

## Information for breastfeeding military mothers



### **CHILDCARE TIPS**

Active Duty military breastfeeding mothers and their babies need extra consideration when providing breastmilk for use at daycare. The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends exclusive breastfeeding for 6 months, and continuing for at least one year with the addition of solids. Your childcare provider can assist you to be successful and maintain your milk supply by following some simple tips outlined below.

#### **Have a trial run before your return to work**

Speak with your daycare provider about arranging a short day at day care, before your return to work, so your baby can be introduced to his new caregivers and you can practice pumping and saving your milk while separated.

#### **Request a place and time to breastfeed**

You may want and need to breastfeed your baby at drop-off and pick-up times, especially if you have a long commute to/from work. It helps to keep your milk supply up and is a special way to reconnect with your baby after work. Ask that daycare NOT feed your baby within 1-2 hours of your arrival. Breastfeeding in public is permitted under Federal and State law. You may breastfeed in uniform, it is NOT against uniform regulations.

#### **Storage of your expressed breastmilk**

First choice is your breastmilk directly from you, second choice is your refrigerated breastmilk followed by your frozen breastmilk. Fresh breastmilk is good at room temperature for 4-6 hours, refrigerated breastmilk is good for 6-8 days, and frozen breastmilk is safe for 6 months or 12 months in a deep freezer. Once thawed breastmilk is safe for 24 hours.

#### **Handling of your expressed breastmilk**

Expressed breastmilk may be warmed to feeding temperature by placing it in a container of lukewarm water (such as a mini crockpot), or a baby bottle warmer. Daycare should not heat your milk higher than body temperature (98°F). Breast milk can be thawed using similar methods in about 10 minutes. Remind your provider to NEVER microwave breastmilk, it creates hotspots and destroys important nutrients and antibodies.

Once thawed, breastmilk will separate with the cream layer rising to the top. After warming, swirl the milk gently to mix the milk. Do NOT shake breastmilk it can damage the protective cells.

Breastmilk is not a 'hazardous substance' and per OSHA does NOT require special handling, use of protective gloves, or placement in a separate refrigerator. Some institutions do require the use of gloves when handling or wiping up spills. Make sure that all of your bags or bottles are properly labeled and placed within a second separate container to prevent leaks or spills.

## Feeding baby expressed breastmilk

- **Average infant intake months 1-6**

Your milk supply and baby's intake remains the same from months 1-6 with a peak milk intake of 25-35 ounces per day. Average feedings are between 3-5 ounces total. Breastfed infants need the SAME amount of breastmilk each day. They more effectively utilize the nutrients and their rate of growth slows.

- **Amount of milk needed for 8 or 12 hours**

On average you will need to bring in between 8.5-11.5 ounces for an 8 hour shift. For a 12 hour shift, you will need to provide between 12.5-17.5 ounces. You can use the following example to determine how much to bring in:

**Avg 30 ounces /24 hours  
8 hour = 1/3 of 24 hours  
1/3 of 30 of ounces =  
10 ounces needed**

Consider bringing your expressed breastmilk in 1-2 ounce bottles or bags for a young baby (up to 6 weeks) and 2-4 ounces for an older baby to prevent overfeeding and waste.

- **Paced-Bottle Feeding**

Bottle feeding needs to remain as close to breastfeeding as possible to help prevent breast refusal and overfeeding. Your daycare provider can do this by using the Paced-Bottle feeding method. Teach them to hold the baby upright and keep the bottle horizontal. Tickle baby's lips and allow him to grasp the nipple. Baby controls the feeding, and the feeding should take 20-30 minutes.

- **Reusing expressed breastmilk**

Sometimes an infant will not finish a bottle of breastmilk. Guidelines vary, but it is considered safe to reuse a bottle of expressed breastmilk within 1-2 hours at room temperature, or up to 4-6 hours if refrigerated, due to the antibacterial and infection protection factors.

## Crying, Holding and Pacifiers

Breastfed babies are used to being held for feedings and can suck at the breast without removing milk. Crying does NOT always mean the infant is hungry. He may just need to suck (or be held) and this is a great time for your daycare provider to offer a pacifier. This also prevents wasting a bottle of breastmilk if reusing is not an option.

## Breastfed infant stools

Remind your provider that breastfed infant stools are generally mustard yellow, semi-liquid, and may contain seeds or lumps. Young infants may stool with each feeding, while older infants often go several days between bowel movements and then have a large, soft stool. This is normal. Infants fed a combination of breastmilk and formula will have firmer and brownish stools. Dry, solid stools in an infant are NOT normal and should be reported to your baby's physician.

## Feeding solid foods

At or around 6 months, per American Academy of Pediatrics guidelines, infants may start solids. Have daycare provide solids while at daycare, this allows you to exclusively breastfeed during your off-duty hours and helps to maintain your milk supply. Average intake of breastmilk is 15-25 ounces from 7-24 months and varies depending on how much solid food baby eats.

After one year, breastmilk still provides calories, fats, proteins and antibodies to your toddler. Breastmilk can and should be given if you are still pumping and want your child to receive your expressed breastmilk. USDA and FDA guidelines for childcare centers state that "*breastmilk meets the requirement of a milk substitute and can be given to children over the age of 12 months*" A medical statement is NOT needed, but may be helpful if you receive pushback.