

Connecticut WIC Program:

Consistent Breastfeeding Education Messages: Pumping for Separation – Work/School

Why is this important?

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, women account for 47% of the total workforce, and are projected to account for 51 percent of the increase in total labor force growth between 2008 and 2018. Many mothers in our country return to work or school within a few weeks postpartum. When mothers want to continue breastfeeding and provide expressed milk, they could benefit from the education and support on how to prepare to return to work/school and how to maintain an adequate milk supply. For this reason, information on how to pump, when to pump and what type of pump to use is vital for WIC moms who are separated from their infants during the workday.

WIC's Goal: Support mothers in meeting their breastfeeding goals. Empower moms to gain confidence in their ability to provide milk for their baby when returning to work/school.

Objectives: After participating in an individual counseling or group education session, participants will be able to:

1. Understand importance to bring baby to breast when not separated. Verbalize why continuing to breastfeed after returning to work/school is important to them
2. Understand workplace breastfeeding laws. Feel empowered to discuss breastfeeding/pumping with their employer during pregnancy.
3. Understand how to optimize their milk supply in the early weeks postpartum.
4. State the protocol for obtaining a breast pump through HUSKY or WIC (if indicated). Obtain a pump (if desired) and learn how to use it prior to going back-to-work (BTW) or back-to-school (BTS). Learn how to hand express.
5. Gain confidence in their ability to maintain lactation after returning to work/school.
6. Store and use milk in a way that will maximize nutrients and assure it is safe.
7. Discuss essential information with person(s) who will be providing care when she returns to work or school. Develop a support system for BTW/BTS and pumping within their individual situation.
8. Incorporate quick, easy nutritious meals and snacks for BTW/BTS

Affirmation: You are a great mom for being dedicated to giving your baby your breast milk! Praise her for her efforts in any small steps she has taken.

Key Educational Messages:

- Ask mom about her breastfeeding goals are for BTW/BTS. Why is this important to her? If mom seems overwhelmed, with her current work/home situation, listen to her concerns and ask her to take a step back to think about why it is important to her. Validate her feelings. Support her decisions.
- Discuss how to manage breastfeeding in the early weeks to assure an optimum milk supply. (Objective #3)
- Find out if she has been shown how to hand express milk. If not, show how to by using demonstration breast and/or showing video. (Objective #4)

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- Encourage her to have a conversation prenatally with her employer (supervisor) which outlines her intent to continue to provide breastmilk for her baby. Discuss various on-line resources that may be helpful to her. Provide the sample letter to employer (included at end of content sheet). She may want to provide the letter to employer, which outlines the need for pumping on a regular basis during the workday and taking advantage of existing breaks. Help mom identify break time and duration as well as the location that will be used for expression. (Objective #2)
- Encourage her to have a conversation prenatally with her school nurse or social worker that outlines her intent to continue to provide breastmilk for her baby. This discussion may include topics such as availability of space to use a breastpump, space to store a pump and breastmilk and overall care for pump and its parts. Mom may want to take into consideration lunch break and any study halls she may have available.
- Discuss how to contact her insurance company regarding obtaining an electric breast pump for BTW/BTS. Discuss procedure for applying for a pump through WIC after the baby is born if they are denied by their insurance. (Objective #2) Refer to WIC 300-12 Breast Pump policy.
- Discuss her plan for return to work including when to start pumping and storing expressed milk and how often to pump. Ideally, approximately 2 weeks prior to her return, encourage that she become comfortable using her pump.
 - Review the difference between letting down to pump vs. having baby skin to skin at breast.
 - If possible, start to store breastmilk in freezer to increase confidence. If milk is stored, that is one less concern. Encourage her to pump at the times of day she expects to pump at work.
 - Discuss a realistic pumping plan with mom for when she is at work. Also review where she will store her expressed milk at work; i.e. refrigerator or a cooler with an ice pack.
 - Discuss caregiver's role in providing expressed breastmilk. Provide education resources to caregiver if needed. If possible, allow time with baby and caregiver prior to first day returning to work to facilitate a smoother transition. Discuss paced feedings by the caregiver to slow the baby down and the difference between flow from breast vs. bottle; consider potential for cup feeding expressed breastmilk.(Objectives #4-6)
- Discuss how to maintain a good milk supply after returning to work.
 - Explain how to calculate her "Magic Number". Refers to the number of times the mother needs to remove milk from her breasts in order to maintain her milk production. It accounts for feedings at the breast and pumping sessions. [Review article from Nancy Mohrbacher](#) how to explain the "Magic Number" to moms that are pumping during the work or school day.
 - Ask if feeding baby at breast while at work is an option
 - Consider reverse cycle nursing
 - Remind mom's that breast milk intake increases from birth to 5 weeks and then stays about the same from 5 weeks of age to 6 months. (25-35 oz/day). Provide reassurance that she will not need to keep increasing the amount that she pumps as the baby grows from one to six months.

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- Review strategies to increase milk production:
 - Use hands on pumping. See link to Nancy Mohrbacher article.
 - <http://www.nancymohrbacher.com/articles/2012/6/27/to-pump-more-milk-use-hands-on-pumping.html>
 - Use all senses (looking at picture of baby, smell of baby's clothes, music, etc.)
 - Check flange fit (<https://www.amedadirect.com/skin/frontend/amedamedia/pdf/making-the-most-of-yours-breast-pump.pdf>)
 - Increase daily total (breastfeed more and/or pump more)
 - Consider pumping in a.m. before work if unable to pump more often at work.
 - If mom inquires about galactagogues, refer to her health care provider or community IBCLC for more information. See ABM (Academy of Breastfeeding Medicine Protocol #9, Revision 2, 2018) <https://abm.memberclicks.net/assets/DOCUMENTS/PROTOCOLS/9-galactagogues-protocol-english.pdf>
- Review what to discuss with baby's caregiver.
 - Include education on avoiding overfeeding by using horizontal feeding technique, slow flow nipple, and cue-based (baby paced) feedings.
 - Help mom trouble shoot. For example, if caregiver keeps running out of breastmilk, is it due to caregiver discarding some because too much is in each bottle and baby cannot finish it? Is it due to caregiver over feeding the baby?
- Offer names and contact information of WIC staff, including but not limited to: Nutritionists, CLCs, IBCLCs and Peer Counselors.
 - Offer contact information of local support if available: Mother's support groups at local hospitals, La Leche League, etc. Encourage Mother to call with any questions/concerns/feedback/ideas. www.ilca.org or www.lalecheleague.org (Objective #8)

Activities:

- Pump assembly demonstration by staff or participant
- Sample letter to employer; role-play conversation with supervisor or caregiver as applicable. <http://www.breastfeedingct.org/> link to Connecticut Breastfeeding Coalition website, link under resources for *Employed BF mothers*- Sample letter
- If the local agency's nutrition education budget allows, a useful group or individual activity is to provide refrigerator magnets that can serve as an inspiration for continuing to breastfeed after going back to work. Ask moms to write why they want to breastfeed or continue breastfeeding after returning to work. If done as a group activity, ask if anyone wants to share what they wrote. Suggest after baby is born that she put a picture of her baby in the middle.
- Group discussion on ways to improve pumping session at work. Provide a basket with different objects (picture, face cloth, CD with music etc...) Ask moms to choose an item from the basket and discuss how these objects could be used to make pumping at work/school more effective.

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Websites:

- <https://www.lowmilksupply.org/>
- <https://www.breastmilkcounts.com/>
- <http://www.nancymohrbacher.com/articles/tag/For+Employed+Nursing+Mothers>
- <https://www.womenshealth.gov/breastfeeding/breastfeeding-home-work-and-public/breastfeeding-and-going-back-work/business-case>
- www.breastfeedingct.org
- www.workandpump.com
- www.breastfeedingpartners.org

Books:

- Milk Memos: How Real Moms Learned to Mix Business with Babies and You can Too by Cate Colburn-Smith and Andrea Serrette
- Working Without Weaning by Kirsten Berggren
- The Breastfeeding Mother's Guide to Making More Milk by Diana West and Lisa Marasco
- Balancing Breast and Bottle by Amy Petersen and Mindy Harmer
- Breastfeeding in Combat Boots by Robyn Roche-Paull (military)

Handouts/Resources:

- Reverse Pressure Softening and Hand Expression activities from Texas WIC Every Ounce Counts:
<https://www.breastmilkcounts.com/moms-playground/educational-activities/reverse-pressure-softening/>
- Storage Guidelines from WIC Policy 300-12
- Breastfeeding in Connecticut: What Are Your Rights? (DPH/CBC)
https://www.breastfeedingct.org/uploads/6/2/8/1/62815511/breastfeeding_flyer_english.pdf
- Healthy Eating on the Run: A Month of Tips (Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics- AND)
<https://www.eatright.org/~media/eatright%20files/nationalnutritionmonth/handoutsandtipsheets/nutritiontipsheets/healthyeatingontherun.ashx>
- Power Up With Breakfast (AND) <https://www.eatright.org/food/planning-and-prep/snack-and-meal-ideas/power-up-with-breakfast>

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SAMPLE LETTER:

Dear Employer:

Since the birth of my child, I have decided to feed my child breast milk. Upon returning to work, I will need accommodations so I can continue to feed my child breast milk. The [American Academy of Pediatrics](#) recommends infants be breastfed exclusively for 6 months and then for a period up to 1 year and beyond that as mutually acceptable for mother and child.

Statistics show that breastfed babies have fewer illnesses, which may result in less work missed, and fewer medical insurance claims. Companies that support breastfeeding mothers have higher retention rates and higher productivity.

In order to provide food for my child and maintain an adequate milk supply, I plan to pump milk during the workday. For your convenience, I have referenced several web resources, which detail existing federal and state laws pertaining to breastfeeding employees. According to Connecticut State Law, all employers must provide breastfeeding employees with reasonable break time (during meal or break periods) and a private, non-bathroom place to express breast milk during the workday. Please find more information about the law at <http://www.ctdol.state.ct.us/wgwkstnd/laws-reg/statute31-40w.htm> .

My health care providers have instructed me to pump milk during the workday (as negotiated with my employer) to provide (or maintain) an adequate amount of milk for my baby. I hope you agree that everyone benefits from my decision to breastfeed: my child, myself, the workforce, and even the economy. I look forward to discussing how this fits in with my workday.

Please consult The Business Case for Breastfeeding for additional information at <http://www.womenshealth.gov/breastfeeding/government-in-action/business-case.html>. If you would like more information, please feel free to contact me.

Thank you very much for your support.

Sincerely,

(Your Name)

Websites for your Reference:

<http://www.usbreastfeeding.org/workplace-law>

<https://worklifelaw.org/>

**You may customize this letter to meet your own needs. This is just a template letter and not mandated by the Connecticut Breastfeeding Coalition.*