



Back to Work After
Baby: A Physician's
Survival Sheet

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6 TIPS FOR YOUR RETURN TO THE WORLD OF ROUNDING, CHARTS, AND (MAYBE) COFFEE THAT'S STILL WARM.

TIP #1

Prep for the return while you're prepping for leave.

Before you go out, have a conversation with your clinical leaders about what your return might look like; re-entry policies, scheduling flexibility, or any commonly overlooked benefits and programs you can utilize. Getting clear up front helps avoid surprises later and sets everyone up for a smoother transition.

TIP #2

Get clear on your pumping plan (if applicable).

Scout out the pumping spaces before you go out on leave. Ask where they are, how to reserve them, and what the norms are for blocking time. You don't want to be stuck pumping in a bathroom because the designated room is a 10-minute walk from your unit.

TIP #3

Guilt is normal. It doesn't mean the narrative is true.

Many physician parents feel like they're falling short both at work and at home...but that's not the truth. Guilt often just means you care deeply; it's not a sign you're failing.



TIP #4

Find your allies.

Connect with another recently returned parent in your department. They'll get it, and they might have great tips (like how they survived on two hours of sleep). HR may also know of parent groups or employee resources that can support your transition.

TIP #5

You won't know unless you ask.

Need a schedule adjustment, closer pumping space, or an extension on a grant deadline? You might be surprised what's possible - but only if you ask. Try this script: *"I'm grateful to be back and want to make this transition as smooth as possible. Can we discuss a short-term change in hours to support that?"*

TIP #6

Set small, achievable goals.

You're wired for excellence - but now's the time to aim for sustainable wins, not burnout. Choose realistic goals, meet them, and celebrate the progress (not just the perfection).

HAVE MORE QUESTIONS?

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