



# Breastfeeding

## Working and Breastfeeding

### **IMPORTANT**

- Decide on your breastfeeding goals.
- Consider your work options.
- Plan to breastfeed as much as possible.

### **What you can do:**

- Many women are now making the choice to continue breastfeeding when they return to work.
- Before deciding on your return to work, contact Employment Insurance to ensure you are aware of your maternity leave benefits.
- Decide on your breastfeeding goals.
- Consider your work options. For example, can you work from home, job share, flex time, etc.?
- Find a breastfeeding friendly caregiver.
- Build your supply of expressed breast milk. Invest in a good quality breast pump. Your Lactation Consultant can assist you in this process.
- Allow 3-4 weeks before you return to work to practise with your method of milk expression and start storing breast milk.
- Discuss your plans to continue breastfeeding with your immediate supervisor, if possible. Explain that you may need a place to express your milk and that this can be accomplished on an allotted break.
- Find a place at work to store your breast milk (milk can be stored at room temperature for up to 4-6 hours).
- Plan to breastfeed as much as possible; many women find the baby will increase evening and night time feeds. Some women are able to travel to the baby on their lunch break to breastfeed; others are able to make arrangements for the baby to come to them. Feed the baby before you leave for work in the morning and as soon as you get home after work. Discuss this with your baby's caregiver so that she can avoid feeding the baby too close to those times.
- Delay introducing a bottle if possible. Some breastfeeding experts recommend exclusively breastfeeding until the mother returns to work and then letting the caregiver introduce the bottle when the mother is not present.
- The mother could also have the bottle introduced 10 days before she returns to work, preferably by

the caregiver who will be looking after the baby.

- When you are at home, continue to breastfeed your baby on demand. You may not need to pump or give a bottle, depending on the age of your baby, especially if your breastfeeding and pumping pattern remains about the same on work days as on days off.
- Remember—depending on the age of the baby, he/she may not need a bottle but could use a cup when the mother is not present. By 6-8 months of age, babies are often developmentally ready to start drinking from a cup for some feeds if they are also breastfeeding for other feeds.