

Pumping Tips for Returning to Work

Communication

- Your workplace must make reasonable accommodations for you to pump at work, so start talking with your manager before returning to work to come up with a plan. Let your manager know that you will need a quiet place to pump and how many breaks you will need.

Environment

- Familiarize yourself with where you will be pumping at work. Find a quiet area if possible and ensure an electrical outlet is available if your pump requires this.
- Ensure there is a sink with hot water and dish soap available for washing your pump parts after your pumping session.
- Ensure there is a fridge with available space to store your milk.
- Consider bringing some items to your pumping space to create a calm and comforting environment- this may include a picture of your baby, a cushion to relax on, etc. Feeling calm and relaxed aids in effective milk expression.

Prepare ahead of time by gathering the necessary supplies you will need to pump at work. These might include:

- Comfortable clothing that provides easy access for pumping (stretchy fabric, buttons down the front)
- Breast pump and pump parts (see below for further guidance)
- Breast pump bag or carrying case
- Hands free pumping bra
- Milk storage bags or containers
- Pen/sharpie for labeling your milk
- Gauze receiving blanket (to allow air flow) or drying rack for your pump parts
- Head phones for music
- Water bottle to remain hydrated
- Nourishing snacks

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Selecting a Breast pump

- A double electric breast pump offers the most efficiency when pumping milk.
- Pumping with a double electric pump offers strong stimulation to help maintain adequate supply.
- Pumping with a double electric pump usually takes about 15 mins whereas it can take close to 30mins or more with single pumps.
- Double electric pumps can range in cost from \$200-\$400 depending on brand and specific features.
- Some pharmacies may offer rentals of hospital-grade double electric pumps, however, these are often quite costly, especially if you require its use beyond a month.
- Purchasing or using a breast pump that has been previously used is not recommended unless it is hospital-grade. Other double electric (or single) pumps are considered single-use only as milk may flow back into the pump and lead to contamination.
- Consider purchasing extra sets of pumping parts to minimize time cleaning pump parts at work.

How often should I pump?

- Pump according to the age and stage of your baby. If your baby usually breastfeeds 1-2 times during the time you are at work, then plan to pump at those similar times. This will look different for different parents. A parent returning to work when their baby is less than 6 months will need to pump more often than a parent returning to work when their baby is 12 months or older.

Safe Storage of Breastmilk

- Freshly pumped milk is good for up to 4 days in the refrigerator, up to 3 months in the freezer compartment of your fridge and up to 12 months in a deep freezer. You can also store milk in a cooler bag filled with ice packs for 24 hours, if you do not have access to a fridge at work.