



## Storage and Preparation of Breastmilk – Guidelines for Child Care Providers

1. Always wash your hands before and after handling breastmilk.
2. Make sure that the infant's parents have labeled the hard plastic bottles with their infant's name and date that the breastmilk was pumped. If the infant's supply of breastmilk runs out, contact the parents so they can bring some more to the center.
3. Check the name on the bottle before feeding infants. If the wrong bottle is fed to the wrong infant, call the parents of the infant and follow your center's policy for what to do next.
4. Refrigerate or freeze breastmilk as soon as the parents bring it to the center. It does not need to be in a separate refrigerator. Rotate the bottles so the earliest date is used first (first in – first out).
5. Health professionals do agree that gloves do not need to be worn to feed an infant breastmilk. Also, there is no proof that gloves should be worn to clean spilled breastmilk, but always wash your hands afterwards.
6. Throw away breastmilk if it is:
  - ✓ Brought to the center in a dirty bottle;
  - ✓ Left not refrigerated for an hour or more;
  - ✓ Not finished by the infant within an hour from the beginning of the feeding – this is because harmful bacteria can grow!
7. Frozen breastmilk can be thawed quickly in a container of warm water (not to exceed 98°F).
8. Breastmilk, as well as formula, in a bottle should **NEVER** be warmed in the microwave – this can cause “hot spots” in a bottle that will burn the infant. Bottles should be warmed under running warm tap water or by placing them in a container of warm water that is not warmer than 98°F. Bottles should not be left in the container of water for longer than 5 minutes, because this can lead to bacteria growth.

9. After warming, bottles should be mixed gently and the breastmilk should be tested on your forearm to make sure that it is not too warm. Excessive shaking of the breastmilk may damage some of the nutrients that are important for infants and may also cause an increase in foaming which could lead to feeding air to the infant and cause gassiness.
10. If using a crock-pot to warm breastmilk, it is important that this should be out of infants' reach and not warmer than 98°F. It should also be emptied, sanitized and refilled with fresh water daily.
11. After a feeding, throw out any unused breastmilk left in a bottle and wash the bottle with soap and hot water.
12. Bottles, bottle caps, nipples and other equipment used to feed breastmilk from a bottle can be cleaned and sanitized by washing in a dishwasher or by washing, rinsing and boiling for 1 minute. If bottles are not cleaned at your center, place all feeding devices into a plastic bag for parents to take home.

### **Breastmilk Refrigeration and Storage Guidelines**

<i>Refrigerator &lt;40°F</i>	<i>Freezer Compartment Inside Refrigerator ≤0°F</i>	<i>Freezer Compartment Attached to the Refrigerator ≤0°F</i>	<i>Deep Freezer ≤0°F</i>
48 Hours (2 days)	2 Weeks	3 Months	6 Months

*Check temperatures with a thermometer according to your center's policy.*