

Storing Breast Milk

Safety Tips:

- ❖ Clean hands and containers first!
- ❖ Use airtight containers. If freezing, ensure containers/bags are intended to be frozen.
- ❖ Label containers of all breastmilk with the time and date of collection, even for home use. Milk that will be used in a hospital or childcare setting will also need baby's name and may need other additional info, check with the facility first.
- ❖ Avoid storing milk in the door compartments of fridge and freezer. Store as far back in fridge or freezer as possible, that will allow you to use a first in first out method.
- ❖ Do not microwave! Hot spots and destroyed proteins will occur. Use warm water bath instead.
- ❖ This table is written as “up to” times. Avoid combining maximum times. For example, if your fresh pumped milk has been out an hour at room temperature, it can likely be safely placed in fridge and used same day. However, you would not want to leave your milk out 8 hours at room temperature, then place in fridge for 8 days, and then place in freezer for 6 months, this would be very risky.
- ❖ Milk fats will separate, you may visibly see a line of fat or notice more than one color in your milk, this is normal and not a cause for concern on its own.
- ❖ Share this info with everyone involved with baby's feeding.



Home Use Your own home, grandma's home, or sitter's home.	Breastmilk	Facility Use Hospital NICU or Daycare, varies by facility.
8 hours	Fresh expressed - body to room temperature. Lidded container or pump with valves highly recommended to limit air contamination.	2 to 4 hours
8 days	Fresh - refrigerated, under 40° F.	3 days
2 weeks	Frozen in small interior freezer of mini fridge, these temperatures vary greatly typically under 15o	2 weeks
6 months	Frozen in freezer compartment of standard home fridge, 5° to 15° F	6 months
12 months	Frozen in free standing freezer, like a deep freezer, - 20° to 0° F	12 months
24 hours in fridge 2 hours once at room temperature	Thawing in fridge, after being frozen, use ASAP once thawed	24 hours in fridge 2 hours once at room temperature
2 to 4 hours	Thawed at room temperature or in warmer, such as cup of warm water, after being frozen	2 hours