



NURSING AND WORKING MOM'S BACK TO WORK CHECKLIST

We all know that breast milk is the best food for babies, but for mothers who are returning to work, continuing to provide breast milk for their babies can be quite a challenge. However, with preparation, encouragement and the right "tools", breastfeeding can continue, without interruption, even after a nursing mother returns to work. So, if you're a working mom and reading this article, I trust that you have made the decision to continue nursing when you return to work? I congratulate you.

I get a lot of enquiries from mothers (especially from first timers) about how to go about it when they start work? Ladies, here are some things a nursing mother should consider as she prepares to go back to work (I believe I have addressed most of the important points). Please let us help you! Go through our checklist and find 10 ways to ease your return to the workplace. May I also recommend that to check out this article "[Breastfeeding 411: Your need- to-know guide](#)" (It has been a good reference site for me while I was breastfeeding)

During your pregnancy (at least a few months before your due date)

1. Try to **associate yourself with other nursing & working moms** that you know (if you don't know any, you know us at Momslittleones.com! We'd be glad to help you)
2. Start **reading up about breastfeeding** & look around for a breast pump. **Choose a breast pump that's right for you** (you may check out the "Breast pump 101" article in our reading room)

Three to Four Weeks before work

3. **Start pumping.** To build up on your milk stock (for "emergency" supply). I would recommend that you express at least 3 to 4 oz a day and store in your freezer (please label with date and time by using a masking tape). **IMPORTANT TIP:** When you start work, I would advise you to give your baby a balanced amount of freshly expressed refrigerated breastmilk (EBM) and frozen EBM while you are at work ie. If you get 4 bottles a day at work, store 2 in freezer and another 2 in the refrigerator. Studies show that a certain portion of the antibodies in breast milk is lost in frozen EBM. Your baby will best benefit from all the protective properties of your milk by doing it this way.
4. Arrange for a **short visit to your workplace** (if possible) or try to **simulate a typical working day** at home by pumping when your baby is fed with EBM. Remember to let someone else feed to baby and not you! Your baby can tell.
5. **Create a support system** for your self by either hiring a maid or choosing a baby sitter. Whoever they are, they should be trained on how to handle and feed your EBM to your baby.

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6. **Find a suitable place to pump at work.** Ideally a pumping area should have: privacy, a comfortable place to sit, an electrical outlet for your pump, a wash basin for rinsing out your pump parts and washing your hands.

When you start work

7. **Figure out what clothes to wear.** The best would be patterned clothing and dark colours. Silk is definitely a no, no for the first few weeks as it makes leak stains more obvious.
8. **How much EBM to leave behind for baby?** One way of estimating how much EBM to leave for your baby is by multiplying your baby's weight (in pounds) by either 2.5 or 3. Then divide by 8. The amount you get is approximately what your baby needs per 3-hour feeding while you're at work.
9. **Set up a timetable/schedule to express your milk at work.** The usual frequency is 3 times a day, 15 to 30 minutes for each session. A typical schedule is 10am, lunchtime (1pm) and tea (4pm). It is also best that you discuss your plans with your boss. Your pumping schedule should ideally suit your needs, as well as your employer.
10. **Learn how to maintain and optimize your milk supply.** (Please refer to "Milk Supply concerns" section in our reading room).