



Breastmilk Storage Guidelines

These guidelines are for healthy full term babies.
 Guidelines are for home use only and not for hospital use.

	Counter top or table	Refrigerator	Freezer with separate door	Deep freezer
Storage Temperatures*	Up to 77°F (25°C)	At or below 40°F (4°C)	0°F (-18°C)	At or below -4°F (-20°C)
Freshly Pumped/ Expressed Human milk	Up to 4 hours	Up to 4 days	Up to 6 months	Up to 12 months
Thawed Human milk	1-2 hours	Up to 1 day (24 hours)	Never re-freeze thawed human milk	Never re-freeze thawed human milk

*Storage times and temperatures may vary for premature or sick babies. Check with your health care provider.

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Collection and Storage



- Wash your hands. Wash bottles and pumping supplies in hot soapy water or in the dishwasher.
- Breastmilk can be stored in clean bottles or breastmilk storage bags. Put the collection date on the container.
- If you are giving the milk to your childcare provider, put your child's name on the container and talk to your child care provider about storage guidelines for breastmilk.
- When traveling short periods of time, such as to and from work or school, store your pumped/expressed milk in an insulated cooler bag with frozen ice packs.
- Refer to the Breastmilk Storage Guidelines chart for storage time and temperatures of breastmilk.
- Do not store milk on the shelves in the door of the refrigerator because the temperatures vary due to the frequency of opening and closing the door.



Freezing Milk

- Freeze milk in small batches of 2 to 4 ounces.
- Leave an inch or so of space at the top of the container because the milk will expand as it freezes.
- Store milk in the back of the freezer. Don't store milk on the shelves of the freezer door.
- Chill freshly pumped milk before adding it to the frozen milk.



Thawing and Warming Milk

- Use the oldest stored milk first. Practice first in, first out.
- Breastmilk does not need to be warmed. It can be served room temperature or cold.
- Gently swirl the milk to mix it, as it is normal for breastmilk to separate.
- Milk may be thawed in several ways, (1) in the refrigerator overnight, (2) under running warm water, or (3) in a container of warm water.
- Milk warmed should be used within one hour.
- Milk thawed in the refrigerator should be used within one day (24 hours) after it is thawed.
- Do not microwave or boil breastmilk. Microwaving and boiling breaks down the nutrients and creates hot spots, which can burn baby's mouth.
- Never refreeze thawed human milk, even if it had been refrigerated.