



Back to work

Checklist for the nursing mother

Continuing breastfeeding while going back to work? This step by step checklist helps with the preparation.

Your rights

As a breastfeeding mother, you have the right to breast feed your baby during the first year of life in the company or outside the company.

- The company must provide you with a suitable room with a comfortable chair.
- The time required may be neither forward nor rescheduled; it may not be withdrawn from other rest periods such as holidays.
- Breastfeeding your child at work is considered as paid working time:
 - at least 30 minutes up to a working time of 4 hours
 - at least 60 minutes with a working time of over 4 hours
 - at least 90 minutes with a working time of over 7 hours

(Not subject to the labour law are public administrations and the agriculture sector - they have their own laws, which often contain identical or similar provisions in relation to breastfeeding. Management positions are also exempt from the provisions set out in the labour code.)

Details can be found in the labour law (ArG) Articles 2 and 3, 34 and 35a and in the regulation 1 and 3.

More than four weeks before returning to work

- **Professional support:** Three breastfeeding counselling sessions by a professional (midwife, lactation consultant IBCLC) can be charged to the health insurance.
- **Mother-to-mother support:** Exchange experiences with other breastfeeding and working mothers to find out what to expect. One possibility for this are the meetings at La Leche League Switzerland (LLL), which take place monthly. Enquire under www.lalecheleague.ch.
- **Talk early with your superior about your intention to breastfeed your child further or to pump breast milk at work.** The support of your superiors is very important. You will find on our website a set of arguments ("facts for the employer") for the conversation that you can give to your employer.
 - **If you want to breastfeed your child:** Talk about the details with your superiors (predicted breastfeeding times when you leave the workplace or when your child is brought for breastfeeding, place for breastfeeding, etc.).
 - **If you want to pump your milk:** If you want to pump your milk: Inform early on that you will need a small protected space for pumping. A room does not need a major infrastructure, but it must be lockable, have sight and sound insulation, and you must be able to relax. A checklist for nursing rooms is available on our website. In addition, a refrigerator for storing breast milk and a way for washing and drying the breast pump is needed. Choose the one breast - pump which suits you best. Here a professional can help you, for example the mother counsellor or a lactation consultant.



Two to four weeks before the resumption of work

- **If you want to pump:** Start with the pumping at least three weeks before resuming work. This gives you enough time to familiarize yourself with it and to allow your child to get used to drink her milk without direct contact to you. Sometimes it takes several drinking systems and several attempts to get the child to drink. Other persons - the father, a babysitter or grandparents - can help you with this task. In case of difficulties, professionals or the LLL meetings can help. You will pump one to two, possibly three times in the course of a workday. This is very individual.
- **If you wish to breast-feed your child:** Plan the lactation periods in your workload. Make sure that the child is brought to you or that you can leave the workplace at the times of day you have nursed until now.
- **Inform the caregiver of your child:** If you have a caregiver look after your child, please inform the caregiver early on that you want to continue to breastfeed or give him breast milk. It is to your advantage that the caregiver knows how important breastfeeding is to you.

The day before the first working day

- Call a work colleague or another person of trust at your workplace, so that the room is reserved in advance and other details can be clarified.
- For the interim storage of breast milk, a large, opaque vessel could serve. You can keep it in the fridge at work and store your breast milk discreetly. Write your name on the container.
- When choosing clothes keep in mind that you are breastfeeding or pumping

The first working day

- Breastfeed your child before you leave the house, even if it is not his usual drinking time.
- Inform the caregiver when the child should receive its last meal. You may be able to breastfeed at the place the child is cared for, before returning home if you pick her up yourself.
- When pumping or breastfeeding during work: Set yourself up as comfortable as possible. A photo of your child and relaxing music in the ears can help to release the work stress.
- **If you are pumping:**
 - Please take the hygiene tips seriously when pumping.
 - Keep the expressed milk in suitable, possibly boiled containers and store in a cool place.
 - After expressing rinse all parts that come into contact with the milk with cold water, then wash with dishwashing liquid and place on a private, clean cloth and allow to dry or dry them so directly. Wash in a dishwasher (hygiene program) or boil the relevant parts at home.
- At night and on non-working days continue to breast feeding your child upon request.

Storage of expressed breast milk

- **Room temperature** (16 - 29 °C): 3 to 4 hours, 6 to 8 hours acceptable under very clean conditions
- **Refrigerator** (≤ 4 °C): 72 hours, 5 to 8 days under very clean conditions
- **Deep freezer** (< -17 °C): 6 months

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