



Breast Milk Collection & Storage

Guidelines for Healthy Newborns

Many mothers find it convenient to collect their breast milk and store it for use at a later time. Such is the case for mothers who return to work, school or who are separated from their infant. The guidelines offered below may answer some questions you have about safely storing breast milk for your full-term healthy newborn.

If you have a preterm newborn, please see your healthcare professional for the guidelines to properly and safely store and transport your breast milk.

Collecting Breast milk

- Wash hands thoroughly with soap and water, or use an alcohol based hand sanitizer.
- Wash all the collection bottles and do not place the parts directly in the kitchen sink for rinsing and washing. Use a dedicated wash basin for infant feeding items.
Rinse the disassembled parts, except for tubing, with cold, clear drinking-quality water. Clean these parts with plenty of warm, soapy water. Use a commercially available dish soap, preferably without artificial fragrances and coloring (pH neutral). Rinse the parts with cold, clear drinking-quality water for 10-15 seconds. Allow to dry after washing.
Allow to air-dry on a clean, unused dish towel or paper towel.
Refer to instructions for use for complete cleaning instructions.
- Read the instruction book that came with your pump for proper cleaning and sanitizing procedures. Sanitize your pump parts once a day as described.
- Practice pumping when you are rested, relaxed and your breasts feel full. You may try to nurse your baby on one side and pump on the other breast. Or pump for a few minutes if your baby skips a feeding or nurses for only a short while. Pumping should not hurt. Your nipple should fit comfortably in the breast shield.
- If you are having problems finding the right size breast shield or have questions on proper fit, ask for help from a lactation consultant, your healthcare provider, or visit this link to learn more about breast shield sizing: www.MedelaBreastShields.us.

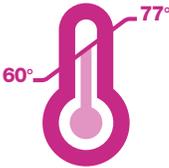
- It is recommended that bottles are avoided until breastfeeding is going well and your milk supply is well-established. If you are having problems breastfeeding, ask for help from a lactation consultant or your healthcare provider.
- Begin to pump and store milk two to three weeks before returning to work. Many working mothers use the fresh milk they pump at work for feedings the next day. Freeze your extra milk for emergencies.
- Ideally, pump every three hours when you are away from your baby. Ten minutes of pumping during breaks and 15 minutes of pumping during lunch with a good quality pump will help protect your milk supply. If you can't pump three times, pump as much as you can during each day. You can add an extra pumping session in the morning when breasts are full.
- Breastfeed in the evening and on days off to help maintain your milk supply and protect your special bond with your baby.



Storing Breast milk

- It is normal for pumped milk to vary in color and consistency depending on your diet. Stored milk will separate into layers and the cream will rise to the top. Gently swirl (don't shake) the bottle to mix the milk layers.
- Avoid adding freshly pumped milk to already cooled milk.
You can add small amounts of cooled breast milk to the same refrigerated container throughout the day.
- Freshly expressed milk may be added to frozen milk provided if it is chilled first.
- Store your milk in breast milk collection bottles or in storage bags specifically designed for breast milk and not made with BPA.
- Freeze milk in two to four ounce portions. Small amounts thaw more quickly. You will waste less milk this way. Be sure to leave some extra room at the top of the container so the bottle or bag will not overflow when freezing or thawing.
- Seal containers tightly. Write the date on a piece of tape and place on the bag or bottle. Use the oldest milk first.
- Some mothers notice their defrosted breast milk smells soapy or rancid. This is due to lipase, an enzyme, which helps to digest the fat content of the breast milk. If this occurs, scald the breast milk (do not bring to a boil) on a stove until tiny bubbles appear along the sides of the pan; do this before freezing. The scalding process will neutralize the enzyme, preventing the soapy taste or smell.
- If you do not plan to use the milk within a few days, freeze it right away in the coldest section of your freezer.

Freshly Expressed Breast Milk Storage Guidelines (For Healthy Term Babies)

Room Temperature	Refrigerator	Freezer
		
*Up to 4 hours at 60-77°F (16-25°C)	*Up to 3 days at 39°F (4°C) or colder	*Up to 6 months at 0°F (-18°C) or colder

Breast Milk Thawed in the Refrigerator
At room temperature: Up to 2 hours | Refrigerator: Up to 24 hours
DO NOT REFREEZE

*For more details, visit:
www.BreastMilkGuidelines.com
Medela wordmark and logo are registered in the US Patent and Trademark Office. 1547514 D 1017

medela 

Defrosting

- Always wash hands before handling breast milk or bottles.
- Thaw frozen milk in refrigerator overnight or hold bottle under warm running water.
- Breast milk thawed in the refrigerator can be safely kept in the refrigerator for up to 24 hours or at room temperature for up to two hours. Never refreeze thawed breast milk. A sealed container of milk can also be placed in a bowl of warm water for 20 minutes to thaw. Gently swirl (don't shake) the bottle to mix the milk before feeding.

CAUTION

Never microwave breast milk!
Microwaving can cause severe burns and can change the composition of the breast milk.

Resources and References

Go to www.medela.us to educate yourself on products and information available for you and your baby.

To locate Medela products or a breastfeeding specialist in your area, visit www.MedelaLocator.us.

References

<https://www.womenshealth.gov/breastfeeding/pumping-and-storing-breastmilk>

Kent, J. C. (2007). How Breastfeeding Works. *The Journal of Midwifery & Women's Health*, 52: 564–570. doi:10.1016/j.jmwh.2007.04.007

Eglash A, Simon L, AMB. ABM clinical protocol #8: human milk storage information for home use for full-term infants, revised 2017. *Breastfeeding Medicine* 2017; 12(7): 1-6.

<https://www.fda.gov/food/foodborneillnesscontaminants/peopleatrisk/ucm089629.htm>

<https://www.womenshealth.gov/files/documents/your-guide-to-breastfeeding.pdf>

Lawrence RA and Lawrence, RW. (2016). *Breastfeeding: A guide for the medical profession*. (8th ed). Elsevier: St. Louis. p.650-666