

Breastfeeding and Milk Storage

Storing

Date each freezer bag

Storing your milk in the same container you collect it in is very convenient. It saves time, minimizes waste of your precious milk, and reduces the risk of contamination. Hard-sided containers, whether glass or plastic, work best to protect your milk. Many working women use plastic freezer storage bags that are pre-sterilized, take up less room in the freezer, and can be attached directly to a breast pumping kit. Avoid disposable plastic bags called bottle liners because the liners are designed for bottle-feeding, not storage. Milk storage times vary, but the following are accepted guidelines.

♥ Mom's Milk Storage Guide ♥				
	Deep Freeze (0° or Less)	Refrigerator Style Freezer (Self-contained Freezer Approx. 0°F)	Refrigerator (32°F- 39°F)	Room Temp (66°F- 72°F)
Fresh Breast Milk	6+ Months	3-4 Months	8 Days	10 Hours
Thawed Breast Milk	Do Not Refreeze	Do Not Refreeze	24 Hours	1 Hour

Source: LaLeche League International

As frequently as possible, use milk that is fresh or has been refrigerated, not frozen. Freezing milk kills some antibodies, although frozen breast milk is still much better for your baby than infant formula (Mohrbacher, 1997).

Freezing



Freeze your milk in the smallest amounts your baby might take at a feeding. Baby can be offered a little at a time to minimize waste. Do not refreeze thawed milk. Studies are unclear about whether human milk from a partially finished bottle should be discarded, as recommended for infant formula. Bottle liners are not recommended for freezing breast milk because liners are not as thick as freezer bags and have a tendency to split, crack or leak. If you do use bottle liners, “double bagging” will help avoid milk loss. In addition, place milk stored in bags in a separate hard-sided container in your freezer to protect the bags from being jostled. Leave room in the container for milk to expand as it freezes and always date

Thawing

Frozen milk can be thawed quickly and evenly under warm, never hot, running tap water. Don't thaw milk in a microwave oven because it may destroy nutrients and create hot spots that can burn your baby's mouth. Thawed, previously frozen milk can be kept in a refrigerator for 24 hours. Because cream separates and floats to the top, shake the milk gently to distribute the fat through the milk before feeding baby.