



Breastfeeding...

when you are away from your baby

Your own breast milk is the best food for your baby. If you want to collect your own breast milk to put in a bottle, this pamphlet will tell you how to express your milk by hand, or by using a pump.

It is best to nurse your baby for at least four to six weeks before giving your breast milk in a bottle. This is so your baby can learn how to breastfeed. Your baby should only be fed with a bottle when you are not there to breastfeed. This will help keep up your milk supply.

What do I need to collect and store my milk?

You may collect your milk in a clean container. Plastic containers or bags that close tightly are the best for storing your milk.

It is still advised that you sterilize containers and pump parts in boiling water. Cover the pot and boil for 5 minutes. Make sure there is enough water in the pot to cover all the containers and pump parts.

If you do not wish to sterilize your containers, be sure to wash them with very hot, soapy water. Rinse well and then let them air dry. You can also wash containers in a dishwasher on the hot wash and dry cycle.



How do I collect my milk?

You can express your milk by hand or by using a breast pump. You can express breast milk any time. You may find it easier right after a feeding. Do not worry if you only collect a small amount the first few times that you pump.

How do I express my milk by hand?

There are many ways to express milk by hand. With practice you will find the best way that works best for you.

Before you start, always wash your hands with soap and water.

Gently massage your breasts towards your nipples for a few minutes.

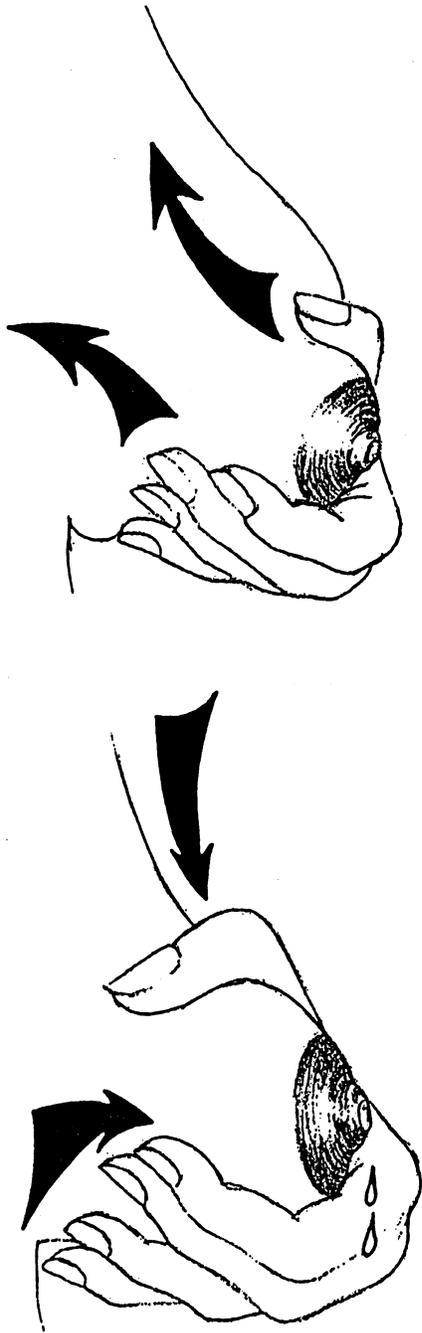
Support your breast from underneath. Place your fingers at the edge of the areola, which is the darker part of the breast. Since areolae come in many sizes, you may need to adjust how much breast you will need to hold.

Now push your thumb and fingers back toward your chest. At the same time, push your thumb and fingers together in a rolling motion. Imagine that you are pushing the milk out and not squeezing your nipples shut. Your lower fingers should be doing most of the work.

Repeat this motion as long as your milk flows. When the flow of milk slows or stops, move your fingers around the areola to express all areas. When you have emptied one breast, switch to the other side. You may go back and forth from breast to breast until you are getting no more spurts or only a few drops of milk.

You can keep milk at room temperature, in a tightly closed container, for up to 6 hours.

Remember to be gentle. You can bruise your breasts easily. It is normal to get very little milk at first. Even a few drops are a good start. Practice will help.



How do I use a breast pump?



If you plan to collect milk this way, there are several types of pumps you can use. Be sure to read all the instructions that come with your pump so that you will use it the right way. Follow all directions about cleaning. Be careful not to touch the inside of the pump.

Do not use a pump with a rubber bulb.

How do I store breast milk?

Pour the milk from the plastic container used to collect it into a sterilized container or bottle.

Close the container tightly and label with the date.

Appliance	Storage Time
Deep Freezer	6 months
Freezer section of the fridge separate door	3 months
Freezer inside main part of fridge	2-3 weeks

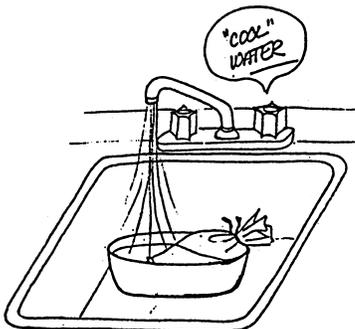
Milk should be stored in single feedings. It may take several collections to get one feeding of milk. Cool each collection in the refrigerator before adding it to the already frozen milk.

Leave about 1 cm or 1/2 inch of air space at the top of the container so that it does not push the lid open during freezing.

After expressing your milk you must either freeze it immediately, or keep it in the refrigerator and use it within 24 hours. If breast milk is to be stored longer than 24 hours, it should be frozen immediately.

Milk stored in a deep freezer can be kept for 6 months. In a freezer compartment which is separate from the rest of the refrigerator, it can be kept for only 3 months. Milk stored in a freezer inside an old refrigerator, can be safely kept for 2-3 weeks.

How do I thaw frozen breast milk?



Always use the oldest milk first.

Thaw frozen milk in the refrigerator or place the container under **running cool water**.

Do not thaw milk at room temperature, or in the microwave.



How do I use stored breast milk?

After the milk is thawed, keep it in the refrigerator and use within 12 hours.

Warm the milk. Before feeding shake the container to mix the milk. You may see white flecks in the milk. This is normal.

Any milk left over after each feeding should be thrown out.

Milk should never be re-frozen.

Do not microwave breast milk.

Some helpful hints:

- If you know what time you will be back, ask the sitter not to feed the baby just before you get home.
- Continue to express or pump while you are away from the baby. This will help keep up your milk supply.
- If possible, express or pump in a quiet restful place. Think about your baby and relax. This will help your milk “let down”, or flow easily. Some babies will take a bottle of breast milk more easily from someone other than their mother.



There are many people who can answer questions or help you with breastfeeding when you get home.

Some choices are:

- ☎ your Public Health Nurse
- ☎ La Leche League or Breastfeeding Support Group
- ☎ a breastfeeding clinic
- ☎ a breastfeeding consultant
- ☎ your doctor

Public Health Services

