

STORAGE AND PREPARATION OF EXPRESSED BREASTMILK FOR HEALTHY FULL-TERM BABIES

BEFORE EXPRESSING/PUMPING BREASTMILK



Make sure the pump, tubing and supplies are clean.



Wash your hands with soap and warm water.

STORING EXPRESSED BREASTMILK

KEEP BREASTMILK IN:



Tightly sealed, clean containers made of glass or BPA-free plastic.



Breastmilk storage bags.

BREASTMILK STORAGE GUIDELINES

HUMAN MILK STORAGE TIMES FOR HEALTHY FULL-TERM INFANTS

Human Milk	Room Temperature (20°C)	Refrigerator (4°C)	Freezer (separate door freezer of refrigerator) (-18°C)	Deep Freezer (-20°C)
Freshly expressed	≤6 hours	≤5 days	≤6 months	≤12 months
Thawed in refrigerator, but not warmed	≤4 hours	≤24 hours	Do not refreeze	
Thawed and brought to room temperature or warmed	≤1 hour (then discard)	≤4 hours	Do not refreeze	
Freshly expressed milk that infant has started feeding	For completion of feed, then discard	Discard	Do not refreeze	
Thawed, previously frozen, pasteurized donor human milk	≤4 hours	≤24 hours	Do not refreeze	
Frozen, pasteurized donor human milk	Not applicable	Not applicable	No recommendation provided	9-12 months from pumping date

Table adapted from Best Start

STORE



- Label breastmilk with the date it was expressed.
- Store breastmilk near back of fridge or freezer where the temperature is most stable.
- Store breastmilk in small, feeding-size amounts to avoid wastage.
- Freshly expressed warm milk should be cooled prior to adding it to older, cooled, stored milk that has not yet been frozen or thawed.
- Breastmilk should be stored in the fridge or freezer as soon as possible after expression if not being used right away.
- When freezing breastmilk, leave 1.5 cm (1/2 in) space at the top of the container to allow room for normal expansion when in freezer.
- Breastmilk can be stored in an insulated cooler bag with frozen ice packs for up to 24 hours.

THAW



- Thaw oldest breastmilk first.
- Ways to thaw frozen breastmilk:
 - Run warm water over container.
 - Set container in a bowl of warm water.
 - Place container in fridge (for up to 24 hours).
 - Use waterless warmer, as per manufacturer instructions.
- Frozen breastmilk should not be left to thaw at room temperature.
- Do not microwave.
- Once thawed, swirl breastmilk to mix the fat, which normally separates.
- It's normal for thawed breastmilk to look, smell or taste different from when it was first expressed.
- Use breastmilk within 24 hours from when it is completely thawed.
- If baby doesn't finish all the thawed breastmilk during a feeding, throw it away after one hour.
- Do not re-freeze breastmilk that has been thawed.

FEED



- Breastmilk can be given to baby cold, room temperature or warm.
- Use fresh breastmilk whenever possible.
- To warm breastmilk, place sealed container under warm running water or in a bowl of warm water.
- Freshly expressed breastmilk can remain at room temperature for the completion of the feed, then discard.
- Babies can be fed with expressed breastmilk by:
 - Open cup or spoon
 - Lactation aids
 - Bottle

CLEAN



- Clean pump, dials, switches and countertops after each use.
 - Disassemble and wash all parts after each use by:
 - Cleaning all feeding parts in hot/warm soapy water.
 - Rinsing well under warm running water.
 - Leaving equipment to air dry on a clean surface.
 - Storing in a clean, dry place.
 - If the item cannot be cleaned with soap, place it in boiling water for 5 minutes before using it.
- *There may be specific manufacturer instructions to follow regarding additional cleaning methods*

