



Pumping your breast milk

- Before you begin pumping, wash your hands with soap and hot water.
- You may want to gently massage your breasts in a circular motion, like a breast self-exam, for 1 to 2 minutes before beginning to pump. This could help you pump more milk.
- Hold the flange against your breast and center the opening over your nipple. Your nipple should not touch the tunnel of the flange, or rub against the tunnel and cause pain when you pump.
- If you use an electric breast pump, the pump will create suction for you when you turn it on. Start pumping at the lowest speed and suction level, and slowly turn it up until it feels okay to you.
- If you use a manual breast pump, gently squeeze the handle of the pump with one hand to create suction like when your baby is breastfeeding.
- If your breast pump can double pump, you can save time by pumping both breast at the same time. You may want to use a hands-free pump bra, or a sports bra with holes cut into the front, to hold the pump flanges and keep your hands free.
- You may want to gently massage or compress your breasts while you are pumping, called “hands on” pumping. This could help you pump more milk.
- Pump until milk stops coming out of your breast. Most women pump for 10 to 20 minutes on each breast.
- You may want to hand express for 1 to 2 minutes after you finish pumping. This will make sure you are completely emptying your breasts each time you pump.
- Always pump your breast milk into a bottle or a special breast milk bag. Put only enough milk in the bottle or bag for 1 feeding.

- If you freeze the milk you pumped, leave empty space at the top of the bottle or bag. When milk freezes, it will expand and take up more room in the bottle or bag.
- Write your baby’s name and the date that you pumped the milk on the bottle or bag.

Storing your breast milk

These storage guidelines are for healthy, full-term babies. If your baby was born early, or has other health concerns, talk with your baby’s doctor to see if they have other recommendations for pumping and storing your breast milk.

Storage tips

- Keep your breast milk organized in the refrigerator and freezer. Always use the oldest stored breast milk first.
- If you use milk storage bags in the refrigerator or freezer, keep them in a bigger bag so the smaller bags do not rip.
- Keep the milk in the back of the refrigerator or freezer, instead of the door. The temperature of the door inside a refrigerator or freezer will not stay cold enough to keep your milk safe.
- If you bring breast milk to your childcare provider or

home from work, put it in an insulated bag or cooler with ice packs while you are traveling.

Thawing your frozen breast milk

There are 3 ways to thaw frozen breast milk.

- 1: Put the bottle or bag of frozen breast milk in the refrigerator until the milk is not frozen.
 - 2: Hold the bottle or bag of frozen breast milk under warm running water until the milk is not frozen and is room temperature.
 - 3: Stir the bottle or bag in a bowl of warm water until the milk is not frozen and is room temperature.
- Do not thaw breast milk in a pot on the stove, in a bottle warmer or in the microwave. It could make the milk too hot for your baby to drink or create “hot spots” in the milk.
 - Never refreeze breast milk that has already been thawed.
 - During storage or thawing, the cream may separate and rise to the top of the milk. Gently mix the cream and milk back together, it is normal for human milk to separate. This does not mean your breast milk has gone bad.

	countertop or table	refrigerator	cooler with frozen ice packs	freezer with separate door	deep freezer
storage temperature	up to 77°F (25°C)	at or below 40°F (4°C)	at or below 59°F (15°C)	0°F (-18°C)	at or below 4°F (-20°C)
freshly pumped/expressed breast milk	up to 4 hours	up to 4 days	up to 18 hours	up to 6 months	up to 12 months
previously frozen thawed breast milk	1-2 hours	up to 1 day (24 hours)	up to 2 hours	NEVER REFREEZE THAWED BREAST MILK	NEVER REFREEZE THAWED BREAST MILK

*Breast milk storage guidelines adapted from the Human Milk Storage Guidelines for the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children. These guidelines are for healthy full-term babies, and are intended for home use only and not for hospital use.