



Human Milk

Storage Guidelines



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		Temperature	Storage time
Freshly Expressed Milk	Warm room	80-90°F	3-4 hours
	Room Temp	61-79°F	4-8 hours (ideal: 3-4 hours)
	Insulated cooler / ice packs	59°F	24 hours
Refrigerated Milk Store in back, away from door	Refrigerated Fresh	32-39°F	3-8 days (ideal: 72 hrs)
	Refrigerated Thawed	32-39°F	24 hours
Frozen Milk Do not refreeze! Store in back, away from door/sides	Freezer compartment inside refrigerator (older-style)	Varies	2 weeks
	Self-contained freezer unit of a refrigerator/freezer	<39°F	6 months
	Separate deep freeze	0°F	12 months (ideal: 6 months)

These guidelines are for milk expressed for a full-term healthy baby. If baby is seriously ill and/or hospitalized, discuss storage guidelines with baby's doctor.

Tips

- To avoid waste and for easier thawing & warming, store milk in 1-4 ounce portions
- Date milk before storing. Milk from different pumping sessions/days may be combined in one container – use the date of the first milk expressed
- Avoid adding warm milk to a container of previously refrigerated or frozen milk – cool the new milk before combining

To thaw milk:

- Thaw slowly in the refrigerator (this takes about 12 hours – try putting it in the fridge the night before you need it). Avoid letting milk sit out at room temperature to thaw.
- For quicker thawing, hold the container under running water – start cool and gradually increase temperature.
- Previously frozen milk may be kept in the refrigerator for up to 24 hours after it has finished thawing. Do not refreeze.

To heat milk:

- Heat water in a cup or other small container, then place frozen milk in the water to warm; or use a bottle warmer.
- NEVER microwave human milk or heat it directly on the stove.
- The cream will rise to the top of the milk during storage. Gently swirl milk (do not shake) to mix before checking the temperature and offering to the baby.
- If baby does not finish milk at one feeding, it is probably safe to refrigerate and offer within 1-2 hours before it is discarded.