

Warming and Preparing Stored Breastmilk

Pumping and storing your breast milk ahead of time, ensures your baby is well-fed when you are away and can't breastfeed. You can store breast milk in the refrigerator and freezer. But it's important to thaw your breast milk safely before giving it to your baby. Follow this checklist for the best ways to warm and prepare stored breast milk.

DO: Thaw your breast milk in the refrigerator for several hours. If you need to speed up the thawing, put the container or bag under warm water or set it in a container of warm, not hot water. Once your breast milk is thawed: DO: Warm it up by running the milk under warm water.

DO: Make sure you stir the milk to ensure it's evenly warm and to mix the fats and other nutrients throughout the milk. DO: Test your milk. Put a few drops on the side of your wrist. It should be body temperature warm, but not hot. DO: Make sure to use your thawed or warmed breast milk within two hours. If you have any leftover milk when your baby is finished feeding, be sure to use within 2 hours, and throw out any remaining milk.

DON'T: Use a microwave to thaw or reheat your breast milk. Microwaves do not heat evenly and create "hot spots" that could burn your baby. DON'T: Refreeze or refrigerate breast milk after it has been thawed or after your baby has drunk from the bottle. Your baby's saliva can contaminate it and using it later can make your baby sick.

If you any questions or concerns about safely thawing your breast milk, talk to your pediatrician. Follow this checklist to safely warm and prepare your breast milk.