



Bloomington Hospital

Pumping Breastmilk

If you are planning to return to work or school, you are not alone. Following is information about breast pumps, and how to continue to breastfeed your baby after you return to work or school. This information is also helpful if you have any questions about using a breast pump at any time, or plan to exclusively pump.

Where can I get a breast pump?

Most insurance companies will now pay for a breast pump.

1. If you are on WIC, talk to WIC about getting a pump. Medicaid does cover a breast pump.
2. Contact your insurance company before you buy or register for a breast pump or any pumping related equipment.
3. Ask for specific information on exactly what make and model of breast pump your insurance covers.
4. Ask for specific information on how to obtain the pump. Many insurance companies require you to obtain a pump through a Durable Medical Equipment provider, and will NOT reimburse you if you buy one anywhere else. There are many Durable Medical Equipment (DME) providers. Two in our area are:
 - a. IU Health Home Medical Equipment, 1355 W. 2nd St. (Bloomfield Rd) in Bloomington, (812) 337-3268
 - b. Williams Brothers Healthcare Pharmacy, 574 S. Landmark Ave. in Bloomington, (812) 335-0000
 - c. If you are having trouble figuring out how to get a pump by talking to your insurance company, try talking to one of the DME providers.
5. Three reputable pump companies are Medela, Ameda and Hygeia. If your insurance company covers a double electric pump from one of these companies, you should be getting a pump you can use for going back to work/school. If your insurance company covers a different brand, or a hand pump only, you may need to purchase a different pump to have something that will be strong enough for a mother who is pumping and working or attending school. There are new pump brands on the market – do some research on your available options. Talk to a lactation consultant for more information.
6. It is generally not a good idea to use a pre-owned breast pump, though there are some designed for multiple users. Talk to a lactation consultant if you are thinking about using a pre-owned or borrowed pump.
7. You can purchase a breast pump at many baby stores and larger chain stores. Locally, IU Health Bloomington Hospital sells pumps and pumping supplies. The Riley Safety Store on Clarizz Boulevard sells parts AT COST for Medela pumps.
8. You can rent a breast pump instead of purchasing a pump. Rentals are available at IU Health Bloomington Hospital and may also be available at some pharmacies.
9. For more information, come to a Breastfeeding and Pumping class offered by IU Health Bloomington Hospital.

What can I do to get ready to go back to work or school?

1. The best way to prepare to go back to work or school, or to prepare to pump for any reason, is to establish breastfeeding well. The first month or so is a time of learning about how to breastfeed for you and your baby. Spend as much of the first month as possible just getting to know your baby and getting breastfeeding off to a good start.

2. Some moms do some pumping in the early weeks due to significant breast fullness. If you do any pumping in the first few weeks, save this milk. Breastmilk can be frozen safely for 6-12 months before being fed to your baby. Many families find the freezer bags made for breastmilk storage to be the easiest way to store milk in the freezer. You can also store in any sealed, food safe bottle or container.
3. If you can delay returning to work or school for 6-12 weeks postpartum, this will help you to recover from childbirth, to adjust to motherhood and to establish a good milk supply. Babies often go through growth spurts around 3 weeks (and around 6 weeks, 3 months, and 6 months), and feed more often. These spurts stimulate your breasts and ensure an abundant milk supply for the coming months. If you need to return to work or school before 6 weeks, you can absolutely continue to breastfeed! Talk to a lactation consultant about developing a personalized plan. The lactation consultants at the hospital can help you get started.
4. It is a good idea to wait until breastfeeding is well established, between 4 and 6 weeks or longer, to introduce an alternate feeding method, or any type of artificial nipple. The Kellymom.com website has a good section under "Breastfeeding" on "Pumping and Employment" with information, resources and links to video clips about how to feed your baby when you are separated/back at work.
5. Start pumping 2-3 weeks or more before you go back to work/school to stockpile some milk in your freezer. More information will follow on how to do this.
6. There are many considerations when choosing a caregiver for your baby. Some families find it easier to have a caregiver close to the mom's work/school. This may allow mom to go to the baby to breastfeed during the day at times. It is helpful to be able to breastfeed your baby wherever your baby is being cared for, when dropping off and picking up. Think about your options and what will work best for your family.
7. When introducing your baby to his/her caregiver(s), do so gradually if possible. Make sure your caregiver understands how to use baby-led bottle feeding and how to handle breastmilk.
8. There is state and federal legislation that supports your right to pump milk in the workplace for your baby. When you return to work/school, you will need a private place that is not a bathroom to pump your milk. Before you go back, do a "trial run" pumping session at work/school if possible.
9. If you can return to work/school on a Wednesday/Thursday, this may be easier than doing a full week for your first week back.
10. Reassess your work wardrobe. You will want easy access clothing for pumping ☺. Also, print fabrics hide the "whatever it was your baby wiped on you" and leaking breasts. White or lighter colors do not work as well for many moms.

How can I pump milk to get ready to go back to work or school, or to have milk available?

Before beginning your pumping career, it is important to understand several things:

1. Morning pumpings will yield the most milk, whether you're pumping at home or away.
2. The amount of milk yielded when you pump regularly during the day will decline as the day goes on. This is normal for most women.
3. Once you get to full milk production, at 3-4 weeks, you make about 1 ounce an hour.
 - a. Have realistic expectations for the volume of milk you will pump. If your baby ate an hour ago, you may only get one ounce and that is okay! When you are back at work/school, you will be pumping about every 3 hours, and will get more milk as your baby is not also breastfeeding during that time.
4. Your overall goal is to have some milk in your freezer as your back-up supply when you return to work/school.
 - a. When back at work/school, you will always give your baby your freshest milk first. Typically, what you pump on Monday will feed your baby on Tuesday, for example. It is helpful to have a back-up supply, as there are always times in life that are more challenging for one reason or another.

Pumping routine:

1. Many moms find it easy to periodically pump to store milk while breastfeeding. There are many ways to do this and below are some suggestions. You will find your own rhythm.
2. If your baby only nurses on one side and falls asleep or is not interested in taking the other side, especially in the morning, and the other side feels full, you can pump that side. This is a great way to pump every few days or so, and build up a stockpile.
3. If you are starting to pump a few weeks before returning to work, you might consider doing some pumping most days. The following routine may be helpful:
 - a. Nurse the baby well on one side between approximately 5 – 8 am. If the baby is still awake, pump the other side for about 10 minutes. Then, nurse the baby on the pumped side to further drain the breast.
 - b. Refrigerate the milk. Milk is good at room temperature for 4 hours, so you can leave it out until you are ready to get up for the day.
 - c. Later in the morning, about 1½ hours after a feeding or during the baby's nap, pump both breasts.
 - d. Chill this milk, add it to the milk already refrigerated and then freeze the container (do not add warm milk to chilled or frozen milk).
 - e. You have finished pumping for the day. For the remainder of the day, just take care of yourself and your baby.
4. Two to four ounces is a good amount of milk to put in one container to freeze. Breastfed babies typically do not take more than 4 ounces at any feeding.
5. If you are able to store 3-4 ounces a day for 2 weeks, you will have 42-56 ounces of milk in your freezer. This is a good stash, and if you collect more, that's great too. Remember though, you will give your freshest milk to your baby once you go back to work and use your freezer supply as back-up.
6. Milk is good in the refrigerator for about 1 week and in the freezer for 6-12 months.

How do I pump when I am away from my baby?

1. You will need to pump about every 3 hours while away, or more often if able.
2. Making milk is a hormonal process. Many moms find that having reminders of baby (picture, blanket, recorded sounds) while pumping increases the volume obtained. Using hand expression before pumping (30 seconds or less helps!) and breast massage and compression periodically during pumping yields more milk.
3. Pump for 10-15 minutes: pump at least 10 minutes, and continue pumping until the flow of milk ceases or slows dramatically.
4. A typical pumping session lasts 15-20 minutes with a double electric pump (time for cleaning).
5. The state and federal laws protect your right for time to pump at work.
6. It is important to not ever go more than 5-6 hours without pumping while away from your baby. This may change as your baby gets closer to a year old.

Start of Day:

Get ready. Allow 20 minutes to nurse just prior to leaving the house. Keep your work clothes fresh by slipping into them after nursing the baby if possible. If you have a long commute before dropping off your baby, nurse at the caregiver's location before going to work.

"Morning" Break (the routine is based on a daytime schedule, adjust as needed):

2 to 3 hours after arriving at work, pump both breasts simultaneously, using a double pump. Pump for approximately 10-15 minutes, then take 3-5 minutes to clean the pump kit parts. Refrigerate your pumped milk and return to your work area.

“Lunch” Break:

Pumping at lunch will be necessary for the first several months. This session may occasionally be skipped if the afternoon pumping is done slightly earlier and you are able to nurse right before and right after work. For the first several months back, the lunchtime pumping will help ensure the frequent emptying that will result in the stimulation of more milk production as well as a plentiful supply of milk.

“Afternoon” Break:

This pumping session will usually yield the least amount of milk but will provide the important stimulation needed to maintain your milk supply.

Extras:

If you work longer shifts, add in pumping sessions as needed. If you have a long commute, talk to a lactation consultant about how you can use your commute time to help with pumping.

If you are running short of pumped milk mid-week, additional pumping during the night will give you immediate access to more milk. This is helpful when your baby has experienced a growth spurt and the amount of breastmilk needed has increased. Pumping/nursing extra during the night for 2-3 nights will increase your milk production. Try to drink more fluids, and get more rest! Stress can have an impact on milk production, so take care of yourself too.

After you return to work, breastfeed your baby as much as possible in the evenings and on weekends. Your baby is the best “breast pump” to maintain your supply.

If you have any concerns, call a breastfeeding counselor or lactation consultant for support and help.

How do I clean my equipment?

1. Wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water before pumping.
2. After pumping, wash your pump kit, separating all the pieces including the white membrane. Use a clean container to wash them in, using dish soap. Rinse with cold water, wash with hot soapy water, rinse well and let air dry.
3. You can also use a cleaning wipe made for breast pump parts. You must use this right after you pump and allow the pieces to air dry (do not use this method if you can't air dry).
4. Some moms purchase extra pump kit pieces so they only wash them at home. This allows you to have a clean set for every session, but costs more.
5. If you can't clean your pump parts, put your pieces in the refrigerator (a Tupperware-type container works well) until the next pumping session. Some moms do this 1-2 times a day which saves a lot of time.
6. Tubing does not need to be cleaned unless it gets milk in it (rare). Tubing frequently gets moisture in it as you pump. Let your pump run for several minutes with your tubing attached, but no flange/connector parts attached, to clear the moisture in the tubing.
7. Ideally, once every 24 hours, run your pieces through the dishwasher on the top shelf, boil them for 10 minutes, or use a steam bag designed for breast pump pieces in the microwave. This sanitizes your pump parts.
8. Please see the manufacturer's guidelines that came with your pump for more information, and specifics related to your pump.

How do I store my breastmilk?

These storage guidelines can be found on La Leche League's website at:
<http://www.lalecheleague.org/faq/milkstorage.html>

This information is based on current research and applies to mothers who:

- Have healthy, full-term babies
- Are storing their milk for home use (as opposed to hospital use)
- Wash their hands before expressing
- Use containers that have been washed in hot, soapy water, and rinsed

Milk Storage Guidelines			
Where	Temperature	Time	Comments
At room temperature (fresh milk)	66° to 78° F (19° to 26° C)	4 hours (ideal) up to 6 hours (acceptable)*	Contents should be covered and kept as cool as possible; covering the container with a damp towel may keep milk cooler.
Insulated cooler bag	5° -39° F (-15° -4° C)	24 hours	Keep ice packs in constant contact with milk containers; limit opening cooler bag.
In a refrigerator	<39° F (<4° C)	72 hours (ideal) up to 8 days (acceptable)**	Collect in a very clean way to minimize spoilage. Store milk in the back of the main body of the refrigerator.
Freezer (compartment of refrigerator)	5° F (-15° C)	2 weeks	Store milk away from sides and toward the back of the freezer where temperature is most constant. Milk stored longer than these ranges is usually safe, but some of the fats break down over time.
Freezer (compartment of refrigerator with separate doors)	0° F (-18° C)	3 - 6 months	
Deep Freezer	-4° F (-20° C)	6 - 12 months	

Preferably, human milk should be refrigerated or chilled right after it is expressed. Acceptable guidelines for storing human milk are as follows.

* *The preference is to refrigerate or chill milk right after it is expressed.*

** *Eight days acceptable if collected in a very clean, careful way.*

All milk should be dated before storing. Storing milk in 2-4 ounce (60 to 120 ml) amounts may reduce waste. Refrigerated milk has more anti-infective properties than frozen milk. Cool fresh milk in the refrigerator before adding it to previously frozen milk.

Thawed Milk

Previously frozen milk that has been thawed can be kept in the refrigerator for up to 24 hours. While there is limited evidence to date that milk thawed for a few hours may be refrozen, this results in further breakdown of milk components and loss of antimicrobial activity. At this time, the accepted practice is not to refreeze thawed milk. While some mothers and caregivers reheat expressed milk that was left over and refrigerated after a previous feeding, there is no research on the safety of this practice. There is also no research about whether freshly expressed milk left unfinished at room temperature should be discarded, or can be saved for a short time (perhaps up to one hour as reported by some mothers and caregivers) to finish the feeding if the baby awakens from having fallen asleep or still appears hungry.

Research indicates that human milk has previously unrecognized properties that protect it from bacterial contamination. One study (Pardou 1994) found that after 8 days of refrigeration, some of the milk actually had lower bacterial levels than it did on the day it was expressed.

Expressed milk can be kept in a common refrigerator at the workplace or in a day care center. The US Centers for Disease Control and the US Occupational Safety and Health Administration agree that human milk is not among the body fluids that require special handling or storage in a separate container.

Keeping up your milk supply:

1. Pumping often is important. When milk is taken from the breasts, it raises the milk supply. Milk left in the breasts lowers the milk supply. You may get more if you wait longer between pumping sessions, but ultimately your supply will be lowered.
2. If you delay/miss a pumping session, pump as soon as you can and pump more often for the rest of the day. It's important to never go more than 6 hours without pumping while you are away from your baby.
3. If you have something to do at your next pumping time, pump sooner.
4. Get friends and family to help you. Pumping milk for your baby is something only you can do. You deserve help.
5. Do not worry if you make more than your baby needs. It is usually easy to reduce your milk supply. It is harder to increase a supply that is too small. Talk to a lactation consultant if you have concerns about your milk supply. You may really be making enough milk and need to adjust how your baby is being fed.
6. If you wait several hours, you will get more milk the next time you pump. BUT, during the hours the milk is collecting in the breasts, the breasts are learning to make less milk.
7. If you are exclusively pumping and not putting your baby to breast, you will need to pump at least 8 times a day so you will make enough milk. By the time your baby is one week old, you need to pump 24 ounces each day.
8. If you are exclusively pumping and not putting the baby to breast, pump first thing in the morning, every 1½ to 3 hours all day, and the last thing at night.

If you need to make more milk:

1. Pump more times while at work, or each day if exclusively pumping.
2. Use your hands to help express milk while you pump.
3. Hand express your milk sometimes before or after pumping (you can use your hands instead of a pump if you want to!).

4. Pump in the middle of the night.
5. Try a different pump (a rental pump is the “strongest” option).
6. Listen to relaxing music before and during pumping.
7. Take a nap before pumping at home.
8. If it is helpful, tape a picture of your baby to the pump.
9. Smell a piece of clothing your baby wore before you begin pumping.
10. Relax periodically by taking short catnaps.
11. Plan your days realistically.
12. Hold your baby skin-to-skin.
13. Drinking extra fluids does not make more milk. Drink to thirst.

Ask the lactation consultant about medications that can raise the milk supply.