



Breastmilk Collection and Storage

Collecting Breastmilk

Wash hands well with soap and water.

Wash all the collecting bottles and breastpump parts that touch your breasts or the milk. Use hot, soapy water or the dishwasher. Rinse thoroughly. Air dry on a clean towel. If your baby is premature or ill, the hospital may ask you to sterilize your pump parts.

Read the instruction book that comes with your pump and follow the suggestions. Practice pumping when you are rested, relaxed and your breasts feel full. Once a day, try to nurse your baby only on one side and pump the other breast. Or pump for a few minutes if your baby skips a feeding or nurses for only a short while.

Read the storage Guidelines chart to learn how to store breast milk. Be sure to use the right size breastshield so that your nipple fits comfortably.

Employed moms can help their baby learn to take a bottle once breastfeeding is well-established. It is best to wait 4 to 6 weeks to introduce bottles. If you are having problems breastfeeding, ask for help.

Begin to pump to store milk 1 to 2 weeks before returning to work. Many working moms use the fresh milk they pump at work for feedings the next day. They refrigerate Friday's milk for use on Monday. Save your frozen milk for emergencies. Pump 3 times during an 8 hour work shift, or every 3 hours you are away from your baby. Ten minutes of pumping during breaks and 15 minutes of pumping during lunch with a good pump will help protect your milk supply. If you can't pump 3 times, pump as much as you can during each day. Breastfeeding in the evening and over the weekend helps build up your milk supply and protects your special bond with your baby.

Storing Breastmilk

It is normal for pumped milk to vary in color, consistency and scent depending on your diet. Stored milk separates into layers. Cream will rise to the top. Gently swirl the warmed bottle to mix the milk layers.

You can continue to add small amounts of cooled breastmilk to the same refrigerated container throughout the day. Do not add warm milk to already cooled milk.

Store your milk in glass or hard plastic containers, or in milk storage bags made especially for breastmilk.

- Freeze milk in 2 to 5 ounce portions. Small amounts will thaw more quickly. You will waste less milk this way and will avoid over-feeding. Liquids expand when frozen. Be sure to leave some extra room at the top of the container so the bottle or bag won't burst.
- Seal containers tightly. Write the date on a piece of masking tape on the bag or bottle. Use the oldest milk first.
- If you do not plan to use the milk within a few days, freeze it right away in the back of your freezer which is the coldest part. Do not place the bottle or bag on the freezer door.

Defrosting

- Thaw milk overnight in the refrigerator, or hold the bottle under warm running water to quickly thaw. You can also place the sealed container in a bowl of warm water for 20 minutes to bring it to body temperature.
- Thawed milk is safe in the refrigerator for 24 hours. Do not refreeze.
- NEVER microwave breastmilk. Microwaving can cause severe burns to baby's mouth from hot spots that develop in the milk during microwaving. Microwaving can also change the composition of breastmilk.

Feeding Tips

- Choose a slow-flow bottle nipple and limit feeding size to 3 to 5 oz. of milk for babies younger than 6 months.
- Remove the bottle nipple out of the baby's mouth periodically to let the baby catch his or her breath.
- Pause to burp the baby when needed.
- If the baby seems fussy in between feedings, it may be because of thirst. Offer 1 to 2 oz. of milk. Babies 4 months or older can have a sip of water from a cup.
- Avoid over-feeding. Offer a pacifier or teething toy to give your baby more sucking enjoyment after finishing a bottle.
- Sometimes, babies do not fully finish bottles of breastmilk. Mothers wonder if they can re-refrigerate and re-uses this milk. We do not recommend it.

Your Milk Supply and Your Baby's Needs

- We used to think that mothers needed to make more and more milk as their babies grew. Scientists now know that a healthy milk supply remains fairly constant over the 6 months of exclusive breastfeeding.
- During the early weeks, babies eat frequently and grow very quickly. By day 10, babies should recover any lost birth weight. For the next few months, little girls should gain about an ounce a day, a little boys slightly more than an ounce.

- Around 3 to 4 months, a breastfed baby's rate of growth begins to slow down. Continuing to gain weight rapidly after this time may contribute to obesity later on. This means that the milk supply established in the early days will continue to satisfy the baby until it is time to introduce solid foods at 6 months.
- By the end of the first week of life, women who are breastfeeding one baby normally make between 19 to 30 ounces of milk each day. Infants between 1 and 6 months of age normally drink an average of 19 to 30 ounces a day. (Daley, Ownes, Hartmann, 1993.) An average "meal" for a baby is between 3 to 5 oz. of breastmilk. Formula is harder to digest and less well absorbed. Formula fed babies may need larger feeds. Consult your doctor for advice.

Storage Guidelines

	<u>Room Temp.</u>	<u>Cooler w/3Frozen Ice Packs</u>	<u>Refrigerator</u>	<u>Freezer</u>	
<u>Deep Freeze</u>					
Freshly expressed breastmilk:	4 hours @	24 hours@	5-7 days@	3-4 mo.	6-
12 mo. @	66-72 degr F	59 degr F	32-39 degr F		0
degr F					
Freshly thawed milk:	Do not store	Do not store	24 hours	Never refreeze thawed milk	

Information taken from "Breastmilk Collection and Storage" by Medela.