



# 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- The time required may be neither forward nor rescheduled; it may not be withdrawn from other rest periods such as holidays.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 counselling sessions on breastfeeding by a midwife or lactation consultant are paid for by the health insurance. You can also get free advice from the mother-father counselling service in your municipality.
- **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](http://www.lalecheleague.ch).
- **Talk early with your superior about your intention to continue to breastfeed your child or to pump breast milk at work.** The support of your superior is important. You will find on our website a set of arguments ("facts for the employer").
  - **If you want to breastfeed your child:** Talk about the details with your superior (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:** Inform your work place early on that you will need a small, protected space for pumping. A room does not need much, 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 possibility for washing and drying the breast pump is needed. Choose the breast - pump which suits you best. Get advice from the mother-father counselling service 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 drinking 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 breastfeeding times 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:** inform the caregiver early on that you want to continue to breastfeed your child or feed 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 your 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 before pick up. 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 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
- Refrigerator (colder than 4 °C): 3 days
- Deep freezer (colder than minus 17 °C): 6 months

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Schweizerisches Rotes Kreuz  
migesplus.ch 

www.stillfoerderung.ch  
contact@stillfoerderung.ch  
Tel. 031 381 49 66