

sometimes  
**breastfeeding**  
looks like this



### **BREASTFEEDING WITHOUT NURSING:**

**Breastfeeding without nursing: What should we do about prejudice against exclusive pumping**

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## **TERMS**

- **Breastfeeder:** a lactating person
- **Breastfeeding:** feeding human milk
- **Direct nursing/nursing at the breast/nursing:** feeding a child directly at the breast/chest
- **EP:** exclusively pump
- **EPing:** exclusively pumping
- **EPed:** exclusively pumped
- **EPer:** exclusive pumper
- **LCP:** lactation care provider
- **NICU:** neonatal intensive care unit

## **DEFINING EXCLUSIVE PUMPING**

- **Only** expressing breast milk to feed your baby and not directly nursing your child at the breast
- **May supplement** with formula
- May have nursed at some point



## **HOW COMMON IS IT?**

- **US:** studies find between **5–7%** of breastfeeders EP (Keim et al., 2017; Shealy et al. 2008)
- **Australia:** **4%** (Clemons and Amir, 2010)
- **Singapore:** Hornbeak et al. (2010) increased from **9% to 18%** between 2000 and 2008
- **Best guess: probably around 10%**

## BREASTFEEDING WITHOUT NURSING STUDY

### Initial Survey (N = 2,007)

- Self-report online survey in English
- ≈170 quantitative & qualitative questions
- Recruited from online groups
- March 2017 – March 2018

### Follow Up Survey (N = 314)

- ≈70 open & closed ended questions
- Sent to those still EPing (+1 survey after they stopped)
- Initially every 2 months, now every month
- May 2017 – October 2018

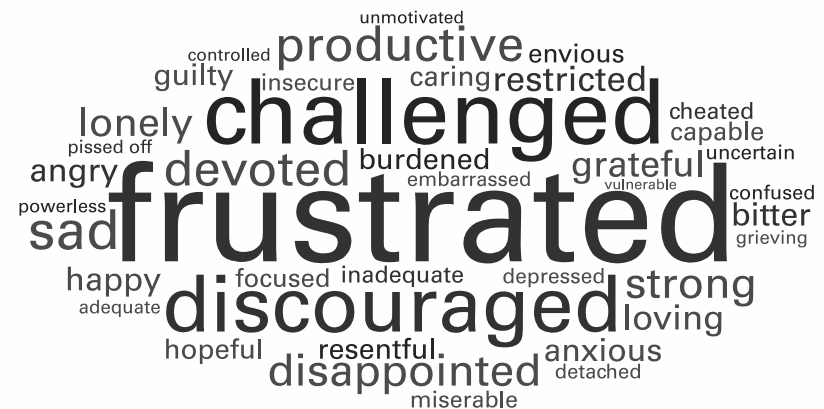
## HOW DO EPERS FEEL?

- **Glad** to still be able to feed human milk
- **Anxious** about milk supply
- **Grief/sadness/failure/cheated** about direct nursing
- **Controlled** by/tied to the pump
- **Better with time** and **routine/strategies**
- **Pride** and **determination**

## EMOTIONS AND BREASTFEEDING

- **Breastfeeding is central** to many parents' "mothering" role (Hauck & Irurita, 2003)
- If breastfeeding **fails**:
  - **Guilt** and **shame** (Lee, 2007; Mozingo et al., 2000)
  - **Inadequacy** and **isolation** (Hegney et al., 2008)

## HOW DO EPERS FEEL?



## WHY DO EPERS FEEL THIS WAY?

- Worry about **milk supply**: universal across all types of breastfeeding
- **Failure** to meet expectations (theirs/partners/society's)
- Other people's **reactions** to EPing

## MOST COMMON REACTIONS

1. Praise, pride, admiration
2. Recognition that EPing is hard work, time consuming, takes commitment/dedication
3. Not understanding/asking why
4. Questions/comments that require EPing to (re)educate
5. Switch to formula

## SUPPORT

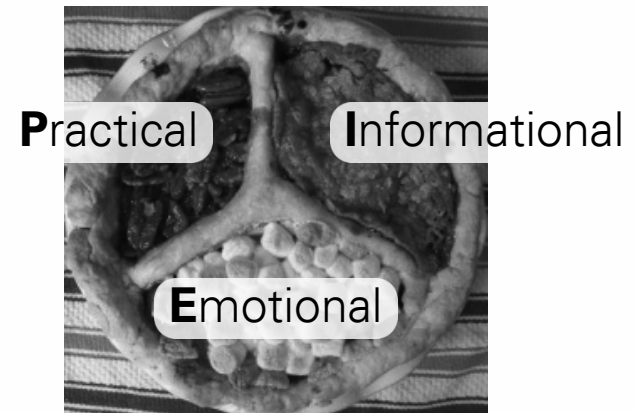
Good 👍

- Significant other
- Family and friends (especially own moms)
- Online support groups
- Workplace\*

Not So Good 😞

- Lactation consultants
- Obgyns
- Pediatricians
- Postpartum nurses

## HOW CAN WE SUPPORT EPERS?



## PRACTICAL SUPPORT

- Help EPers figure out **routines, schedules, strategies, storage**
- **Determine** (and reassure!) that **milk supply** is adequate
- Assess **pump equipment** and settings, **flange** size

## INFORMATIONAL SUPPORT

- Know that EPing is sustainable
- **Educate yourself** on what pump equipment is out there
- **Include EPing** in breastfeeding education programs

## EMOTIONAL SUPPORT

- **Counsel** as well as **consult**: we're not just nipple techs
- **Balance** wishes, desires, and **expectations** with **reality**
- Be EPing **cheerleaders** - **EPing IS breastfeeding**



**Designer of the  
Universal Breastfeeding  
Symbol**

[universalbreastfeedingsymbol.com](http://universalbreastfeedingsymbol.com)

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## **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

- How is exclusive pumping so different from nursing or nursing plus pumping?
- What unique challenges would exclusive pumpers from different backgrounds have and what can we do to overcome them? For example, blue versus white collar worker, stay at home parent, multiple children, low income, underdeveloped country.
- How does exclusive pumping help or hinder breastfeeding equity?