

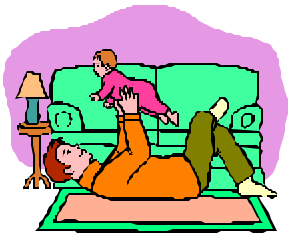
Getting Ready for Child Care

Consider the following when choosing child care for your breastfed baby:

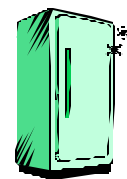
- Attitude: Choose a child-care provider who is willing to support your plans for breastfeeding and welcomes you to breastfeed at the childcare site.
- Knowledge and experience: Choose a child-care provider who knows or is willing to learn how to handle breastmilk safely and feed your baby the way you have requested.



- Location: If the child care provider is located a short distance from work, it may be easier to breastfeed right before work or right after work at the child care site. Ask your employer whether they will allow you to leave work to nurse your baby during breaks or at lunch.



- Practice expressing your breastmilk a few weeks before returning to work.
For information on selecting breast pumps, [click here](#).
For information on collecting and storing breastmilk, [click here](#).
- Collect breastmilk in the amount that you think your baby will take at one feeding. Try starting with 2 ounces per container. Be sure to label each container with your baby's name and the date you expressed the milk.
- Introduce your baby to a bottle or cup a few weeks before returning to work. Ideally, wait until your milk supply is established (about 4-6 weeks) before starting a bottle, if possible. Try offering one bottle of expressed breastmilk a day.
- If your baby will not take a bottle from you, ask a family member or friend to help introduce the bottle. It may be helpful for you to leave the room to help your baby settle down and be fed by another person.



- Some babies may have difficulty using a bottle. Try different nipples on the bottle, or consider using a cup or a spoon as an alternative. Be patient and allow the baby to explore new ways of feeding at his/her own pace.



- Keep track of the times your baby usually wants to breastfeed and write them down for your child care provider. This will help your provider anticipate times your baby will be ready to eat in addition to watching for baby's hunger cues.
- Let your child care provider know how you normally hold your baby during feedings. Your baby may prefer this position when fed by someone else also.
- Leave a piece of your clothing with your scent on it for the childcare provider. Your baby may feel comforted by smelling your scent and be able to settle down to feed more easily this way.
- Arrange a few practice visits to the child care provider before returning to work. This allows your baby to become familiar with new people and the new environment.



Establishing a Routine: Work and Child Care

- Breastfeed your baby whenever you are together.
- Breastfeed before work, at home or at the child care site.
- Provide breastmilk to the child care provider every day to feed your baby. Be sure that all containers are labeled with your baby's name and the date the milk was expressed.



- Keep breastmilk chilled in a portable ice chest while transporting it from home to child- care. [Click here](#) for more information on collecting and storing breastmilk.

- Express breastmilk at work for the next day's feeding at child- care.

Resources

- Breastfed Babies Welcome Here – This informational packet by USDA promotes breastfeeding in childcare settings. It offers advice on feeding the breastfed baby, preparing for childcare as well as collecting, storing and handling breastmilk.

Contact: Supplemental Food Programs
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