

Expressing breastmilk



You can express breastmilk by hand or by using a breast pump. You should get the same amount of milk no matter which method you choose.

It's easier to express if you feel relaxed and comfortable.

Wash your hands first.
Have a clean container ready to collect the breastmilk.

Expressing means your baby can have breastmilk even when you are not there.



Hand expressing

- Place your thumb and fingers on opposite sides of your breast, just behind the areola (the darker skin around your nipple).



- Gently squeeze the breast between your thumb and fingers. Squeeze about twice per second.



- Drops of milk will form on your nipple. Once your breastmilk flows, it may spray from your nipple.



- Move your thumb and fingers around the areola so that all the milk ducts get squeezed.
- Change hands and/or breast when you get tired.

Expressing with a breast pump

- Ask the person who gave you the pump to explain how to use it.



- Always follow the directions that come with the pump.



- Massage the breast towards the pump.
This helps the breastmilk to flow.

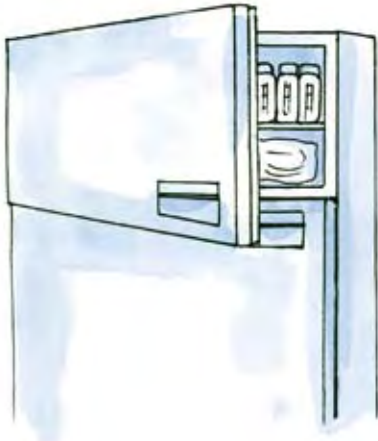


*Ask your health
worker or lactation
consultant for help
if you need it.*

Storing breastmilk

Freshly expressed breastmilk can be stored for:

- 3 – 5 days in the back of the refrigerator. Keep the fridge door shut as much as you can.



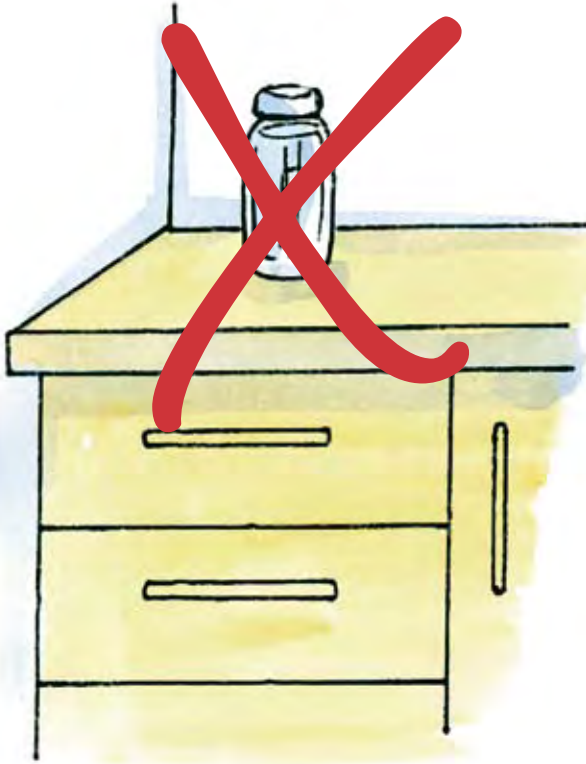
- 3 months in a fridge freezer that has a separate door to the freezer.
- 6 – 12 months in a deep freezer.



Never store breastmilk in the door of the fridge.

Thawing and warming breastmilk

NEVER leave frozen expressed breastmilk to defrost at room temperature. Warm up frozen breastmilk by standing it in hot water (not boiling water).



Shake the bottle well before giving it to Baby. This helps to make sure that the milk is heated evenly throughout the bottle.



If you use a microwave to thaw breastmilk, you must be very careful. Microwaves heat unevenly so some parts of the breastmilk will be hotter than others. Heat the bottle in short bursts (about 5 or 10 seconds) and shake well.

*Milk that is too hot
or not mixed well can
burn Baby's mouth. Be
careful when heating
milk for Baby.*

*ALWAYS test
the temperature
before giving it
to Baby.*



Transporting expressed breastmilk

- Store expressed breastmilk in a clean container.
- Put the container in an esky bag with a freezer brick or crushed ice to keep it cool.
- Place the breastmilk into a fridge as soon as you arrive.



*NEVER refreeze
breastmilk.
Throw any
leftovers out.*



**Queensland
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Queensland Health

For more information contact your local health worker