

STORING BREAST MILK

Storing breast milk allows you to have a supply of milk for your baby when it is needed. This can be a good option for busy moms who return to work or school. After pumping, milk should be stored in a refrigerator or freezer. Breast milk should be stored at the proper temperature so it is as fresh as possible for your baby¹.

Milk that will not be used within 48 hours should be frozen in small amounts 2-4 ounces (¼ cup-½ cup). Small amounts will freeze faster and will reduce the possibility having to discard leftover milk after a feeding. Frozen milk is best stored for 3 to 6 months².

It's normal for breast milk to separate when it's stored. The fat (or creamy part) floats to the top. Before feeding, gently swirl to mix the milk together³. It is also normal for your milk to look a different color. Sometimes certain foods you eat can change the color. Don't worry, your milk is still good and it will not hurt your baby.

TIPS OF THE WEEK

- Storing milk helps moms as they transition back to school or work.
- Freeze small amounts to prevent discarding leftovers.
- Frozen milk is best stored up to 6 months.

HERE'S WHAT YOU CAN DO:

- Before handling your milk, wash your hands to prevent the spread of infection or illness. Also make sure the containers you use are properly cleaned. You can use capped glass or BPA-free hard plastic containers with fitted lids to store milk.
- Breast milk can also be stored in specially designed breast milk storage bags. Do not use household storage bags because they may leak or tear.
- Once you fill a container, label it with the date and time you pumped. Use waterproof labels and ink so the writing does not rub off. If you are taking your stored milk to your baby's childcare provider, be sure to include his or her name on the label⁴.
- Remember to keep milk cool when transporting by putting it in a cooler bag.
- Share proper milk storage information with your childcare and family members (Refer to the Returning to Work/School lesson).
- Containers should be put in the coolest part of the refrigerator or freezer (usually in the back).

TO PREPARE FROZEN MILK FOR USE¹:

**Frozen breast milk that has been thawed should be used within 24 hours.*

1. Thaw by placing it in the refrigerator the night before.
2. When it is time to feed your baby, be sure to warm your breast milk slowly.
 - Place the bottle or storage bag with the breast milk in a cup or a bowl of warm water.
 - Do this instead of boiling milk on the stove or heating it in the microwave. Boiling or microwaving will destroy the nutrients in your breast milk.
3. Make sure not to refreeze breast milk after it is thawed.

GUIDE TO STORING BREAST MILK⁵

PLACE	TEMPERATURE	HOW LONG	THINGS TO KNOW
Countertop, table	Room temp (60°F-85°F)	Up to 3-4 hours is best. Up to 6-8 hours is okay for very clean expressed milk.	Containers should be covered and kept as cool as possible; covering the container with a clean cool towel may keep milk cooler. Throw out any leftover milk within 1 to 2 hours after the baby is finished feeding.
Small cooler with a blue-ice pack	59°F	24 hours	Keep ice packs in contact with milk containers at all times; limit opening cooler.
Refrigerator	39°F or colder	Up to 72 hours is best. Up to 5-8 days is okay for very clean expressed milk.	Store milk in the back of the main body of the refrigerator (Usually in the back).
Freezer	0°F or colder	Up to 6 months is best. Up to 12 months is okay.	Store milk toward the back of the freezer where temperature is most constant. Milk stored at 0°F or colder is safe for longer periods, but the quality of milk might not be as high.

You may be covered for a breast pump and visits with a lactation consultant through your

medical insurance plan, WIC, Medi-Cal or the Affordable Care Act.

IF YOU NEED BREASTFEEDING HELP, CALL THE HELP LINE: 888-278-6455

RESOURCES:

Check out the *Returning to Work/School* (Week 9) and *Breastfeeding and Pumping* (Week 7) lessons

womenshealth.gov/breastfeeding/pumping-and-milk-storage/index.html

cdc.gov/breastfeeding/recommendations/handling_breastmilk.htm

medelabreastfeedingus.com/tips-and-solutions/11/collection-and-storage-of-breastmilk

APPS:

PUMP LOG (FREE)

<https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/pump-log-track-breast-milk/id814112299?mt=8>

Track breast milk production.

BLOGS:

STORING BREAST MILK BAGS

whattoexpect.com/forums/breastfeeding/archives/storing-breastmilk-bags.html

VIDEO

STORING BREAST MILK

youtube.com/watch?v=_ethlmW7fDo&feature=youtube_gdata_player



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youtube.com/watch?v=qWySnu2zsts&feature=youtube_gdata_player

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