

Why Do Employed Mothers Need Pumping Breaks?

Lactation is the process of making milk for a baby. It is different from other body processes.

Lactation requires consistent, predictable removal of milk from breasts to maintain milk supply, for comfort and to prevent illness. Milk is removed through the mechanical process of pumping the breast, either with an electric pump or through manual expression.

Women need pumping breaks so they can continue to directly breastfeed their babies at home and provide human milk when they are separated.

The law protects a mother's right to lactation breaks.

Therefore an employed mother needs:

TIME

- Typically, about 20 minutes to pump milk, store milk and clean up
- Some mothers can pump quicker and some might take longer
- Employed mothers need time to properly store their milk, wash hands and redress

SPACE

- Employed mothers need a space that is private, clean, close to their work area and is not within a bathroom

PUMP

- Employed mothers need a pump. The law does not require a pump
- For most employed mothers, a double sided, electric pump will be the most efficient
- If a mother has a single sided pump, her lactation break time may increase
- Access to a pump is important, for help, www.breastfeedla.org

Mothers prevented from consistently and adequately removing milk, may suffer from:

- Decreased milk supply (causing her to supplement with artificial infant milk or wean)
- Plugged ducts and mastitis (breast infections that may require an absence)

