









Breastmilk storage instructions

Breastmilk storage is easy once you get the hang of it.



- Wash your hands before expressing or handling breastmilk.
- Store breastmilk in clean containers, such as screw cap bottles or bags designed to store breastmilk that fit directly onto breast pumps. Avoid using ordinary plastic storage bags that could easily leak or spill.
- Clearly label and date expressed milk.
- Store in refrigerator or freezer (depending on when you will use it).
- Do not add fresh milk to already frozen or chilled refrigerated milk.
- **Never** refreeze breastmilk after it has been thawed.

Condition	Temperature	Breastmilk Storage	Length of Storage
Room temperature	77°F or colder	Freshly expressed	Up to 4 hours
Refrigerator 	40°F	Store milk in the back of the refrigerator for a more stable temperature	Up to 4 days
Frozen milk thawed in the refrigerator  	40°F	Store milk in the back of the refrigerator for a more stable temperature	Up to 24 hours
Freezer   	0°F or colder	Frozen after a few days in the refrigerator/ frozen right away	6 months optimal 12 months acceptable



Thawing & feeding breastmilk



Simple tips
to help make
sure your thawed
breastmilk will be
safe for your baby.



Thawing breastmilk

- **Night before.** Frozen milk is best thawed in the refrigerator the night before it will be used.
- **Warm water.** Frozen and refrigerated milk can be thawed under running warm (not hot) water or placed in a container of warm water for 20 to 30 minutes before a feeding.
- **Mix it up.** Gently rock the thawed milk to help mix the fat layer back into the rest of the milk.
- **Temperature test.** Shake a few drops of breastmilk onto your wrist; liquid is a safe temperature if it feels barely warm on the skin.
- **Never combine.** Never add fresh breastmilk for storage to refrigerated or frozen breastmilk.
- **24 hours.** Defrosted breastmilk is good for up to 24 hours if kept in the refrigerator under appropriate conditions.

Feeding breastmilk

- **First in, first out.** Feed the oldest stored milk first.
- **One to two hours.** Once milk is offered and exposed to baby's saliva, any unconsumed milk should be discarded within one to two hours after a feeding begins.

NEVER THAW OR HEAT BREASTMILK IN A MICROWAVE.

In addition to creating hot spots in the liquid that may burn your baby, the microwave may destroy some of the breastmilk's nutrients.



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