



Working and Breastfeeding

It is possible to continue to breastfeed after you return to work or study. Many women do this successfully. Breastmilk is **IMPORTANT** for your baby. If you are planning to return to work, consider that even breastfeeding for a short time, or partial breastfeeding, is better for your baby than no breastfeeding at all.

Ways that you can work and breastfeed:

Young baby (6 weeks to 6 months) — 3 possible options

- 1) Go to your baby for each feed
 - have the baby at work with you
 - your carer could bring the baby to you or telephone you to come
 - arrange child care close to your work
- 2) When you are at work you can leave your own milk in a bottle or cup for the carer to feed your baby (see Fact Sheets *How to Express Breastmilk* and *How to Store Breastmilk*). You will need to leave enough for at least two feeds. Feed your baby just before you leave and breastfeed as soon as you come home.

While you are at work, you will probably need to express your milk once or twice. This depends on how long you are at work and how full your breasts feel. You can do this in your breaks and keep the milk for the next day's feed. Store in a refrigerator on insulated container.
- 3) Arrange for your baby to have bottles of artificial baby milk when you are at work. When you are with your baby, breastfeed frequently.

Baby over 6 months

- Continue to leave expressed milk and other suitable food.
- Partially wean your baby. Your baby has baby milk suitable for his age and family foods when you are away and breastfeeds when you're at home.

Common Questions

1. Doesn't breastfeeding mean my baby won't take a bottle?

Some mothers worry that their breastfed baby will not feed from a bottle and that this is going to be a problem when they go back to work.

- Try to get your baby used to taking the bottle occasionally. After he is a few weeks of age, give him some expressed breastmilk in a bottle or cup. Try once or twice a week.
- Ask someone else to give the bottles, while you stay out of the baby's sight. If possible, get the person who will be looking after the baby to give the bottle. This is often the best way for baby to get used to the changes.

- Some mothers find it easier to teach their babies to drink from a cup than a bottle. For small babies, use an ordinary cup or glass with a fine rim. Older babies (6 months or more) like to drink from other baby cups available in shops.

2. Isn't it more difficult to leave a breastfed baby?

- Breastfed babies are no more difficult to leave than bottle-fed babies.
- Breastfed babies are all individuals. However you can make it easier to leave your baby by gradually increasing the time you are away and leaving him with the same familiar carers.

Further Reading

- Fact Sheet *How to Express Breastmilk*
- Fact Sheet *How to Store Breastmilk*

For more information contact your Child Health Centre or the Australian Breastfeeding Association (ABA).

Breastfeeding Helpline
1800 mum 2 mum

1800 686 268

The ABA Breastfeeding Helpline is available 7 days a week and is staffed by trained volunteer breastfeeding counsellors.

If you need help making phone calls in English, ring the Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS) on 131 450.

Email counselling and more information is available at www.breastfeeding.asn.au