

Breast Pumping Guide: Timing and Duration Tips

Every breast pumping situation is unique. It's important to find a routine that works for you and your baby. The following scenarios may provide general guidance to support you.

EXCLUSIVELY PUMPING

Start pumping within one hour after birth. Pump 8-12 times in 24 hours. Pump both breasts for 15 minutes with a hospital-grade pump.

TEMPORARY SEPARATION

Pump both breasts for 15 minutes as many times as baby would feed while separated.

BABY TAKING A BOTTLE FEEDING

Pump both breasts for 15 minutes each time baby feeds from a bottle. Pumping replaces nipple stimulation missed during bottle feeding.

CREATE A FREEZER SUPPLY

One extra pumping session per day (often in the morning). Pump both breasts for 15 minutes after baby breastfeeds. Start pumping for returning to work one month after baby is born or halfway through maternity leave (whichever is sooner).

INCREASE MILK SUPPLY

Pump both breasts for 15 minutes multiple times per day after breastfeeding baby. It may take 5-7 days to see an increase in milk production.

ENGORGEMENT RELIEF

Pump breasts until comfortable (not empty) using minimal suction. Limit pumping as much as possible. Consider applying ice to the breasts for 15 minutes after breastfeeding or pumping.

IF BABY IS HAVING TROUBLE LATCHING

Use a pump for 1-3 minutes until the nipple is more everted, then attempt to latch baby.



* If you have risk factors for impaired lactation such as: polycystic ovarian syndrome, thyroid disorder, previous heart or breast surgery, or diabetes; please make an appointment with an IBCLC to discuss your individualized pumping routine.