



Breastfeeding: How to Pump Your Breast Milk

When should I start to pump my breasts?

If you will be pumping your breasts when you return to work or school, practice for 1 or 2 weeks beforehand. You can try pumping just after your baby eats or you can pump your breasts between feedings. Practicing at home will help you learn how your pump works. During this time, try to collect and store breast milk to be fed to your baby when you return to work.

How much milk will I get when I pump?

You may not get much milk when you first start pumping. But, the more you pump the more your body makes! After a few days of regular pumping, your breasts will begin to make more milk. Drink lots of fluids to stay hydrated, try by drinking water, juice or milk each time you pump (which will help your milk supply).

How long should I pump each time?

Pumping your breasts takes about the same time as breastfeeding, but with practice and a good pump, you can pump your breasts in as little as 10 to 15 minutes. While you are at work or school, try to pump as often as your baby usually feeds or for about 15 minutes every few hours. To keep up your milk supply, give your baby extra feedings when you are together. You can also pump right after your baby feeds, which will help your breasts make more milk.

What you need to pump your breasts:

- Breast pump— you can get one through WIC, ask your Caseworker for details.
- A place to pump! Try working on this with your boss or school officials before your return.
- A small cooler w/ice pack (if you cant access a refrigerator). You can also store breast milk at room temperature for up to 8 hours. (See *Storing Your Breast milk* handout)
- Milk storage containers, enough for the day.
- An extra top to wear in case your breasts leak.
- Clothing that makes it easier to get to your breasts.
- A shawl or small blanket for privacy if you need to pump in a common area.
- A water bottle & healthy snacks, you will need the extra calories.
- A pillow for supporting your arm while you pump your breasts (optional).
- A “do not disturb” sign if you are pumping in a shared space.
- A picture or something that reminds you of baby, stimulates the let-down reflex.