

# Aeroflow Breastpumps

## Planning for Separations from Your Baby

Whether you are returning to work, looking forward to a date night, or just running errands, there may come a time when you expect to be separated from your baby. Mother/baby separation can change your breastfeeding routine, but with careful planning you can minimize the disruption this may have on breastfeeding and continue to provide breast milk for your baby. Below are a few tips to help make this transition go smoothly for you and your baby.

### Occasional Separations

If you are going to be separated from your baby for less than 3 or 4 hours, you may not need to provide any pumped milk at all. This will depend on the age of your baby, how often they breastfeed, and how easily they can be distracted by their caregiver. If your baby is a newborn, less than about 6 weeks old, their feeding routines are less predictable and you will likely want to make sure your caregiver has breast milk to offer baby in your absence. With older babies, especially if your separations are infrequent and they haven't had a lot of practice bottle feeding, they may only take a small amount (1-2 ounces) of your milk or they may even be willing to hold off on feeding until you return.

As a general rule, if you breastfeed your baby right before you leave and as soon as you return, this will minimize the amount of milk that your baby needs while you are gone. You know your baby best, so use your instincts when it comes to this. If you do leave milk, 1-1.5 ounces per hour is a good estimate of how much breast milk many babies will need. If you miss a feeding while away from your baby, it is important to express your milk while you are apart to prevent engorgement, decreased milk supply, and complications such as plugged ducts or mastitis.

### Consistent Separations

If you expect to have regular separations from your baby, such as returning to work, you will need to make a plan for pumping and providing milk for your baby. Here are some suggestions:

1. **Finding Your Pump:** There are many pumps available with different features and settings. Practice using your pump before returning to work so you know how to put it together and how it works.

Some things to consider when choosing a pump:

- How often will you need to pump?
- Where will you be pumping?
- Will you multitask and pump while working or take a break to pump?
- Do you have access to an electrical outlet?

You can compare breast pumps available through Aeroflow with this [comparison chart](#).

Other equipment to consider:

- Milk storage containers or bags
- Bottles
- Milk storage cooler
- Pump bag
- Spare pump parts
- Pumping bra
- Cleaning supplies

**2. Talk with Your Employer:** Talk about your plans for returning and pumping at work.

You may want to discuss:

- How often you expect to need to pump
- How long you will need to pump each day
- Where you will pump
- How you will store your milk
- Flexibility in your schedule

There are [state](#)<sup>1</sup> and [federal laws](#)<sup>2</sup> that protect your lactation rights in the workplace. These laws include the right to reasonable break time to pump your milk and a private space to pump your milk, other than a restroom. Open communication with your employer is important as you plan to return to work so everyone has clear expectations. If you have to travel for work, please check out this [information](#) for traveling while breastfeeding or pumping, with or without your baby.<sup>3</sup>

**3. Preparing for Childcare:** Give your caregiver detailed feeding instructions. Plan for 1-1.5 ounces of breast milk per hour that you expect to be away from your baby. If you can, provide your caregiver with additional stored milk in the freezer for emergencies.

Be sure your caregiver understands these things about breastfed babies:

- It is best to feed babies on cue, not a schedule
- Breastfed babies rarely take more than 4-5 ounces of milk at a feeding
- Paced feeding is best practice for a breastfed baby

While there is no need to spend a lot of time pumping and bottle feeding during your maternity leave, especially if you will be off for several months or more, once breastfeeding is well established you can introduce a bottle, as needed or desired. After you've introduced a bottle, continuing to offer it a few times per week will help your baby stay familiar with taking it. Make sure to pump whenever your baby gets a bottle so that your milk supply stays in sync with your baby's needs. If you decide to wait until closer to returning to work to start pumping and bottle feeding, try to give yourself and baby a few weeks to adjust to your new feeding routine. While most babies transition to bottle feeding easily, others may need more practice.

4. **Other Considerations:** Other ideas to make the transition smoother:

- Practice your morning routine before you return to work
- See if you can trial your caregiver or daycare for a day or two before your return to work so you and baby can “practice” prior to your first day back
- If your schedule allows, breastfeed baby when you drop-off and pick-up to reduce the number of times you need to pump and the number of bottles baby receives
- When you and baby are together, breastfeed frequently to reconnect
- Find support from your partner, friends, family, and mother support groups

### What If I Have Questions?

If you are interested in learning more, these Aeroflow classes expand on some of the topics discussed above:

- Navigating Maternity Leave
- Pumping 101
- It Takes a Village

To register for these classes, log into your portal or click [here](#).

### Want More Info?

For a directory of Aeroflow's other Care Guides offering information on pregnancy, baby care, and more, browse our comprehensive list of titles:

<https://www.hersourcehealth.com/aeroflow-care-guides/>

References:

1. <https://www.ncsl.org/health/breastfeeding-state-laws>
2. <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/whd/pump-at-work>
3. <https://www.cdc.gov/nutrition/infantandtoddlernutrition/breastfeeding/travel-recommendations.html>