

Baby drinks very little expressed Breast Milk

QUESTION:I have gone back to work part-time and my 5-month old baby needs to take 1 feed from the bottle. However, she only takes 60 to 80ml of milk when I am away. I am concerned that she might not be taking enough, and she is only passing motion once every 4 to 5 days.

ANSWER:You have been doing very well, being committed to fully feed your baby breastmilk! Your baby sounds very smart. She seems to like her milk best just the way she has been getting it - straight from the source. I do understand your dilemma. You want to be sure that your baby is well-fed during the time you are at work. That is a concern that many mothers combining work with breastfeeding have.

Since you only work part-time and thus only away from your baby for 1 feed, your baby having only a small feed while you are away is not something to be too worried about. Your baby's intake will regulate itself. She will nurse more frequently and take larger amounts directly at your breasts when you are at home with her. In this way, your baby will get enough.

Some such "fussy" babies whose mothers work full-time are reported to likewise take only a token amount to keep themselves from being too hungry during the time their Mummies are away at work. They will then have a "feast" when their Mommy is home! They too thrive well with such a feeding pattern.

One concession for you is that since your baby takes only a small feed while you are away, you don't have to be overly worried about having to express a HUGE amount of breastmilk!

If your baby continues this feeding pattern however, it is important to monitor your baby's output. A baby over 5 or 6 weeks of age should be wetting 5 to 6 diapers a day. Her urine output is an important indicator to whether she is getting enough milk. Bowel movements are not too important an indicator of milk sufficiency, as long as she doesn't seem to have too much difficulty in passing motion. It is actually quite normal for some fully breastfed babies who are more than 6 weeks old to have only one bowel movement every few days. Their absorption of nutrients is more complete and thus there is less waste to send out.

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