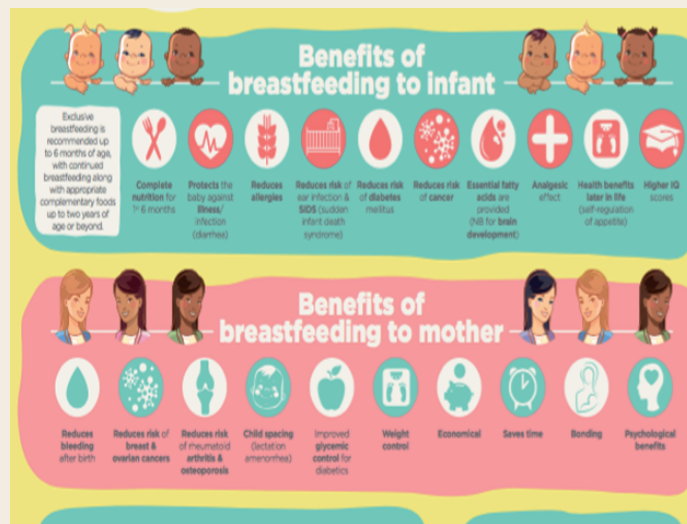




## Let us make breastfeeding at work, work



Breastfeeding is the natural and healthiest way to feed babies from birth. Breastfeeding is the key to a comprehensive and sustained development in our society. SKGH is celebrating the National breastfeeding Week in the first week of November with the global theme of "Enabling breastfeeding, making a difference for working parents "Being a baby friendly hospital SKGH takes pride in supporting female employees to continue breastfeeding at work. SKGH calls all employers, companies and organizations to make workplace breastfeeding friendly. Breastfeeding is a low-cost intervention which yields greater economic returns for the employer.



## Why is it important to support breastfeeding at workplace?

Breastfeeding provides the baby with adequate nutrition, immunity, brain development and bonding. A breastfeeding mother is at reduced risk of breast, uterus and ovarian cancers and many other maternal illnesses. Although the benefits of breastfeeding are known, many working women are forced to choose between work and breastfeeding following the maternity leave.



Lack of support for breastfeeding at workplace eventually leads to cessation of breastfeeding. A breastfeeding friendly organization enables breastfeeding mothers to continue breastfeeding at work. Sufficient time, resources and services are provided to help mothers recover in the postnatal period, lays foundation for bonding between mother and baby along with sustained breastfeeding practices. Breastfeeding rates drops significantly when women join work, this can be reversed when workplaces provide adequate breastfeeding support.

## What are the benefits to the company/employer by providing breastfeeding friendly workplace?

1. Decreased healthcare costs: Breastfed babies and mothers are healthier and therefore less doctor visits and less insurance claims leading to lower medical care costs.
2. Decreased employee absenteeism: Lactating mother take less sick leave and escort leave for their babies.



3.Higher productivity: Less absenteeism leads to higher productivity and saves money.

4.Increased retention of female employees: Female employees choose to return back leading to retention of efficient employees, reducing the cost to hire and train new employees and thereby reducing employee turnover rates.

5.Positive company image: Uplifts company's image. Described as a company that takes interest in the welfare of the employees.

6.Increase in employee morale and loyalty.

## **How can a company support breastfeeding mums?**

Various workplace strategies are available to make workplace

1. A written policy to support breastfeeding practices at workplace.
2. Paid maternity leave
3. Flexible working hours
4. Part time job option or work from home option
5. lactation breaks
6. Physical facilities-availability of breastfeeding room for milk expression and refrigeration facility to store expressed milk.
7. Guidance to access lactation support in community.
8. Educational material to support breastfeeding.
9. Non-discrimination against pregnant and breastfeeding woman.

## **What physical infrastructure is required to support breastfeeding at work?**

Breastfeeding/lactation room at workplace is essential for working mothers to continue breastfeeding. These rooms provide a private space for mums to express breastmilk and store until they can take home the breastmilk.

The breastfeeding room should include the following:

Minimum requirements for a lactation room

- √ Designated private room or space with signboards
- √ Clean easily accessible and safe
- √ Breastfeeding chairs and footrest
- √ Refrigerator space
- √ Functioning sink
- √ Electric breast pump(optional)
- √ Breastfeeding -friendly messages.
- √ Artwork, soft lighting and bulletin board.
- √ Provide a comment box to allow mothers to offer suggestions on improving the room.

Optional

- √ Providing breastfeeding accessories like bottles, pump, nursing pads, gel packs
- √ A library with books, brochures and posters containing information on pregnancy, early childhood and breast feeding

Reference

UNICEF-<https://www.unicef.org/parenting>