

Storing & Handling Expressed Milk



Q: What do I need to know about storing expressed milk?

A: In addition to the milk storage times (see chart below) it also helps to know these points:

- Glass, hard plastic containers, or milk freezer bags can be used.
- Store your milk in the smallest amount your baby may take. This will minimize wasting milk if your baby doesn't drink it. Leftover milk can be used within 1-2 hours from the start of the feeding.
- Write the date and time on your milk container.
- You can combine milk pumped at different times. You can combine cooled milk bottles into one container. When combining milk from different dates, write the date of the oldest milk on the container.
- If you plan to use your milk within 4 days, you can keep it in the fridge. Otherwise, plan to freeze it in the coldest part of the freezer. Avoid storing it in the door.

STORAGE TIME	DEEP FREEZER (0°F / 18°C)	REFRIGERATOR FREEZER (Variable 0°F 18°C)	REFRIGERATOR (39°F / 4°C)	ROOM TEMPERATURE (66-72°F / 19-22°C)
Fresh	12 Months	3-4 Months`	4 Days	4 – 6 Hours
Thawed in refrigerator (not warmed)	Do Not Refreeze	Do Not Refreeze	24 Hours	4 HOURS



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Q: Why do some milk storage guidelines differ?

A: To determine these guidelines research confirmed that expressed milk will not spoil before the times on the table. But the longer milk is stored, the more vitamins and antioxidants are lost. That's why some references list shorter storage times. Those experts prefer to use expressed milk sooner than later, but this doesn't mean that the milk will spoil if you wait longer. When in doubt about the freshness of expressed milk -smell or taste it. Spoiled milk will usually smell spoiled.

Q: What should I know about warming and thawing expressed milk?

QUESTION: What should I know about warming and thawing expressed milk?

ANSWER:

- Whether warming chilled milk or thawing frozen milk, keep the heat low. High heat kills the live cells in our milk which helps keep your baby healthy.
- Warm expressed milk to between room and body temperature by running it under warm water or placing it in a cup with warm water.
- You can thaw frozen milk in the refrigerator.
- Expressed milk is not "homogenized" like the milk in the store. It may separate into layers. If this happens, gently swirl the milk to mix it.
- Do not warm milk in the microwave- this can cause hot spots that can burn your baby.
- Do not re-freeze thawed expressed milk.

