

Breastfeeding and Work - Let's Make it Work! Health Fair

Host a ***Breastfeeding and Work - Let's Make it Work!*** Health fair in the clinic, and use the NE code *BF-000- 52: National BF Month* to award nutrition education credit to participants who attend the National Breastfeeding Month activities. Set up learning stations that offer information and materials promoting the value and positive impacts of Mother-Friendly Worksites and the importance of continued breastfeeding. Advertise to and invite local business owners to the health fair to learn how to support BF employees.

Ideas for the stations include:

Station 1: Federal and national laws on breastfeeding

- Provide the information to participants or partner with your Regional Department of Labor and have a representative on hand to provide it.
 - Advertise the federal Fair Labor Standards Act that requires employers to provide reasonable break time for breastfeeding employees to express breastmilk for up to one year after the child's birth and a private place other than a bathroom for expressing breastmilk.
 - Provide the fact sheet that explains the new Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) Enforcement Guidance on Pregnancy Discrimination and Related Issues guidance which requires that pregnant employees be treated the same as non-pregnant employees who are similar in their ability or inability to work. The Act prohibits discrimination of female employees based on pregnancy - whether past, present or planned - as well as any medical conditions related to pregnancy and childbirth, such as lactation. It requires employers to provide similar rights and freedom to breastfeeding employees who need to address breastfeeding related needs, as they would other co-workers with other similarly limiting medical conditions. The Act protects breastfeeding mothers who are not covered by the FLSA Break Time for Nursing Mothers law. For more information, visit http://www.eeoc.gov/laws/types/pregnancy_guidance.cfm
- **Recommended materials**
 - *Break time for Nursing Mothers Employee Rights* card (stock #13-06-14199)
 - [EEOC Fact Sheet](#)
- Check participant understanding! Ask participants:
 - Which law protects a mother's right to express her milk at work? (FLSA)
 - Which guidance includes lactation as a condition of pregnancy and further protects a mother's right to express her milk at work? (EEOC)

Station 2: Benefits of Mother-Friendly Worksites to employers

- Employers who support breastfeeding employees at their worksites report:
 - Improved staff morale.
 - Better public image.
 - Overall reduced health-care costs.
 - Lower sick day rates due to a sick child.
 - Increased employee retention.
 - Increased productivity.
 - Higher employee job satisfaction.

- **Recommended material**
 - *Mother-Friendly Worksite brochure* (stock #13-58)
- Check participant understanding! Ask Participants:
 - List 2 benefits of breastfeeding to the employer.

Station 3: Talking to your employer

- Provide information on talking to employers and co-workers about breastfeeding. Encourage participants to:
 - Find out if the employer's business or workplace is a designated Texas Mother-Friendly (MFW) Worksite. Show participants how to access the MFW directory on www.texasmotherfriendly.org or have a laptop available at the station for them to check the listing.
 - Talk to the human resources (HR) department at the workplace if there is one. HR will know of any policies or programs that can help you combine working and breastfeeding. Some larger companies have an employee wellness program, an occupational nurse, or an employee relations program that might be able to support you in talking with your employer.
 - Schedule a meeting with the employer to discuss returning to work and the options that are available.
 - Practice what they plan to say to their employer with friends or family. This will help ease their nerves and be prepared.
 - Explain why breastfeeding is important to them and the baby, and how it benefits the company.
 - Let their employer know that they'll need time to pump. Offer to come in early or stay late to make up for the time.
 - Discuss their ideas on where they would pump and store the breast milk, including how often they think they will need to pump while at work.
 - Ask the employer if they can start back to work part time at first, job-share with another employee, or telecommute or work from home. If the employer is open to it, ask if you can bring your baby to work.
- **Recommended material**
 - *Breastfeeding and Returning to Work brochure* (stock #13-06-11496)
- Check participant understanding! Ask participants:
 - Identify one thing that they can discuss with their employer about breastfeeding and returning to work.

Station 4: Talking to your child care provider

- Provide tips for moms to share with their child care providers, on how they can support breastfeeding. Parents should:
 - Try to find a child-care provider that supports breastfeeding and is close to their work.
 - Let their child-care provider know that they're breastfeeding.
 - Ask what policies the child care providers have in place to support breastfeeding clients. Texas Child Care Licensing Minimum Standards for Child-Care Centers require that a comfortable place for breastfeeding and supportive policies be provided in Texas child-care centers. Facility policies must inform all parents that they have the right to breastfeed or provide breastmilk for their child while in care. Also, ask if they are a

Texas Mother-Friendly Worksite to support their own employees in breastfeeding. For more information on the Texas Child care Licensing Minimum Standards for Child Care Centers, visit

http://www.dfps.state.tx.us/Child_Care/Child_Care_Standards_and_Regulations/default.asp

- Explain to the care provider that breastmilk is food and does not require any special handling.
- Ask child care provider to hold their baby on her lap in an upright position during feeding. Be sure that the care provider knows that breastfed babies usually eat smaller, more frequent meals.
- Let their child care provider know when they plan to pick the baby up. They should ask her not to feed the baby right before they arrive from work, as they'll want to breastfeed their babies very soon after pick-up, and having a hungry baby makes this easier! Ask her to use comforting techniques other than feeding if the baby seems hungry toward the end of the day.
- **Recommended material**
 - *Breastfeeding and Returning to Work* brochure (stock #13-06-11496)
- Check participant understanding! Ask participants:
 - Which standards require child care centers to provide a comfortable place for breastfeeding and have breastfeeding supportive policies in place? (Texas Child Care Licensing Minimum Standards for Child-Care Centers)

Station 5: Tips for returning to work

- Provide tips on how to make breastfeeding and returning to work easier. Encourage moms to:
 - Take as much time as they can for maternity leave. Encourage moms to talk to their bosses or human resources department about their options.
 - Breastfeed often to build up a good milk supply.
 - Call their health plan to ask about how to get a breast pump
 - Begin pumping and storing milk about two weeks before the return to work date. If going back to work full time, two weeks of pumping one time a day should give mom plenty of milk stored in the freezer.
 - Talk to family and friends about their plans to breastfeed. Let them know what they will need in order to stick to their breastfeeding plan.
 - Start back to work in the middle of the work week. Having a short first week will help mom and baby adjust.
 - Have at least one practice run where they leave the baby with a caregiver who will feed the baby a bottle of breastmilk. This helps the baby to get used to the bottle before mom goes back to work. Encourage moms to take this time to do something special for themselves; a nap, a movie, time with a friend, or their spouse. The baby may not easily take the bottle if mom is in the same room.
 - Talk to friends and family to find out whether they have any experience with breastfeeding while at work and ask for their support.
 - Talk to their coworkers. They may find other mothers who have pumped at work. Encourage moms to learn as much as they can from them. Find out if anyone else is pregnant or breastfeeding, and consider a group meeting with the boss to make arrangements.

- Visit the child-care center a few times before baby's first day. Touch toys and items in the center. Mom's milk will build up immunities to germs in the child-care center to protect her baby.
- Make a backup plan on what to do if the baby is sick or the baby's caregiver is unavailable on a workday.
- **Recommended material**
 - *Breastfeeding and Returning to Work* brochure (stock #13-06-11496)
- Check participant understanding! Ask participants:
 - List 1 tip that can make breastfeeding and returning to work easier.

Station 6: Keeping up your milk supply

- Concerns about milk supply are the number one reason moms start supplementing with formula. Give moms plenty of tips on how to keep up their milk supply after returning to work.
 - Let participants know that breastfeeding the baby is the best way to make more milk. Tell mom to check for correct position and latch, and to ensure that the baby is nursing efficiently at the breast.
 - Encourage mom to nurse frequently whenever she and baby are together, and for as long as her baby is actively nursing. The more often mom breastfeeds, the more milk she will make.
 - Tell participants to offer both breasts at each feeding. Let baby finish the first side before offering the second.
 - Encourage the participants to avoid all solids, water and formula, and to give only breastmilk, if baby is younger than six months.
 - Encourage participants to get adequate rest, to drink liquids to thirst, and to eat a variety of healthy and nutritious foods.
 - Encourage participants to pump breast milk at work as often as they would nurse the baby at home. Massaging the breasts while pumping can increase milk supply as well as the calorie content of breast milk.
 - Show participants the video *Maximizing Milk Production with Hands on Pumping*, and teach about the use of soothing sounds while pumping, such as a recording of their babies' coos or having the *Sing to Me* lullaby CD play in the background as mom pumps.
 - Encourage the participants to take good care of their breast pumps. Encourage them to read the pump instructions or watch the video so that they can know when to replace the valve or if there is need to use a larger breast flange. Both of these things can affect milk supply.
 - Encourage participants to take breastmilk vacations if and when possible. This means taking a day or two off work to be together with the baby and breastfeed often for a few days in a row. This is a great way to increase milk supply.
- **Recommended Materials**
 - *Breastfeeding and Returning to Work* brochure (stock #13-06-11496)
 - *Maximizing Milk Production with Hands on Pumping* video
 - *Sing to me lullaby CD's* (stock #CD0030)
- Check participant understanding! Ask participants:
 - List 2 ways that can help you keep up your milk supply

Station 7: Breastmilk storage guidelines

- Provide guidelines on how to store breastmilk. Inform participants that:
 - Breastmilk can be stored in a plastic or glass bottle with a screw-on lid or in sterile zip-seal breastmilk storage bags (available in the baby section of most grocery stores).
 - Storage containers should be labeled with the date the milk was pumped and baby’s name. This is helpful if the baby goes to child care where there is more than one infant or if more than one mom is pumping at work.
 - Pumped breastmilk should be cooled as soon as possible. Breast milk can be stored in a refrigerator or in a cooler with ice packs. The milk can also be frozen if it’s not going to be used right away.
 - Frozen breastmilk should be thawed under running water that is gradually warmed, or in a cup or bowl of warm water. NEVER microwave breastmilk.

Storage guidelines

Storage Location	Best used within	Still safe to use within
Insulated cooler bag	24 hours	24 hours
Refrigerator	3 days	5 days
Freezer section inside a refrigerator	2 weeks	2 weeks
Freezer with a separate door or deep freezer	6 months	12 months

- **Recommended material**
 - *Breast Milk Storage Guidelines* magnets (stock #13-06-11968)
- Check participant understanding! Ask participants:
 - How long can breastmilk be stored in an insulated cooler bag?
 - How do you thaw frozen breastmilk?

New Guidance Provides More Protection for Breastfeeding Moms Returning to Work

In July 2014, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) released new *Enforcement Guidance on Pregnancy Discrimination and Related Issues*. The new guidance protects breastfeeding mothers who are not covered by the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) Break Time for Nursing Mothers law. EEOC clarified that lactation is a condition related to pregnancy. The Pregnancy Discrimination Act requires that pregnant employees be treated the same as non-pregnant employees who are similar in their ability or inability to work and prohibits discrimination of female employees based on pregnancy - whether past, present or planned - as well as any medical conditions related to pregnancy and childbirth, such as lactation. It requires employers to provide similar rights and freedom to breastfeeding employees who need to address breastfeeding related needs, as they would other co-workers with other similarly limiting medical conditions.

An excerpt from the guidance, in section I. 4, b, Discrimination Based on Lactation and Breastfeeding, states:

To continue producing an adequate milk supply and to avoid painful complications associated with delays in expressing milk, a nursing mother will typically need to breastfeed or express breast milk using a pump two or three times over the duration of an eight-hour workday. An employee must have the same freedom to address such lactation-related needs that she and her co-workers would have to address other similarly limiting medical conditions. For example, if an employer allows employees to change their schedules or use sick leave for routine doctor appointments and to address non-incapacitating medical conditions, then it must allow female employees to change their schedules or use sick leave for lactation-related needs under similar circumstances.

For more information on the EEOC guidance see http://www.eeoc.gov/laws/types/pregnancy_guidance.cfm

For more information on the FLSA Break Time for Nursing Mothers law see <http://www.dol.gov/whd/regs/compliance/whdfs73.htm>

If you are being told that you cannot express your milk at work, share a copy of this handout with your human resources office staff. Then ask to meet with them to discuss the best way for you to express your milk at work.