shall pass."** Most mothers stop pumping at work sometime between their baby's ninth and twelfth months, when their baby takes more solid foods and other drinks and needs less mother's milk.



*This is general information and does not replace the advice of your healthcare provider. If you have a problem you cannot solve quickly, seek help right away.*

*Every baby is different, if in doubt, contact your physician or other healthcare provider.*