



Parent's Guide to Breastfeeding and Child Care Centers

Did you know that you can continue to feed breastmilk to your baby even if you decide to go back to work or school? There are some things that can help make this time easier for you, your baby and your baby's child care provider. Feeding breastmilk to your baby is the best nutrition you can offer.

Breastfeeding and Work/School

Below are some helpful tips on how to continue to feed your baby breastmilk when you return to work or school.

- ✓ When you are at home, breastfeed your baby often; watch for hunger signs such as making sucking noises.
- ✓ If your child care center is close to your work or school, go to the center and breastfeed your baby.
- ✓ Express your breastmilk during your breaks at work with a breast pump. The milk can be used by your child care provider at another time. It is best to freeze or use newly expressed milk within 2 days. Have a cooler or refrigerator available to keep your milk cold while at work. Talk with your boss and let him/her know about your decision to provide your milk for your baby. If you feel uncomfortable talking with your boss about your need to pump during breaks, contact your health professional or your local health department to find someone who can help you with this.

Your Breastfeeding Baby and Child Care

Below are some helpful tips on how to prepare your baby and yourself for breastfeeding while he/she attends child care.

- ✓ Introduce one bottle once a day to your baby at least 2 weeks before starting child care. This is very important because you want your baby's transition to child care to go smoothly. If he/she has learned to drink from a bottle, this can decrease some common problems in the beginning. Practice time with a bottle can start after the mother's milk supply and the infant's feeding schedule is well established. This is usually around 4 to 6 weeks.

- ✓ It may take many tries before your baby will drink from a bottle. Try a position that is different from the way you normally breastfeed. Sometimes it is easier if someone other than the baby's mother gives the bottle – a father, grandmother or friend.
- ✓ Not all bottle nipples are alike! Some babies prefer one kind to another. It is important to buy bottle nipples that make the infant open his/her mouth wide and suck for the breastmilk. You do not want the nipples that have the infant only suck on the tip of the nipple – this may lead to sucking that could be uncomfortable for you and lower your milk production. A lactation consultant (someone who is an expert on breastfeeding) can help you find the best nipples or look at labels for “breastfeeding friendly” nipples.
- ✓ Do a few practice runs with your baby's child care center! Take your baby to the center for at least two short visits before you return to work or school. This will not only help decrease your nervousness, but allow your child care provider to practice feeding your baby.

Things You Can Do to Help Your Child Care Provider Care for Your Breastfeeding Baby:

Below are some helpful tips on how to help your baby's child care provider.

- ✓ Discuss with your child care provider whether you will be breastfeeding on site or sending pumped milk in a cooler with ice packs to the center.
- ✓ Based on your baby's home feeding schedule, write down how many feedings your baby is having each day. Make sure your provider has enough breastmilk to last throughout the day. The amount will be less in the beginning and will increase as your baby gets older.
- ✓ Fresh breastmilk is normally preferred by babies, but it is always good to have 1 to 2 feedings of frozen breastmilk available at the center in case your infant needs more food. These feedings can be stored in hard plastic bottles or plastic bags that are used to store breastmilk. Talk with your provider about how they store frozen breastmilk.
- ✓ Give your provider your breastmilk in hard plastic bottles or hard plastic bottles with liners for each feeding. Label all bottles with your baby's name and date that the breastmilk was pumped. This will decrease the chance of your breastmilk going to the wrong baby and will give the provider more time to care for your baby.
- ✓ Sometimes emergencies or late nights at school or work will occur. Let your provider know how you want your infant to be fed if this happens.
- ✓ Discuss with your provider if you would like him/her to use a pacifier to calm your baby or if there are other methods you would like used (e.g. rocking, specific toy)
- ✓ When your baby is ready to start solid foods, discuss with your provider about the amount and types of solid foods to offer your baby.

- ✓ Find out about your baby's day. How did he/she sleep? Did he/she eat well? How many wet or dirty diapers did he/she have? It is important for you to know this information. Many centers will share this with you each day with a written report card.
- ✓ Collect all of your baby's bottles at the end of the day and take them home with you, so they can be washed and sterilized.

Need Help Choosing a Breast Pump? Check out these website from La Leche League:

- ✓ How do I choose a breast pump?
 - www.lalecheleague.org/FAQ/pump.html
- ✓ How often will I have to pump when I go back to work?
 - www.lalecheleague.org/FAQ/pumpfreq.html
- ✓ I'm pumping my milk to feed my baby, but my supply is going down. What can I do?
 - www.lalecheleague.org/FAQ/pumpwork.html

Where can I find a Lactation Consultant?

- ✓ Contact your hospital that you delivered your baby at; they often have lactation consultants on staff.
- ✓ Contact your local health department.
- ✓ Check out the below website and entire in your zip code to find a lactation consultant in your area.
 - <http://gotwww.net/ilca> (International Lactation Consultant Association)