



Returning to work after maternity leave

Tips for new moms from the Concordia Disability and Survivor Plan

Counting tiny fingers and tiny toes as you rock the night away – your baby has changed your world forever. Concordia Plans wish God's blessing on you and your little one.

While you celebrate the joy of your child's birth, we know that all too quickly you'll be returning to His service. To help your family with this transition, we're providing the following tips.

CHOOSING DAY CARE

You can alleviate some of the stress of returning to work by carefully choosing a day care provider you trust.

- Make sure you and your spouse agree on the care you want for your baby.
- Ask your pediatrician, neighbors and coworkers for recommendations of day care providers.
- Concordia Health Plan members can call the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) at 866-726-5267 for day care referrals.
- Prepare a list of questions to ask potential care providers and make notes so you can clearly recall their answers.

After you have selected a provider, consider a transition period where your child gradually spends more time each day in day care, leading up to a full day. Make sure your provider has everything needed prior to your baby's first day (i.e., diapers, extra outfits, emergency contact information).

TALK TO YOUR EMPLOYER ABOUT RETURNING TO WORK

Talk with your employer about a return-to-work date. Consider returning mid-week so you can work a couple of days then have the weekend to catch up on sleep, review your schedule and make any needed changes.

Ask your employer about any required paperwork and any changes in duties or assignments that occurred while you were away.

BACK INTO THE ROUTINE

Planning ahead and getting in a morning routine can benefit you as you return to work. Try having a couple of practice mornings, so you can see how much time it takes to get yourself and your family ready in the morning. You will also want to keep an overview of your child's daily routine for your day care provider.

Develop a list of items you need to pack each morning or pack the night before to keep from feeling rushed. Be sure to factor in time for traffic and drop-off procedures.

THE BIG DAY

When the day arrives to return to work, remember to give yourself extra time. Meet with your supervisor and coworkers to catch up on what you've missed. Take a few personal items, like a picture of your baby or a small toy, that will help you feel close while you are away. You can also ask your caregiver to send you brief text updates to let you know how your baby is doing. If you feel emotional, remember it's OK. Give yourself a break!

TIPS FOR NURSING MOMS

If you want to continue nursing, you will want to be sure to:

- Talk to your employer about an appropriate and private location in the office to use your breast pump.
- Make arrangements for your breaks.
- Take extra nursing supplies like storage bottles and breast pads.
- Take extra nutritious snacks and water.
- Introduce your baby to a bottle before going back to work to make sure he/she is comfortable drinking from it.
- Visit with a lactation consultant to help answer questions (Concordia Health Plan members can use Included Health to find a consultant).
- Encourage other family members to give your baby a bottle so they get used to someone else feeding them.

IT'S OK TO ASK FOR HELP

When you have a new baby, your family and friends are usually anxious to help. Don't be afraid to seek help from your support network with household chores, errands or meals. This will allow you some extra time to focus on your baby.

If you find you need additional assistance, either personally for stress or depression, or for your home, like finding a cleaning company you can trust, the EAP can help. Call 866-726-5267 for more information.

CREATE A BACKUP PLAN

Emergencies happen – your child may get sick or your day care provider may be unavailable. Think about different "what if" scenarios and possible solutions.

If you do have a doctor's appointment during the workday, you'll need to talk with your supervisor about how this time will be accounted for based on your company's leave policy. Clearly communicate your work schedule and backup plan to your coworkers.



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