

How to Safely Store Breast Milk

As a new mom, there may be times when it's not possible to breastfeed, for example, you may be going back to work. Using a breast pump is a great way to provide the benefits of breast milk when you can't actually breastfeed. Follow this checklist for tips on how to safely store your breast milk.

DO: Store freshly expressed or pumped breast milk in bags or containers with tight fitting lids. **DO:** Mark your bags or containers of breast milk with a date, so you know when the milk was expressed and stored. **DO:** Store your breast milk in the refrigerator. Breast milk can be stored in the refrigerator for up to four days. If you do not think you will use your breast milk within 4 days, freeze it right away.

DO: Freeze breast milk in small amounts of 2 to 4 ounces (or the amount that will be offered at one feeding) so you don't waste breast milk. You can store your breast milk in the freezer up to six months.

If you will be giving breast milk to your childcare provider: **DO:** Clearly label the container with your child's name and talk to your childcare provider about other requirements they might have for labeling and storing breast milk.

DON'T: Store breast milk in disposable bottle liners or plastic bags that are not intended for storing breast milk. **DON'T:** Store breast milk in the door of the fridge, where the temperature can fluctuate. Place it toward the back of the refrigerator where the temperature is colder. **DON'T:** Leave breast milk out at room temperature for longer than six hours.

For more information on the proper storage of breast milk, visit [cdc.gov](https://www.cdc.gov). Follow this checklist for ways to safely store your breast milk.