

# Returning to Work or School

## Enjoy the weeks at home

- Enjoy being with baby. Let go of concerns about returning to work.
- Focus on getting breastfeeding off to a good start. Learn hand expression, a useful skill.
- Plan to take as much maternity leave as possible.

## Plan your return to work

- Plan where and how often you can pump and store milk at work. Get tips from other moms.
- Negotiate with your employer for break time. Both Minnesota and Federal law protect a mother's right to pump breast milk at work. Breastfed babies mean fewer sick days.
- Find a day care provider who knows how to support breastfeeding families.
- Contact your medical insurance about coverage for a breast pump.
- Have someone besides mom introduce the bottle. Wait until baby is at least three weeks old.
- Practice pumping at least two weeks before you return to work. Practice once in the morning. Freeze any milk obtained. Don't worry if you do not get much at first.

## Keep Your Milk Supply

### **Breastfeed when you are with your baby. Reserve bottles for when you are at work.**

Breastfeed often at home and at night. Keep your supply stable by nursing frequently on your days off.

**If you cannot pump at work, continue breastfeeding at home.** Any amount of breast milk is worth giving to your baby! Frequent breastfeeding can help keep up your supply.

## Simplify Your Work Routine

**Plan a happy departure and homecoming.** Prepare everything the night before: what to wear, lunch, baby's bottles, pump kit, ice packs. Get to bed early and plan to wake up early. Breastfeed before you leave the house. Take advantage of any opportunities to breastfeed at daycare and again after work. Once home, relax and breastfeed before plunging into tasks. More breastfeeding, less pumping.

**Simplify pumping.** Plan to pump at least twice in an eight-hour work day, or about every three hours away from baby. Double pumping takes a lot less time. After pumping, just rinse and store in a zippered bag, then wash everything at home. Consider leaving a second pump kit at work.

## Reduce Stress

**Take time to nurture yourself.** Find time for a relaxing bath or a good book. Talk to friends. Discuss breastfeeding issues with supportive people. Find new breastfeeding friends.

**Ask for support.** Do not try to do everything by yourself. Talk with your family about how they can help take care of the baby...and the chores. Organize family life so that it works for you, too.



**Washington County Breastfeeding Coalition**

<http://www.livinghealthywc.org/Breastfeeding.html>

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