



You can keep breastfeeding when you go back to work or school

If your baby is not with you, you can pump your breast milk and save it to feed later, this will help your body keep making milk. If you are away from your baby for a long time and do not pump your milk, your body will make less milk.

Before you return

At least 2 weeks before you go back to work or school, start pumping your breast milk 1 to 2 times a day. This will help you learn how to use the breast pump. Put the milk you pump in the freezer to give to your baby when you are not there to breastfeed.

Once your baby is breastfeeding well, you can give them bottles that are filled with your breast milk. Your baby may need to practice drinking from a bottle. Have someone else give your baby a bottle the first few times. You may want to wait in a separate room. If you are nearby when your baby is practicing drinking from a bottle, your baby may want to breastfeed instead and get upset. Soon your baby will learn it is okay to drink breast milk from a bottle. This can take time.

Tell your childcare provider that you want your baby to have only breast milk until they are 6 months old.

- Share information on how to store your breast milk in the refrigerator or freezer.
- Teach them how to make bottles of your pumped breast milk.
- If your breast milk is frozen, teach them how to thaw and warm your breast milk safely.
- Tell them what times your baby eats and how much breast milk your baby needs at each feeding.
- Ask them to time your baby's last feeding so your baby is hungry and ready to breastfeed when you are with your baby again.

Be prepared

Tell your boss, your HR/personnel office, or your school advisor that you want to keep breastfeeding after you go back to work or school. Ask them to help you find a space to pump. This space should be safe, clean, and private. It cannot be a restroom.

Plan to use break time for pumping. Most women need 15-25 minutes each time they pump, but some women need more time. Ask about having longer breaks if needed.

Ask if you can work or attend school part-time for a little while, or if you can work or do classwork from home.

Ask if there is a refrigerator you can use to store the breast milk you pump when at work or school.

Tips for success

- If possible, arrange to have your baby brought to you or go visit your baby during a break to breastfeed.
- Ask your childcare provider for a comfortable place to breastfeed during drop-off, pick-up, or visits. Breastfeed right before you leave your baby and immediately when you are with your baby again.
- Breastfeed while you are home as much as you can, in the morning, at night, and on the weekend.
- Find your "Magic Number" which is the number of times your baby breastfeeds when you are with them for a full day. When you go to work or school, try to breastfeed or pump breast milk the same number of times as your "Magic Number" each day. This will help your body keep making milk.

