

Traveling with a Breastfed Baby: Essential Tips for a Stress-Free Trip

By Philmar Mendoza Kabua, BSN

Traveling with an infant can be tricky, but breastfeeding is a convenient way to feed your baby on the go. With a little planning, you and your little one can have a relaxing trip.

Preparation

- **Doctor's Visit:** Schedule a checkup with your baby's pediatrician before your trip. Talk about your travel plans and make sure your child is up to date on vaccinations.
- **Research Your Destination:** Read about breastfeeding laws and customs at your destination. Are there nursing spaces available? Is public breastfeeding culturally acceptable? You can also check if your hotel room has a mini fridge for storing breast milk.

Packing

- **Essential Supplies:** Pack extra nursing pads, lanolin cream (if needed) and a comfortable nursing bra.
- **Nursing Cover:** A lightweight nursing cover or scarf can provide privacy and comfort when breastfeeding in public places. If you choose to use a nursing cover, opt for breathable fabrics like cotton muslin for hot weather.
- **Breast Pump:** Consider bringing a breast pump if you plan to be away from your baby for extended periods or anticipate needing to relieve pressure.
- **Storage:** Pack a cooler bag with ice packs to keep expressed milk cold during travel. Frozen milk can stay fresh for up to 24 hours in a cooler.

Plane Travel

- **Nursing in the Airport:** Use apps like Mamava to find nursing spaces in the airport. These apps often show real-time availability and offer features like remote unlocking. Many airport websites also have maps highlighting nursing spaces. If you're unsure, ask airport staff for help finding nursing spaces. They're familiar with the airport layout and can help guide you.
- **Airport Security:** In the United States, the limits on the amount of liquid you can bring through airport security do not apply to breast milk. Tell security officers that you have breast milk with you and be prepared to show it during the screening process. They may ask to see it separately or transfer a small amount for testing.
- **Nursing on the Plane:** Nursing during takeoff and landing can help your baby's ears adjust to pressure changes. If you want more privacy, most airlines offer nursing areas or allow discreet breastfeeding in your seat.

- **Hydration:** Airplane cabins can be dehydrating. Drink plenty of water throughout the flight to maintain your milk supply.

Road Trips

- **Don't Breastfeed While Moving:** Always pull over to a safe location and stop the car completely before breastfeeding your baby.
- **Frequent Stops:** Schedule breaks every two to three hours to breastfeed, change diapers and allow you and your baby to stretch.
- **Plan Your Route:** Look for rest areas, parks or family-friendly restaurants with comfortable nursing areas along your route.

These tips will help make breastfeeding easy and convenient during your travels so you can enjoy a memorable trip with your baby.

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