

Breast Milk Storage Guide

Storage times, thawing guidelines, and what you need to know

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COLOSTRUM STORAGE

Colostrum is your first milk - thick, golden, and produced in small amounts. It has different storage guidelines than mature breast milk. Even a few drops are valuable, so collect and store carefully.

EXPRESSED COLOSTRUM

Room temperature (up to 77 F)	Up to 4 hours
Refrigerator (39F or colder)	Up to 4 days
Freezer	Up to 6 months

IMPORTANT NOTES

- *Use small syringes or containers - colostrum is produced in teaspoons, not ounces.
- *Hand expression often works better than a pump in the first days.
- *Hospital-grade pumps are available if baby cannot latch or needs supplementing.
- *Talk to your nurse or IBCLC about collecting and storing colostrum before birth.

MATURE BREAST MILK STORAGE TIMES

ROOM TEMPERATURE, REFRIGERATOR, & FREEZER

Countertop (up to 77 F)	Up to 4 hours
Refrigerator (39 F or colder)	Up to 4 days
Freezer (0 F or colder)	Up to 6 months

IMPORTANT NOTES

- *Never store in the door of the refrigerator or freezer - always in the back.
- *Deep freezer milk can be stored for 12 months - quality begins to degrade after 6 months.
- *Do not refreeze previously frozen milk.
- *Use thawed milk in the fridge within 24 hours.
- *Always label with date and amount
- *Leave room at the top - frozen milk expands

Source: CDC, AAP, Academy of Breastfeeding Medicine

THAWING & WARMING

HOW TO THAW

In the refrigerator	Overnight
Under warm running water	Several minutes
In a bowl of warm water	10 - 20 minutes

HOW TO WARM

Warm water bath	A few minutes
Bottle warmer	Per device
Under warm running water	A few minutes

Never microwave breast milk (creates dangerous hot spots) - Boil or heat directly on the stove - Refreeze previously frozen breast milk

MY NOTES:
