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Balancing breastfeeding and work



Health and
Aged Care



THE UNIVERSITY
OF ADELAIDE



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A DELTA COMPANY



Important Information
for Workplaces

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INTRODUCTION

This booklet provides information for employers and employees on how and why women should be encouraged to breastfeed and to continue to breastfeed when they return to work. It describes a range of options to enable breastfeeding to be combined with work. It gives information to help employers and employee representatives negotiate appropriate agreements to support women who wish to combine breastfeeding and work. It makes clear that efforts to support staff who are breastfeeding can not only benefit employees but also provide direct and indirect benefits to their workplaces.

In addition, there is information in this booklet that can be photocopied and distributed to employees who would like to know how to successfully balance breastfeeding and work.

Most people in Australia believe that breastfeeding is best for the baby. This view is supported by the World Health Organisation recommendation that babies be exclusively breastfed from birth to 4-6 months and then partially breastfed up to 2 years and beyond (WHO/UNICEF 1990). While about 80% of Australian babies are breastfed at birth, only 40% of babies are still being breastfed at 6 months (ABS 1997). Studies have shown that returning to work is a major reason for early weaning (Visness 1997, Duckett 1992, Kurinij 1989).

The Australian Government has made a commitment through its National Breastfeeding Strategy to encourage breastfeeding awareness, with the aim of increasing Australia's rate of breastfeeding. This strategy takes a multi-faceted approach that includes producing and distributing this information kit.

The Department of Public Health at the University of Adelaide, the SA Employers' Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the ACTU, the Work and Family Unit in the Department of Employment, Workplace Relations and Small Business (DEWRSB), Nursing Mothers' Association of Australia (NMAA) and employer and employee representatives have contributed to the development of this kit to ensure it provides useful information concerning balancing breastfeeding and work.

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SECTION 1 - For Employers

This section provides information on how and why supporting breastfeeding in the workplace is worthwhile. It explains the importance of breastfeeding for employers and workplaces, mothers and their babies, as well as the whole community and presents case studies depicting the numerous ways in which balancing breastfeeding and work has been achieved. This section can be used to initiate discussion between the employer and the employee representative on how to make a workplace Breastfeeding Friendly.

BALANCING BREASTFEEDING AND WORK - THE BENEFITS

There are various people who will benefit from a mother combining breastfeeding and work. The baby benefits, because of the superior nature of breastmilk and the protection from infection. The mother benefits because the baby is healthier and because of the overall convenience of breastfeeding, including cost. But what many people do not realise is that the employer and the whole community also benefit significantly.

It is well established from research conducted in Australia and elsewhere that breastfeeding protects babies from many illnesses and infections and that sick babies are more likely to be bottle fed than breastfed (Ball 1999, Lawrence 1997, Campbell 1996). Furthermore, parental absenteeism increases as infant illness rates increase, and by contrast parental attendance improves with healthier infants (Cohen 1995). Thus breastfeeding can be seen as a contributor to lowering parental absenteeism due to infant illness.

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Benefits for Employers.

Reduced absenteeism

Since breastfed babies are healthier, there will be reduced absenteeism to care for a sick baby, fewer trips to the doctor, and all the other productivity-reducing effects of having a sick baby (Cohen 1995). There will be increased productivity in the workplace in terms of parental productivity and where parental absenteeism disrupts team workflow.

Increased productivity

Employers who support breastfeeding mothers enhance employer-employee relations resulting in a more motivated, committed, and productive workforce (Work and Family Unit 1998).

Lower staff turnover

There are reduced recruitment costs due to lower staff turnover or loss of skilled workers as mothers are more likely to return, or return sooner, from maternity leave.

Reduced training costs

There is also a higher financial return to the employer's investment in on-the-job and other training due to earlier return from maternity leave or improved staff retention. Employees retain their work skills and thus require less retraining (Work and Family Unit 1998).

Positive corporate image

There will be a more cost-effective recruiting capacity due to a 'good employer' reputation and a positive corporate image, resulting in greater customer loyalty, public goodwill towards the workplace and higher shareholder value.

Some costs

There are a number of considerations for the employer, including the direct and indirect costs of any paid or unpaid lactation breaks and the costs of any specific facilities provided to breastfeeding mothers for expressing and storing breastmilk in the workplace.

It is worth remembering, however, that there are financial benefits to workplaces by supporting breastfeeding employees that can be both direct and indirect. These arise because of the well-established and substantial health benefits of breastfeeding as well as the potential gains from creating a Family Friendly Workplace (Work and Family Unit 1999).

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Benefits for Mothers

Healthier baby

There are many benefits to the mother and the baby from balancing work and breastfeeding. With a healthy baby, mothers have fewer trips to the doctor or sleepless nights tending a sick baby and spend less on health care. This means they are more productive and happier at work.

Less time off work

A healthy breastfed baby means the parents are less likely to be absent from work due to illness of the baby and are better able to concentrate on their work knowing their baby is well (Cohen 1995).

Maintain job skills

Mothers are more likely to return to work and return earlier if breastfeeding is supported at the workplace. This means mothers maintain their job skills.

Special bonding

Breastfeeding promotes bonding between mother and baby. Combining breastfeeding and work allows for the maintenance of the special mother/baby relationship.

Healthy mother

Mothers who breastfeed have a reduced risk of developing health problems such as ovarian cancer, pre-menopausal breast cancer, and osteoporosis (Labbok 1999).

Free baby food

Breastfeeding provides a positive economic advantage for families. Formula can cost up to \$1,200 a year. Breastmilk is free. The health care costs of a formula fed baby are approximately twice the cost of formula for that period. The health care costs of a breastfed baby are much less.

Benefits for Babies

Less illness

Babies who are fed their mother's milk have lower incidence of many serious diseases, including gastro-intestinal upsets, allergies and asthma, juvenile diabetes, and both respiratory and urinary tract infections (Lawrence 1997).

Perfect food

For a long time it was thought that formula was just as good as breastmilk but it is now known that this is not so. Breastmilk contains important ingredients that are not found in any formula. This makes it the perfect food to help baby grow, develop and learn in the best possible way (Walker 1993).

More easily digested

Breastmilk is more easily digested than formula. Breastfed babies are rarely constipated and are less likely to get diarrhoea (Lawrence 1997).

Helps bonding

When breastfeeding, a mother releases relaxing hormones that help her bond with her baby (Cafarella 1996).

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Benefits for the Community

Reduced health care costs

Breastfeeding reduces the cost of preventable illnesses such as gastrointestinal upsets, allergies and asthma, juvenile diabetes, and both respiratory and urinary tract infections (Lawrence 1997).

Reduced ecological damage

As well as this, research shows that breastfeeding reduces ecological damage through reduced production, packaging, distribution and disposal of breastmilk substitutes and containers (Radford 1992).

Economic value

It is also worth noting that recent studies have shown that breastmilk has economic value. One study suggests the amount of breastmilk that can be produced annually in Australia if all babies are breastfed is worth over \$1 billion based on the price of expressed breastmilk (Smith 1999).

Healthier workforce

There are also long-term benefits to employers and to the whole community from having a healthier workforce and keeping health costs and health insurance costs down. In the short term it will result in healthier babies. In the long term it will result in a workforce where more employees have been breastfed and have gained the long term benefits of this form of infant feeding.



WHAT EMPLOYERS AND WORKPLACES CAN DO TO SUPPORT BREASTFEEDING

For breastfeeding to be maintained, most mothers need to either breastfeed their baby or express their breastmilk if separated from their baby.

There are three main things an employer can do to support women who want to combine breastfeeding and work. These are in the areas of policy, implementation and provision of facilities. For organisations covered by the *Equal Opportunity for Women in the Workplace Act 1999*, this could be done in the context of your equal opportunity program.

Develop a policy

Consider developing a breastfeeding and workplace policy that suits the needs of your employees and workplace conditions. This booklet contains a sample policy statement that may help.

Awareness of policy

Once a policy has been adopted ensure all are aware of this policy and what it means for them.

Family Friendly Practices

Consider incorporating this policy in other family friendly workplace agreements. See the resources section for more information.

Implementation

Talk to employees

Ensure women are aware of the policy before or as they go on maternity leave and when they return to work following maternity leave. Consider contacting them before they return to work to discuss their options and preferences.

Offer options

Consider offering mothers flexible return to work options e.g. returning initially to part-time or reduced hours before going full-time.

Lactation breaks

Lactation breaks may need to be negotiated, including the frequency and duration of breaks, and whether they are paid or unpaid. Negotiations between an employer and employee or employee representative will need to take into account both the employee's and the organisation's needs.

Flexible hours

Where possible consider allowing working from home, part-time, job sharing or flexi-time so mothers can more easily combine their breastfeeding with their work commitments

Provide information

Consider providing information to all about the benefits of breastfeeding so the workplace is supportive of breastfeeding. Consider providing breastfeeding mothers access to breastfeeding support services.

Facilities for expressing breastmilk or breastfeeding

Consider providing some or all of the following.

Clean private room

A clean, hygienic and private area in which women can express breastmilk or breastfeed their baby e.g. the First Aid Room. It does not necessarily involve a lot of expense.

Storage area

Secure storage facilities for both breastmilk (refrigerator/freezer) and pumping equipment.

Comfortable chair

A comfortable chair to use while expressing or breastfeeding.

Table

A table to support the breast pump and any other equipment.

Washing facilities

Washing facilities for washing hands and equipment.

Power point

A power point for mothers who use an electric breast pump.



BALANCING BREASTFEEDING AND WORK: *Stories from around Australia*

The following stories have been compiled from case studies from the Corporate Work and Family Awards (awarded by the Department of Employment, Workplace Relations and Small Business, in sponsorship with the Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the Council for Equal Opportunity and Employment, www.dewrsb.gov.au), the Nursing Mothers' Association of Australia newsletters and from consultations with mothers in the workforce. They show a diversity of approaches that support breastfeeding.

Virginia took 12 months maternity leave after the birth of each of her 2 daughters so that she could care for and breastfeed her children. When she returned to work, she breastfed just before leaving home for work and immediately upon her return. She breastfed each daughter for 2 years.

The human resource manager of an electrical manufacturing plant compiled a list of child care centres nearby the workplace. This list is made available to mothers going on maternity leave. Mothers are allowed to take time out to go to breastfeed their child at these nearby centres.

A local council allows employee mothers to go home to breastfeed since most live close by.

One large financial institution implemented a pregnancy and return to work program that has resulted in a 40% increase in return to work saving them between \$50,000 and \$150,000 per woman.

Jasmin organised a regular parking spot at work for her caregiver to bring her baby to her for breastfeeds.

A major bank offers part-time, flexitime, job sharing and home-based work as options for continued employment following maternity leave.

Jenny's mother accompanied Jenny and her 3 month old son, Jack, when she attended a seven-day residential training course in another state so that she could look after Jack while Jenny attended lectures. Jack was able to be breastfed between lectures throughout the course.

A university campus allows staff and students to use the First Aid Room to feed their babies or to express and store breastmilk. This is not only making it much easier for these mothers, but also promotes breastfeeding among today's students, who are tomorrow's professionals.

Mary chose child care nearby her work so that she could go there during her lunch break to breastfeed her son while she had lunch. It also meant she could breastfeed just before going to work and immediately after finishing work before going home.

A motor vehicle company has developed a booklet for employees outlining their family friendly practices and entitlements such as considering home-based work where it is a viable and practical option, and the use of the first-aid room for expressing and storing breastmilk.

Roslyn, a member of the defence forces, was able to go home (500 metres from the office) to breastfeed her baby who was being cared for at home. She often pumped from one breast while her baby breastfed from the other. Roslyn also expressed at night if her breasts became uncomfortable. In this way she stockpiled breastmilk in preparation for 24-hour guard duty.

Kerry returned to full-time work 10 weeks after her daughter, Caitlin was born. Caitlin was cared for by either her father (who worked part-time) or her grandmother who have both developed a very strong bond with Caitlin. Kerry expressed breastmilk at least three times each day using empty offices or the first aid room and was able to provide enough breastmilk so that Caitlin was exclusively breastfed for five and a half months and continues to breastfeed at 26 months.

A banking corporation has set up three on-site child care centres and implemented several family friendly policies including flexible working arrangements and 6 weeks paid maternity leave. The results - an increase in return to work rates from maternity leave from 32% to 53% over two years, and a productivity increase of 15% due to home-based work arrangements.

Catherine's employer provided her with office equipment so she could work from home as much as possible following the birth of her son, Guy. When Catherine does go into work, Guy comes with her and appropriate care arrangements are made for these periods.

Tracey was surprised to find how supportive her employer was when she spoke to him about having breastfeeding breaks. She was able to go to breastfeed her child at the child care centre nearby.

A petroleum organisation has implemented flexible work practices, established a mothers' breastfeeding room for breastfeeding employees, an information program of information kits and seminars on family and other issues, and family leave. This has resulted in an increase in return to work rates from maternity leave from 42% to 72% in one year, and a high level of use of the information kits and seminars.

Sharon, a production manager for a clothing company returned to work three weeks after the birth of her son. She was able to bring her baby to work until he was 5 months old and so continued to breastfeed him during working hours. When he went to child care, Sharon was able to take time out to express milk for her baby. He was breastfed for 18 months. Her second child, now 8 months, still goes to work with Sharon and is breastfed.

A large hospital has developed and implemented a breastfeeding policy which provides breastfeeding staff with lactation breaks and a facility for expressing and storing breastmilk. Staff work the time taken for lactation breaks above their regular working day.

RESOURCES: *Where to go for more information and help*



Australia's National Breastfeeding Strategy is a multi-faceted approach to increasing breastfeeding rates in Australia. This strategy provides breastfeeding information and strategies in many areas including employer support. More information can be located on:

<http://www.health.gov.au/pubhlth/strateg/brfeed/>

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The ACTU is the peak council and national centre representing the Australian workforce. It has produced a booklet *Achieving mother friendly workplaces*.

Telephone: 1300 362 223

<http://www.actu.asn.au/>

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The Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry is the peak council for Australian businesses.

Telephone: (02) 6273 2311

<http://www.acci.asn.au/>

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The Australian Industrial Relations Commission facilitates agreement making between employers and employees or organisations of employees about wages and conditions of employment.

Contact numbers

ACT	(02) 6247 9333
Northern Territory	(08) 8944 3131
NSW	(02) 9332 0666
Queensland	(07) 3227 6666
South Australia	(08) 8207 0900
Tasmania	(03) 6232 1753
Victoria	(03) 9653 8200
Western Australia	(08) 9278 8800

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Breastpumps

The Nursing Mothers' Association of Australia (NMAA) hires out electric breastpumps and sells hand breastpumps. See State contact numbers under NMAA. Most pharmacies sell hand or battery operated breastpumps. Some also hire out electric breastpumps. Consult your local yellow pages for your nearest pharmacy.

Child Care Centres

For information about child care centres near the workplace, see the local yellow telephone pages. Child care centres may be listed by locality as well as name.

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Equal Opportunity for Women in the Workplace Agency

(formerly the Affirmative Action Agency) was established to administer the *Equal Opportunity for Women in the Workplace Act 1999*.

Telephone (02) 8255 6300

<http://www.eeo.gov.au/index.html>

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The Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission provides information about anti-discrimination and equal opportunity legislation.

National contact 1300 369 711

<http://www.hreoc.gov.au>

Information about State and Territory anti-discrimination and equal opportunity legislation is available from the following:

ACT	Human Rights Office	02 6207 0576
Northern Territory	Anti-Discrimination Commission	1800 813 846
New South Wales	Anti-discrimination Board	1800 670 812
Queensland	Anti-Discrimination Commission	1300 130 670
South Australia	Equal Opportunity Commission	1800 188 163
Victoria	Equal Opportunity Commission	1800 134 142
Tasmania	Office of the Anti-Discrimination Commissioner	1800 001 222
Western Australia	Equal Opportunity Commission	1800 198 149

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The Nursing Mothers' Association of Australia (NMAA) is a national breastfeeding support organisation that provides a range of services including a 24 helpline, plus books, booklets and audio-visual items on all aspects of breastfeeding. NMAA literature specific to combining breastfeeding and work include:

Mother Friendly Workplace Initiative Information Sheet

The Caregiver's Guide to the Breastfed Baby

Expression and Storing Breastmilk

Breastfeeding, women and work

Telephone: NMAA Headquarters (03) 9885 0855

<http://www.nmaa.asn.au/>

NMAA 24 hour breastfeeding helplines

ACT and South-NSW	(02) 6258 8928
Northern Territory	(08) 8988 4616
NSW	(02) 9639 8686
Queensland	(07) 3844 8977
South Australia	(08) 8411 0050
Tasmania	(03) 6223 2609
Victoria	(03) 9885 0653
Western Australia	(08) 9309 5393

You can also look under Nursing Mothers' Association of Australia in your local White Pages.

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The Office of the Employment Advocate provides assistance and advice to employers and employees on the Workplace Relations Act, especially on making Australian Workplace Agreements.

Telephone: 1300 366 632

<http://www.oea.gov.au/>

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OSIRIS is an electronic database that contains the full text of Australian Federal Awards, Agreements, Decisions, Variations and Decision Summaries. It can provide you with rates of pay and conditions of employment.

<http://www.osiris.gov.au>

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WageLine is a telephone inquiry service providing information and advice on wages and conditions of employment.

New South Wales - Victoria - Tasmania -

Australian Capital Territory - Northern Territory 1300 363 264

Queensland 1300 369 945

Western Australia 1300 655 266

South Australia 1300 365 255

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The Work and Family Unit in the Department of Employment, Workplace Relations and Small Business, produces a series of fact sheets and guides dealing with a wide range of work and family issues. It has produced a *Guide to combining Breastfeeding and Employment*, available from the Work and Family Unit for \$5 or can be downloaded from the internet.

GPO Box 9879

Canberra City ACT 2601

Telephone: (02) 6121 7742

<http://www.dewrsb.gov.au>

A SAMPLE BREASTFEEDING POLICY STATEMENT FOR WORKPLACES

This breastfeeding policy statement is a guide to the issues that need to be considered in writing a workplace breastfeeding policy. It is not intended to prescribe the policies that an organisation should have in place.

Your organisation will need to determine a policy to suit its needs.

RECOMMENDED

Breastfeeding Policy Statement for Workplaces

This organisation, recognises the importance of breastfeeding for both mother and baby and supports, protects and promotes breastfeeding.

This organisation provides facilities and the support necessary to enable mothers in their employment to balance breastfeeding with their work.

Provision of facilities and support includes:

- lactation breaks. There is flexibility for mothers to take lactation breaks during their workday. These can be negotiated between the mother (or her employee representative) and her supervisor.
- a clean, private room with power point, lockable door, comfortable chair, refrigerator, hand washing facilities and breastpump storage area.
- access to breastfeeding resources. Employees who are pregnant or considering pregnancy will be provided with information about this policy and about balancing breastfeeding and work (see section 2 of 'Balancing breastfeeding and work' booklet).
- flexible work options. A mother (or her employee representative) can negotiate flexible work options (such as flexi-time, part-time, home-based work) with her supervisor taking into account both the employee's and organisation's needs.
- all staff are made aware of this policy.

SAMPLE

.....

(Employer)

..... / /

(Date)

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SECTION 2 - For Mothers

This section contains information for women who intend breastfeeding and combining it with work. A list of resources is also included. Women may wish to read the segment in Section 1 - Balancing breastfeeding and work - stories from around Australia.

Please photocopy the appropriate pages and distribute to women who are about to take maternity leave and any other interested employees.

A summary of key points has also been translated into Arabic, Chinese, Vietnamese, Spanish and Turkish. Copies of these translations are available from Working Womens' Centres (or equivalent), Migrant Resource Centres or can be downloaded from the internet (<http://www.health.gov.au/pubhlth/strateg/brfeed/>)



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THE WHY, HOW AND WHEN OF BALANCING BREASTFEEDING AND WORK.

Why should I consider balancing breastfeeding and work?

Breastfeeding will benefit both you and your baby for many reasons.

It's free

Breastmilk is free. Formula can cost up to \$1,200 a year. Plus the health care costs of a formula fed baby are approximately twice the cost of formula for that period. The health care costs of a breastfed baby are much less.

Perfect food for baby

Breastmilk whether fed directly from the breast or in a cup or bottle, provides the perfect food for your baby. It has all the goodness the baby needs to grow and it also contains substances which protect your baby from allergies and infections.

More easily digested

Breastmilk is more easily digested than formula, so your baby's nappies will not smell so bad.

Healthier baby

Your baby will be healthier if you breastfeed since breastmilk contains antibodies.

Saves time

Breastfeeding saves time. It is quick, efficient and always available - there is no measuring, mixing or heating necessary. Breastmilk fed to a baby by cup or bottle is simple to store and prepare.

Close bonding

Breastfeeding promotes close bonding between you and your baby. It helps satisfy your baby's emotional needs. You know your baby is getting the very best, whether by breastfeeding or breastmilk feeding from a cup or bottle.

Healthy mother

Breastfeeding decreases your chances of getting osteoporosis, ovarian cancer and pre-menopausal breast cancer.

How can I balance breastfeeding and work?

There are many ways you can balance breastfeeding and work. This will be determined partly by the kind of work you do and the length of your working day.

Many options

Delay return to work

However, it is important that both you and your baby are happy with what you decide.

Talk to your supervisor or employee representative to find out what options are available in your workplace. There are a number of different options for combining breastfeeding and work.

Work from home

If you want to feed your baby entirely at the breast, you could achieve this by delaying your return to work until your baby can go without breastfeeds during your worktime.

Working from home will allow you to breastfeed your baby as required.

Onsite child care

Using onsite child care will make it easier for you to breastfeed your baby during work.



Work flexible hours

Working flexible hours will allow you to fit your work time around your baby's needs.

Bring baby to work

Having your caregiver bring your baby into your workplace to be breastfed or bringing your baby to work with you will allow you to breastfeed during work.

Express breastmilk at work

If these options don't suit your circumstances, then you can try breastfeeding when you are with your baby and expressing your breastmilk at work so your baby is fed your expressed breastmilk from a cup or bottle by your caregiver while you are at work.

Breastfeed at home, baby has formula when you are at work

You may also decide to breastfeed when you are with your baby and have your caregiver feed your baby formula when you are at work.

Work less hours

Job sharing or working part-time so you work less hours overall and are not away from your baby for long periods of time will mean you may not need to express when you are at work.

Use child care near work

You may choose to use childcare close to your work so you can feed just before going to work and/or immediately after finishing work and during your meal breaks. This way you are away from your baby for the least possible time and baby will have most feeds as breastfeeds.

A few weeks or months - as long as you choose

Expressing or breastfeeding at work is a personal decision, usually lasting for a few weeks or months. It will depend on how old your baby is when you go back to work, and how long your working day is. If you delay returning to work, work from home, bring baby to work or are able to work shorter hours, you may not need to express your breastmilk at all.

You will probably need to express or breastfeed at work until your baby is having solids and other fluids. Solids are usually started at four to six months. Other fluids are usually started a bit later.

You will still be able to continue breastfeeding for many more months even when you are no longer expressing.

What should I do before my baby arrives?

There are quite a few things you can do before your baby is born to assist you to successfully combine breastfeeding and work.

Find support for breastfeeding

You can start preparing for breastfeeding when you first become pregnant. Find out what support there is to help you breastfeed. You can ask your doctor, the local child health nurse, a hospital midwife, or a lactation consultant, or you can contact your local group of the Nursing Mothers' Association of Australia.

Talk to your supervisor about your entitlements

Talk to your supervisor or human resource manager about your maternity leave and return to work entitlements. The usual entitlements will include at least 12 months unpaid maternity leave if you have been permanently employed for at least 12 months. There may also be other entitlements. Talk to your supervisor or employee representative about them.

Request maternity leave

It is best to request your maternity leave well in advance. You can find out what breastfeeding related workplace facilities there are in your workplace at present and what you think you will need when you return to work.

Talk to your supervisor about what you need

In addition, take the time to talk to your supervisor or human resource manager before you go on maternity leave about how you would like to balance breastfeeding with work when you return and the facilities you will be able to use.

What should I do before I return to work?

Once you have had your baby, you can prepare to combine breastfeeding and work.

Talk to other mothers

You can talk to other mothers who have balanced breastfeeding with work and decide which option for combining breastfeeding and work will best suit you and your baby, now that you have settled into motherhood.

Talk to your supervisor about your needs

It is worthwhile talking again to your supervisor or human resource manager before you return to work about how you would like to combine breastfeeding with work.

Choose child care

You can choose a caregiver and/or child care centre that supports breastfeeding.

Learn to express your breastmilk

You can learn how to express and store your breastmilk and make sure that your baby will take expressed breastmilk from a cup or bottle.

Build up a supply of expressed breastmilk

You can build up a supply of breastmilk so there is always some available.

How do I express, store and transport my expressed breastmilk?

Breast pumps - hand, battery or electric or Hand express

If you choose to express breastmilk while at work, you will need to consider how you are going to express your breastmilk. There are several available options that include buying a hand pump or battery operated pump, hiring or buying an electric pump, or hand expressing. If you intend using a pump, ask the person who is selling or hiring you the pump to

Where to express at work

explain how to use it. Whatever method you choose, it will help if you get used to expressing before you return to work.

If you choose to express breastmilk while at work, you will need to consider where to express at work. You might like to discuss your requirements with your supervisor. Things to consider include where to actually express and where to safely store your expressed breastmilk and equipment.

Clean private room

You will find that you will be able to express sufficient milk for your baby if you can find a comfortable private place where you can express.

Store breastmilk in fridge or freezer

Store your expressed breastmilk in a fridge or freezer. However, where this is not possible, your expressed breastmilk remains safe for several hours if stored in an insulated container with a freezer pack or crushed ice.

Use plastic or glass containers or milk bags

You can store your expressed breastmilk in either clean covered plastic or glass containers or in milk bags. Some mothers prefer to store their breastmilk in small containers so only small amounts are used at a time, others store it directly in the bottles the caregiver will use the next day.

Transport breastmilk in cold container

Transport your expressed breastmilk in an insulated container with a freezer pack or crushed ice. It is very important to keep your breastmilk cold.

***How do I successfully express?*****Wash hands**

Thoroughly wash your hands before you start expressing.

Clean equipment

Make sure all your equipment is very clean.

Read breastpump instructions

Read the instructions for your breastpump carefully and follow them correctly.

**Relax
Massage breasts**

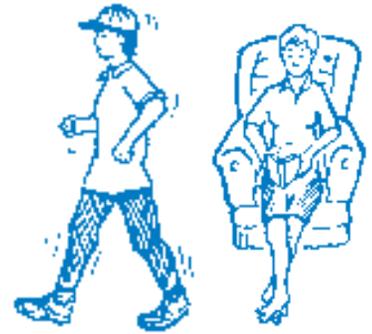
Being relaxed helps expressing. It also helps to gently massage each breast (towards the nipple) before expressing.

Store breastmilk safely

When you have finished, carefully clean the equipment and store your expressed breastmilk safely.

Look after yourself

You need to eat well, exercise, plan ahead, get plenty of rest and try not to do too many non-essential things. This approach will ensure you enjoy your baby and your work and that you are able to cope with the extra demands motherhood places on your time.



As often as baby feeds

While you are at work, try to express as often as your baby would usually feed. If you think your supply has decreased, simply breastfeed or express more often.

How much do I need to express each time?

As much as you can

Express as much as you can. A breastfed baby usually needs about 150ml breastmilk per kilo body weight per 24 hours but this can vary widely. For example if your baby (weighing 4 kg) has 6 feeds a day and you are away for 2 of those feeds, you will need to express about 200 mls or 2 lots of 100 mls. If your baby weighs 6kg, has 5 feeds a day and you are away for 2 of those feeds, you will need to express about 360 mls or 2 lots of 180 mls.

How long can breastmilk be stored?

Three to five days in the fridge

or

Up to 3 months in the freezer

Storage times for breastmilk range from:

- 3-5 days if stored in a fridge
- 2 weeks if stored in a freezer compartment of fridge (if freezer is inside fridge)
- 3 months if stored in a freezer (if freezer has separate door to fridge)
- 6-12 months if stored in a deep freezer.



What information do I give my baby's caregiver about using expressed breastmilk?

Your baby's caregiver should thaw expressed breastmilk using either cool or warm (not boiling) water. Do not use a microwave oven. Shake breastmilk gently before using it.

Thaw expressed breastmilk slowly

Use cup or bottle

Offer your breastmilk to your baby in either a cup or bottle.

Discard if not used in 24 hours

Refrigerate but do not refreeze thawed breastmilk and discard any thawed breastmilk if not consumed within 24 hours

If I am not able to express enough breastmilk for my baby, what do I do?

Remember to always give any expressed breastmilk, even if only a few mls before offering formula.

Have your expressing method checked

Have your expressing technique assessed by a suitable health professional, for instance a lactation consultant, a child health nurse, or a NMAA breastfeeding counsellor.

Express more often

You can try to express more often. You can try breastfeeding more often or expressing after each breastfeed at home.

Try another type of pump

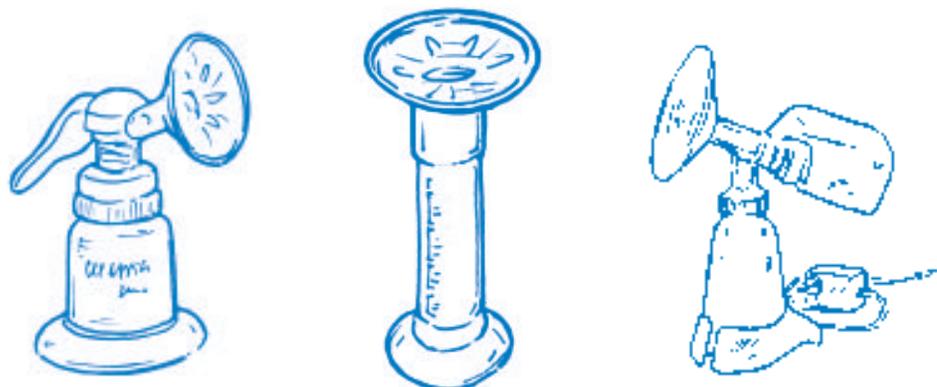
Sometimes it helps to try another expressing technique, for example, a hand pump or an electric pump.

Breastfeed more at home

If you are unable to express sufficient breastmilk for your baby, this may only be a temporary problem. However, you can ask your caregiver to give your baby formula while you are at work, but continue breastfeeding when with your baby including during the night. Doing this will help build up your supply and will ensure your baby has the benefits of breastmilk.

Take it easy

You can take it easy for a few days. Maybe your baby's appetite has increased so you need to feed more frequently to let your supply increase to meet your baby's needs.



Where can I find out more?



Talk to your supervisor and employee representative about your maternity leave and other rights

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Australia's National Breastfeeding Strategy is a multi-faceted approach to increasing breastfeeding rates in Australia. This strategy provides breastfeeding information and strategies in many areas including employer/employee support. More information can be located on:

<http://www.health.gov.au/pubhlth/strateg/brfeed/>

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The ACTU is the peak council and national centre representing the Australian workforce. It has produced a booklet *Achieving mother friendly workplaces*.

Telephone: 1300 362 223

<http://www.actu.asn.au/>

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Breastpumps are hired and sold by the Nursing Mothers' Association of Australia NMAA. See state contact numbers under NMAA.

Most pharmacies sell hand or battery operated breastpumps. Some also hire out electric breastpumps. Consult your local yellow pages for your nearest pharmacy.

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Child Health Centres set up by all state health departments provide assistance with child health. Check your state government health department in your local white pages telephone directory for information on your nearest child health centre and parent helpline.

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Child Care Centres are listed in your local yellow telephone pages. Child care centres may be listed by locality as well as name.

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The Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission provides information about anti-discrimination and equal opportunity legislation.

National contact 1300 369 711

<http://www.hreoc.gov.au>

Information about State and Territory anti-discrimination and equal opportunity legislation is available from the following:

ACT	Human Rights Office	02 6207 0576
Northern Territory	Anti-Discrimination Commission	1800 813 846
New South Wales	Anti-discrimination Board	1800 670 812
Queensland	Anti-Discrimination Commission	1300 130 670
South Australia	Equal Opportunity Commission	1800 188 163
Victoria	Equal Opportunity Commission	1800 134 142
Tasmania	Office of the Anti-Discrimination Commissioner	1800 001 222
Western Australia	Equal Opportunity Commission	1800 198 149

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The Nursing Mothers' Association of Australia (NMAA) is a national breastfeeding support organisation that provides a range of services including a 24 helpline, plus books, booklets and audio-visual items on all aspects of breastfeeding. It has a webpage <http://www.nmaa.asn.au/> with links to other breastfeeding sites.

NMAA literature specific to balancing breastfeeding and work includes:

Mother Friendly Workplace Initiative Information Sheet

The Caregiver's Guide to the Breastfed Baby

Expression and Storing Breastmilk

Breastfeeding, women and work

NMAA 24 hour breastfeeding helplines

ACT and South-NSW	(02) 6258 8928
Northern Territory	(08) 8988 4616
NSW	(02) 9639 8686
Queensland	(07) 3844 8977
South Australia	(08) 8411 0050
Tasmania	(03) 6223 2609
Victoria	(03) 9885 0653
Western Australia	(08) 9309 5393

You can also look under Nursing Mothers' Association of Australia in your local White Pages.

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The Office of the Employment Advocate provides assistance and advice to employers and employees on the Workplace Relations Act, especially on making Australian Workplace Agreements.

Telephone: 1300 366 632

<http://www.oea.gov.au/>

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WageLine is a telephone inquiry service providing information and advice on wages and conditions of employment.

New South Wales - Victoria - Tasmania -

Australian Capital Territory - Northern Territory 1300 363 264

Queensland 1300 369 945

Western Australia 1300 655 266

South Australia 1300 365 255

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The Work and Family Unit in the Department of Employment, Workplace Relations and Small Business, produces a series of fact sheets and guides dealing with a wide range of Work and Family issues. It has produced a *Guide to combining Breastfeeding and Employment*, available from the Work and Family Unit for \$5 or can be downloaded from the internet.

GPO Box 9879

Canberra City ACT 2601

Telephone: (02) 6121 7742

<http://www.dewrsb.gov.au>

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The Working Women's Centres (or similar organisations) provide information relating to issues about work. Services are free and available to any woman.

ACT (Women's Legal Service) 1800 634 669

Northern Territory 1800 817 055

NSW 1800 062 166

Queensland 1800 621 458

South Australia 1800 652 697

Tasmania 1800 644 589

Victoria (Job Watch) 1800 331 617

Western Australia (Women's Legal Service) 1800 625 122

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Other useful websites

Breastfeeding solutions from Medela
<http://www.medela.com/>

Hand expressing breastmilk
<http://www.lactationinstitute.org/MANUALEX.html>

San Diego County Breastfeeding Coalition
<http://www.breastfeeding.org/>

Texas Breastfeeding Promotion Section
<http://www.tdh.state.tx.us/lactate/bf1.htm>

Why you should breastfeed
<http://www.erols.com/cindyrn/>

Working and Breastfeeding
<http://www.lalecheleague.org/bfwork.html>

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