

Wearable Pump Guidance

Many pumps can be portable, but not all are wearable. A wearable pump is a hands-free device worn in your base layer that is cordless and tubeless, intended to remove milk while you move, work or rest. Wearable pumps prioritize convenience. The user does not have to actively engage while using this device to collect milk and hands-on pumping may be difficult to achieve.

General information about wearable pumps:

- Usually quiet, may have fewer parts and it is generally easy to clean
- Flange sizes may vary from brand to brand
- Battery life and charging times vary
- Milk collection containers come in different sizes
- Can be discreet

Wearable pumps may be used in these instances:

- As a secondary pump for occasional milk removal when a hand pump or plug-in electric pump is not an option.
- When a milk supply is considered well-established, typically after 4-6 weeks postpartum.

Wearable pump cautions:

- Wearable pumps may not work for all anatomy
- Ill-fitting/uncomfortable pumps and/or improper flange sizing can lead to inefficient milk removal and impact milk supply
- Improper flange sizing may cause pain and damage
- Anecdotal reports suggest that this device may be less effective at achieving optimal milk removal for some users from compression or the weight of the pump, and may contribute to undersupply
- Overuse may cause oversupply, tissue irritation and/or damage
- The pressure that wearable pumps apply to the tissue has anecdotally shown to restrict output
- When using, the milk supply should be closely monitored by user
- Important, please note: The user of a wearable pump is not required to multitask and should not feel obligated to take on additional responsibilities simply because these devices make it possible. Since the user does not need to be actively engaged with the device to express milk, this convenience can unintentionally create a gradual erosion of the hard-won protections that support dedicated pumping time. When wearable pumps are framed as an invisible or effortless way to remove milk, it reinforces the notion that

milk output is the sole objective. This can promote the belief that multitasking while pumping is the ideal standard. In reality, milk expression is more than just a task to be completed — you are worth more than your milk yield, and you deserve protected time and space devoted solely to this work.

Wearable pumps may **not** be an appropriate tool for:

- Exclusive pumping
- Establishing a milk supply
- A parent with an infant younger than 4-6 weeks of age
- Use as a primary pump; the motors are smaller, often not as strong as traditional double electric pumps and can negatively impact milk supply
- Being continuously worn; there is a risk of damaging tissue
- Use with a client that will be expressing milk due to regular separation from baby (return to work or school, baby in NICU, etc.)
- For use while sleeping

Wearable pumps can be a great option if you are pumping only occasionally, are using a quality double electric pump as well, or have a baby who is nursing effectively. Speak with a lactation support expert for more information on choosing a pump and protecting your milk supply!