

Pumping, Storing, and Feeding Breastmilk

Getting Started

- Wash your hands before handling your breast pump kit and before pumping.
- Wash bottles and pumping supplies in hot soapy water or in the dishwasher. Follow your pump's cleaning instructions.
- Store breastmilk in clean glass or BPA-free* plastic bottles with tight fitting lids.

After You're Done Pumping

- Put the date on the container.
- If you're giving breastmilk to your childcare provider, put your child's name on it. Share these milk storage guidelines with your childcare provider and others caring for your child.
- Refrigerate or chill your milk after you pump it.
- Store milk in the back of the refrigerator, not on the door.
- When traveling short distances with pumped milk, put containers in an insulated cooler bag with ice or frozen cooler packs.

Tips for Freezing Breastmilk

- Freeze milk in small amounts, about 2 to 4 ounces.
- Leave an inch or so of space at the top of the container because milk expands as it freezes.
- Store milk in the back of the freezer. Don't store on the shelves of the freezer door.
- If you're adding freshly pumped milk to frozen milk, cool it first.

Tips for Thawing Breastmilk

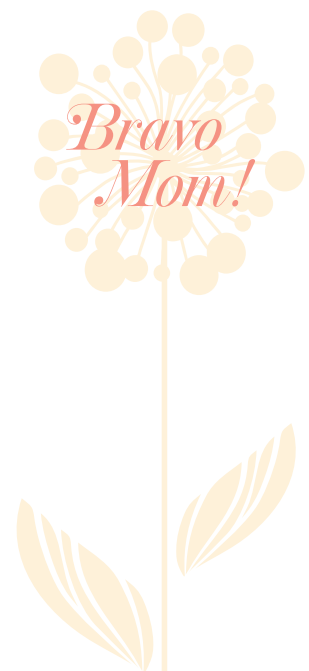
- Use the oldest stored milk first.
- Thaw frozen milk in the refrigerator overnight, under warm running water, or in a container of warm water.
- Use milk thawed with warm water within 1 hour.
- Use milk thawed in the refrigerator within 1 day (24 hours).
- Never refreeze thawed breastmilk.

Feeding Stored Breastmilk

- Gently swirl the container to mix the breastmilk. It's normal for breastmilk to separate.
- Never microwave breastmilk. Microwaving destroys nutrients and creates hot spots, which can burn your baby's mouth.
- Breastmilk doesn't need to be warmed. It's okay to feed breastmilk at room temperature or cold.
- If you choose to warm breastmilk, place the bottle in a bowl of warm water or hold it under warm running water. Test the temperature of breastmilk by dropping some on your wrist. It should be slightly warm.
- Discard unused milk left in the bottle within 1 to 2 hours after the baby is finished feeding.

Note

We recommend using BPA-free plastic or glass containers for freezing milk because they're less likely to be damaged. Use special breastmilk storage bags for short-term storage.



*Ask your WIC staff or health department about BPA-free bottles.

WIC BREASTMILK STORAGE GUIDELINES FOR HEALTHY FULL TERM BABIES

	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 or expressed breastmilk	Up to 4 hours	Up to 4 days	Up to 6 months	Up to 12 months
Thawed breastmilk	1–2 hours	Up to 1 day, or 24 hours	Never re-freeze thawed breastmilk	Never re-freeze thawed breastmilk

Check with your health care provider if your baby is sick or was born early. These guidelines are for home use only.



FEW THINGS ARE STRONGER
THAN A MOM PUMPING
HER BREASTMILK FOR HER BABY

