Returning to Work: Tips & Checklist for Nursing Mothers

WHAT TO BRING TO WORK:

☑ Small cooler or insulated bag for milk storage
☑ Milk storage containers for each pumping session you will need during your work day
☑ Wear easy-access clothing that opens in the front
☑ An extra shirt or sweater to wear in case your milk leaks
☑ Water bottle and nutritious snacks
☑ Picture of your baby or other item that reminds you of your baby
☑ iPod or music player
☑ Wipes or soap to clean your attachments to the breast pump

EQUIPMENT:

☑ Rent/buy a breast pump for home use (The Ameda Elite is the pump model available in Michigan Tech lactation spaces. Any attachments for the pumps in the lactation spaces need to be provided by the employee or student. Attachments can be ordered from: www.amedadirect.com (Ameda Dual HygieniKit without BPA or DEHP), www.amazon.com, www.sears.com, and other online stores.) Space is available in the lactation rooms if you choose to bring your own portable pump. Some women find it helpful to bring their own pump the first day.
☑ Buy milk storage, cooling, and bottle-feeding equipment (silicone nipples are recommended for easy cleaning).

AT HOME:

☑ Begin using your pump before your return to work (best if begun between 3rd-5th weeks after breastfeeding starts). This will help you get used to the breast-pumping process, as well as to set up a milk supply in advance.
☑ Start your baby on some breast milk bottle-feedings to help make sure that he or she will not refuse the bottle when you return to work.

AT YOUR WORKPLACE:

☑ Plan how breast-pumping will fit into your work schedule. This should fit as closely as possible to your baby’s usual feeding times. You should plan on at least 20 minutes for each pumping session, not including travel time, set-up, and clean-up.
☑ If you do not have a private space to pump, set up access to one of Michigan Tech lactation spaces. Contact the WorkLife Connections Office (487-2416 or worklife@mtu.edu) with any questions.
☑ Determine how you will refrigerate and transport your expressed milk. The lactation spaces do not have cold storage for expressed milk.
☑ Rehearse your routine before your actual work return date. Consider planning a day there in advance for a walk-through session.

FOR YOUR SUPPORT:

We recommend that you establish contact with a lactation consultant, so that you will know in advance whom to call if problems with expressing milk arise on the job. Local lactation consultant resources are usually available via your obstetrician or pediatrician.

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