



# BREASTFEEDING

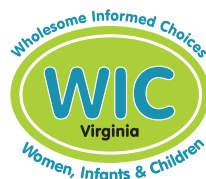
AND

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## RETURNING TO WORK OR SCHOOL



**VDH** VIRGINIA  
DEPARTMENT  
OF HEALTH



[VDHLiveWell.com/breastfeeding](https://VDHLiveWell.com/breastfeeding)

# BREASTFEEDING

## AND

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## RETURNING TO WORK OR SCHOOL

Moms who continue to breastfeed after returning to work or school find that breastfeeding gives them a special time to bond, which is even more important now that they spend more time apart. Feeding at the breast while together helps mom maintain a good milk supply.

Families, employers, and school administrators should know breastfed babies get sick less often, which means less time missed from work or school.

It's not all or nothing when it come to breastfeeding.

You have options and every sip counts!

### **ALWAYS FEED AT THE BREAST WHEN TOGETHER. WHEN APART YOU CAN:**

1. Consider going to the caregiver to breastfeed at lunch or during breaks.
2. Have the caregiver feed your expressed breastmilk.
3. Have the caregiver supplement with iron-fortified infant formula.



# INTRODUCTION

## PREPARING FOR WORK OR SCHOOL:

- You can successfully manage returning to work or school and provide breast milk for your baby with planning. While you are home with your baby, rest, relax, and breastfeed frequently. Talk to your WIC Breastfeeding Peer Counselor for ideas to help you reach your breastfeeding goals. You can do it, and WIC can help!
- If possible, stay home six weeks to build up a good milk supply.
- Two weeks before returning to work or school, begin expressing and storing milk once a day.
- Return to work or school mid week (as practice), before starting a full work week.



**Breastfeed at the caregiver's  
before going to work.**

## CHILDCARE:

- Find a caregiver who is breastfeeding-friendly.
- Consider finding a caregiver close to work or school.
- Inform the caregiver that it is normal for breast milk to vary in looks, commonly it can be thin or watery and it can be blue or yellow in color.
- Remind the caregiver not to microwave or boil breast milk.
- Discuss paced bottle feeding.
- Tell the caregiver not to feed your baby right before you pick her up so that you can breastfeed right after work.

## TALK TO YOUR EMPLOYER/SCHOOL BEFORE YOU RETURN ABOUT:

- A private place to pump or breastfeed (a space with a chair, an outlet for power, and a locking door at the very least).
- At least two 15 minute breaks per day.

# HELPFUL HINTS

## BEFORE EXPRESSING:

- Wash your hands.
- Wash your collection cup and storage bottles in hot soapy water or in the dishwasher. Air dry.
- Relax in a quiet place.
- Having a piece of clothing or a blanket that smells like baby is helpful, as well as photos or video of baby.
- Massage your breasts in a circular pattern. Then, lightly stroke your breasts from the outer edges toward the nipple.
- Place a warm washcloth on your breast. This will help your milk letdown.



## WHILE PUMPING:

- Pump both breasts at the same time.
- Center pump flanges over nipples.
- Always start on minimum suction and then increase to comfort.
- Milk flow will change throughout each pumping session. It will drip slowly at first, then may squirt forcefully after let down.
- When milk flow slows down, switch to pumping one side at a time. Massage the breast as you are pumping. Switch sides and repeat.



## THINGS TO KNOW:

- Pumping both breasts at the same time will result in more milk collected.
- Some women find it easy to breastfeed their baby on one breast while expressing milk from the other.
- Many moms find that they have more milk in the morning.
- Plan to pump at least once for every feeding baby will need.
- You can use a breast pump or hand express. To collect the most milk, begin each pumping session with a pump and end with hand expression.

# COLLECTING YOUR MILK

## WHY EXPRESS YOUR MILK?

- To supply breast milk for your baby while you are apart.
- To prevent or relieve engorgement.
- To increase milk supply.



## WHAT TO EXPECT?

- Expect to collect small amounts.
- When first starting to pump, it is **NORMAL** to get only a few drops.
- The more you express, the more milk you will make.

## WHEN TO EXPRESS?

- Begin by expressing once a day.
- Express about one hour after you have breastfed the baby.
- Some mothers find the best time to express is when they wake up after their longest sleep period.

# EXPRESSING YOUR MILK

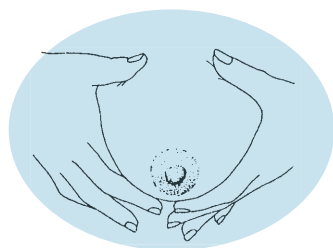
## HAND EXPRESSION

### GET READY

- Find a private place where you feel comfortable.
- Wash your hands.

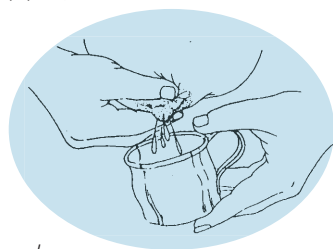
### MASSAGE YOUR BREASTS

- Breast massage helps your milk come out.
- Massage for at least two minutes.
- Put one hand underneath your breast for support.
- Gently rub your breast with other hand using small circular motions.
- Move around the breast, working from your chest toward your nipple.
- Repeat on your other breast.



### EXPRESS YOUR MILK

- Place your fingers and thumbs about one inch behind the areola (darker area around the nipple).
- Gently lift; push breast back toward your chest, press fingers together and release.
- It is a rolling motion. Do this several times until your milk begins to flow into the cup.
- Continue around your breast.
- A simple tip to remember: *Press, compress, release.*

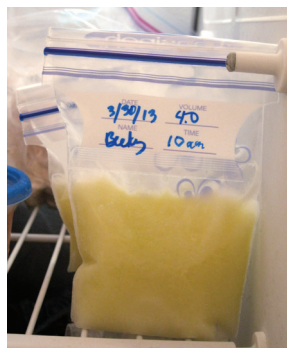




# BREAST MILK STORAGE GUIDELINES

## COLLECTION AND STORAGE

- Wash your hands. Wash bottles and pumping supplies in hot soapy water or in the dishwasher.\*
- Breast milk can be stored in clean glass or BPA-free\*\* plastic bottles with tight fitting lids or milk storage bags, put the collection date on the container.
- If you are giving the milk to your childcare provider, put your child's name on the container and talk to your childcare provider about storage guidelines for breast milk.
- When traveling to and from work or school, store your pumped/expressed milk in an insulated cooler bag with frozen ice packs.
- Refer to the Breast Milk Storage Guidelines chart for storage time and temperatures of breast milk. (See page 8)



## NOTE:

- Disposable bottle liners (not labeled for storage) and other plastic storage bags should not be used to store breast milk.
- Store milk on the shelves at the back of the refrigerator, not on the door.

\*Check the manufacture information on whether pump parts can be washed in the dishwasher.

\*\* Bottles with the recycle symbol number 7 indicates that the container may be made of BPA-containing plastic.

# BREAST MILK STORAGE GUIDELINES

## **FREEZING BREAST MILK**

- Freeze milk in breastmilk freezer bags in small batches of 2 to 4 ounces.
- Leave an inch or so of space at the top of the container because milk will expand as it freezes.
- Store milk in the back of the freezer. Don't store milk on the shelves of the freezer door.
- Chill freshly pumped milk before adding it to frozen milk.



## **THAWING AND WARMING MILK**

- Use the oldest stored milk first. Practice FIFO (first in, first out).
- Breast milk does not need to be warmed. It can be served room temperature or cold.
- Gently swirl the milk (don't shake it) to mix it, as it is normal for breast milk to separate.
- Note – If you do warm your milk, test the milk temperature by dropping some on your wrist. It should be comfortably warm.
- Milk may be thawed in several ways, (1) in the refrigerator overnight, (2) under running warm water or (3) in a container of warm water.
- Thawed milk should be used within one hour after it is thawed or placed in the refrigerator.
- Milk thawed in the refrigerator should be used within one day (24 hours) after it is thawed.
- Discard unused milk left in the bottle within 1-2 hours after the baby is finished feeding.

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## **NOTE:**

- Do not microwave breast milk. Microwaving breaks down nutrients and creates hot spots, which can burn your baby's mouth.
- Never refreeze thawed breast milk even if it had been refrigerated.





# BREAST MILK STORAGE GUIDELINES

**THESE GUIDELINES ARE FOR HEALTHY FULL TERM BABIES\*.  
GUIDELINES ARE FOR HOME USE ONLY AND NOT FOR  
HOSPITAL USE.**

	Counter Top or Table	Refrigerator	Freezer with Separate Door	Deep Freezer
Storage Temperatures *	Up to 77°F (25° C)	At or below 40°F (4° C)	At or below 0°F (-18° C)	At or below -4°F (-20 C)
Freshly Pumped/ Expressed Breast milk	Up to 4 hours	Up to 4 days	Up to 6 months	Up to 12 months
Thawed Breast Milk	1-2 hours	Up to 1 day (24 hours)	Never re-freeze thawed breast milk	

\* Storage times and temperatures may vary for premature or sick babies.  
Check with your health care provider.

CDC Breast Milk Storage Guidelines accessed at:  
[www.cdc.gov/breastfeeding/recommendations/handling\\_breastmilk.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/breastfeeding/recommendations/handling_breastmilk.htm)

United States Department of Agriculture: <https://lovingsupport.fns.usda.gov/>

# FEEDING TIPS

## TIPS FOR MOMS

- Leaking? Press firmly against nipples for 1 to 2 minutes.
- Use breast pads to protect clothes.
- Wear patterned or print tops or vests that button in the front.
- Milk supply low? Breastfeed or express every 2 to 3 hours on days off or when you are home to increase milk.
- Baby refusing a feeding at caregivers? Baby may “cluster feed” or breastfeed more often while together, every 1 to 2 hours.

## PREPARING FOR THE CAREGIVER

- The first few times will be a “learning” feeding.
- Baby can be bottle fed with a slow flow nipple, a cup, or spoon. Try introducing one week before the planned separation.
- Run warm water over bottle nipple.
- Have someone other than mom offer the feeding.
- Wrap baby in a piece of mom’s clothing.
- Try offering the feeding when baby is still sleepy or awake and content.
- Some babies need help adjusting. The feed may be offered while rocking, walking, or swaying. You can also try different positions.
- Plan to leave 1-1.5 oz. of expressed milk for every hour that you are away. Breast milk needs are basically the same, regardless of your baby’s age. Talk to your provider for more guidance.



# SAMPLE SCHEDULE

Time	Mom	Caregiver
6 AM	Breastfeed baby (put baby back to bed while you get ready)	
7:30 AM	Breastfeed at caregiver as soon as you arrive	
10:30 AM	Pump during break	Caregiver feeds baby expressed milk
12:30 PM	Pump during lunch or go to baby and breastfeed	Caregiver feeds baby expressed milk or breastfeed
3 PM	Pump during break	Caregiver feeds baby expressed milk
5 PM	Breastfeed as soon as you get to caregiver location	
Other times	Breastfeed, Breastfeed, Breastfeed	

You know your schedule best. Make a plan that works for you!





# NOTES/NOTAS

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For more information, please call your local WIC office

**1-888-942-3663**

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