LACTATION SUPPORT
REQUIRES FEW RESOURCES

Companies both large and small benefit from providing a lactation support program. When the following simple, cost-effective components are provided companies enjoy the biggest savings.

1. **Privacy to Express Milk**
   - If women do not work in a private office, a small, private space (as small as 4’ x 5’) can be set up for a lactation room. A woman produces milk on a constant basis (see page 6 of Easy Steps to Supporting Breastfeeding Employees). This means she needs to express milk approximately every 3 hours to maintain a healthy milk supply and relieve uncomfortable fullness while separated from her infant. Milk can be refrigerated or stored in a personal cooler to provide to the baby later. Many companies also provide a hospital-grade electric breast pump that makes pumping quicker and more efficient (see Easy Steps to Supporting Breastfeeding Employees to learn more about accessing quality breast pumps).

   Employees should never be asked to express milk or breastfeed in a restroom. Breast milk is food, and restrooms are an unsanitary place to prepare food. In addition, electrical outlets are usually unavailable and it is difficult and uncomfortable managing breast pump equipment in a toiled stall.

2. **Flexible Breaks**
   - Each milk expression session usually takes around 15 minutes plus time to get to and from the lactation room. Breastfeeding employees typically need no more than an hour per work day to express milk, which can be divided between usual paid breaks and the meal period. If milk expression takes longer than expected, a common solution is to allow employees the flexibility to come in early or stay late, or to use a portion of their lunch period, to make up time.

3. **Education**
   - Employees value information they receive during their pregnancy about continuing to breastfeed upon returning to work. Pamphlets, resources, lunchtime prenatal classes, and a lactation consultant can help employees feel more prepared (see the Resource Guide section of the Etool Kit).

4. **Support**
   - Supportive policies and practices that enable women to successfully return to work and breastfeed. Providing support is a temporary need for each breastfeeding employee. Once babies accepting attitude.

   Supporting Breastfeeding Employees). Some of these companies employ significant numbers of women and some do not. Examples of large, mid-sized, and small companies and public agencies with supportive lactation programs include:

   - Texas Instruments
   - Home Depot
   - Texas Instruments
   - Home Depot

   Companies that Support Breastfeeding Employees
   - Maternal and Infant Health Outcomes in Developed Countries. United States.
   - 18(1), 61-65.
   - American Journal of Health Promotion
   - Pediatrics, 100 (2), 148-153.
   - Obstetrics and Gynecology.
   - Pediatrics, 100 (2), 148-153.
   - Maternal and Infant Health Outcomes in Developed Countries. United States.
   - 18(1), 61-65.
   - American Journal of Health Promotion
   - Pediatrics, 100 (2), 148-153.
   - Obstetrics and Gynecology.
   - Pediatrics, 100 (2), 148-153.
   - Maternal and Infant Health Outcomes in Developed Countries. United States.

   If only employers knew how much a supportive environment means. Nursing moms don’t need much…a private place, time to pump, and someone who can help answer your questions. It’s not asking a lot, but you get as much in return! I cannot even imagine being able to continue breastfeeding without this warm, friendly environment that helps me know I can reach my goals. I think my employer gains, too, with fewer sick days for employees. I breastfed my little girl for a year, and never took a single day of sick leave!

   Gina Wilczewski
   Manager, Media Relations
   Boston Medical Center

   References:
   - Maternal and Infant Health Outcomes in Developed Countries. United States.
   - Maternal and Infant Health Outcomes in Developed Countries. United States.

   The Business Case for Breastfeeding
   Published by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), Maternal and Child Health Bureau.

   www.hrsa.gov/pregnancyandbeyond

   1. HRSA, the lead U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Agency for improving access to health care for vulnerable and underserved populations.
   2. This handbook was produced under contract for the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Health Resources and Services Administration, Health Information Network, and the HRSA Web Design and Production Office.

   Mid-Sized Businesses (100-499 Employees)
   - Petco
   - Sears Roebuck & Co. #2179

   Small Businesses (1-99 Employees)
   - Adidas North Carolina (Oregon)
   - HCG Software, LLC (Oregon)
   - Pecan Ridge School (Texas)
   - Western Environmental Law Center

   Resources and Services Administration by Every Mother, Inc. and Rich Winter Design and Multimedia.
The Business Case for Breastfeeding

Companies successful at retaining valued employees after childbirth find that two components can make the difference: providing dedicated space (as small as 4’ x 5’) for breastfeeding employees to express milk in privacy, and providing worksite lactation support. This booklet provides business executives and managers, as well as human resource managers, with the business case for breastfeeding...how supporting breastfeeding employees contributes to their company’s return on investment (ROI).

The Return on Investment
Supporting your breastfeeding employees saves money. Here’s how.

1. Breastfeeding employees miss work less often
That’s because breastfed infants are healthier! Human milk boosts an infant’s immune system and helps protect him from common childhood illnesses, infections, and dermatitis. For infants in childcare settings where they are exposed to a multitude of germs and viruses, human milk provides extra insurance against getting sick.

Business Savings
- The insurance company CIGNA conducted a 2-year study of 343 employees who participated in their lactation support program, and found that the program resulted in an annual savings of $240,000 in health care expenses, 62 percent fewer prescriptions, and $60,000 savings in reduced absenteeism rates.7

3. Investing in a worksite lactation support program can yield substantial dividends to the company
Companies of all types have found that implementing a lactation support program can have a positive impact on their bottom line. Just a few of these important dividends include lower turnover rates, additional health care savings, higher productivity and loyalty, and positive public relations.

Lower Turnover Rates
Employees are more likely to return to work after childbirth when their workplace provides a supportive environment for continued breastfeeding. Being able to keep experienced employees after childbirth means lowering or eliminating the costs a company otherwise would incur to hire temporary staff or to recruit, hire, and train replacement staff, both of which involve additional lost revenue while getting these new staff up to speed.

Business Savings
- Mutual of Omaha found that health care costs for newborns are three times lower for babies whose mothers participate in their company’s maternity and lactation program. Per person health care costs were $2,146 more for employees who did not participate in the program than a company-wide yearly savings of $113,881 in health care claims for the breastfeeding mothers and babies.6

Positive Public Relations
Providing a supportive environment for breastfeeding employees improves your overall company image and enhances your ability to recruit top-notch staff. Many companies with support programs receive local, state, and national recognition and media attention, a positive boost to recruitment efforts and general goodwill in the community.

2. Breastfeeding lowers health care costs
The reduced health care costs for breastfed infants translate into lower medical insurance claims for businesses. Babies who are not breastfed visit the physician more often, spend more days in the hospital, and require more prescriptions than breastfed infants. One study found that for every 1,000 babies not breastfed, there were 2,025 extra physician visits, 212 extra hospitalization days, and 649 extra prescriptions for these illnesses alone - ear, respiratory, and gastrointestinal infections.8 This does not include the risks of numerous other childhood illnesses and infections, or women’s diseases such as pre-menopausal breast cancer, which are reduced when a mother breastfeeds.9

Business Savings
- The insurance company CIGNA conducted a 2-year study of 343 employees who participated in their lactation support program, and found that the program resulted in an annual savings of $240,000 in health care expenses, 62 percent fewer prescriptions, and $60,000 savings in reduced absenteeism rates.7

Additional Health Care Savings
Companies that provide comprehensive onsite lactation support programs enjoy additional health care cost savings. That’s because these programs encourage employees to breastfeed longer and to breastfeed exclusively to 6 months (the recommendation of the American Academy of Pediatrics) which provides the greatest health advantages for breastfeeding employees and their infants. When programs include prenatal education to help improve birth outcomes, the savings are even greater.

Business Savings
- Mutual of Omaha found that health care costs for newborns are three times lower for babies whose mothers participate in their company’s maternity and lactation program. Per person health care costs were $2,146 more for employees who did not participate in the program than a company-wide yearly savings of $113,881 in health care claims for the breastfeeding mothers and babies.6

Higher Productivity and Loyalty
Employees whose companies provide breastfeeding support consistently report improved morale, better satisfaction with their jobs, and higher productivity.7 They also feel the support eases their transition back to work and enables them to return from maternity leave sooner.

Business Savings
- Although 80 percent of its employees are male, the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power found that a lactation support program for mothers, fathers, and partners of male employees made a dramatic difference in reducing turnover and absenteeism rates for both male and female workers. They also found that 83 percent of employees were more positive about the company as a result of the program, and 67 percent intended to make it a long-term employer.7

Profits and People
Today, women with children are the fastest growing segment of the workforce. Nearly 35 percent of women with children under the age of 6 are employed.6 In the United States, more than 70 percent of all new mothers today choose to breastfeed to give their babies important nutrition and health benefits.10 Family-friendly policies and programs that provide lactation support for both female employees and paternal employees of male employees enhance your employee health benefits package and help protect your company’s investment in staff through better retention of valued employees.

Percentage of Infant Illnesses Requiring 1-Day Maternal Absence from Work1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage of Breastfed Infants</th>
<th>Percentage of Formula Fed Infants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>25%</td>
<td>75%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Retention Rate for Employees of Companies with Lactation Support Programs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Companies with Lactation Support Programs</th>
<th>National Average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>94.2%</td>
<td>59%</td>
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