

# Expressing breastmilk



Growing Strong Feeding you and your baby

Great state. Great opportunity.



Queensland  
Government

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.

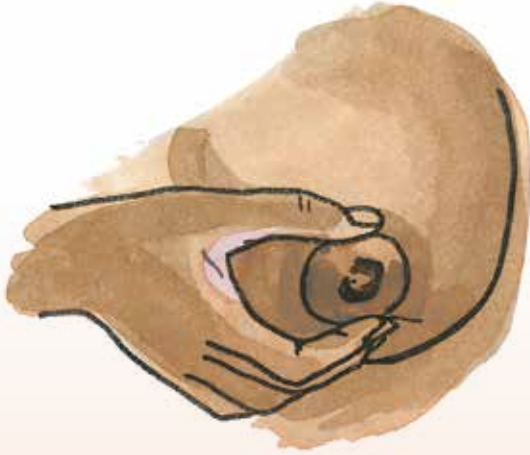
Wash your hands first. Have a clean container ready to collect the breastmilk.

*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.
- When milk flow slows change breasts.

## 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 in a sterilised bottle or container 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.

*Label milk with the date you expressed it before storing.*



**Never store breastmilk in the door of the fridge.**

## Thawing and warming breastmilk

- Warm up frozen breastmilk by standing it in warm water for a few minutes (no longer than 10 minutes).
- NEVER leave frozen expressed breastmilk to defrost at room temperature.
- Shake the bottle well before giving it to Baby. This helps to make sure that the milk is heated evenly.







- Do not thaw or heat breastmilk in the microwave. Microwaves damage the goodness of the milk.
- Microwaves can make some parts of the milk too hot and burn baby's mouth.

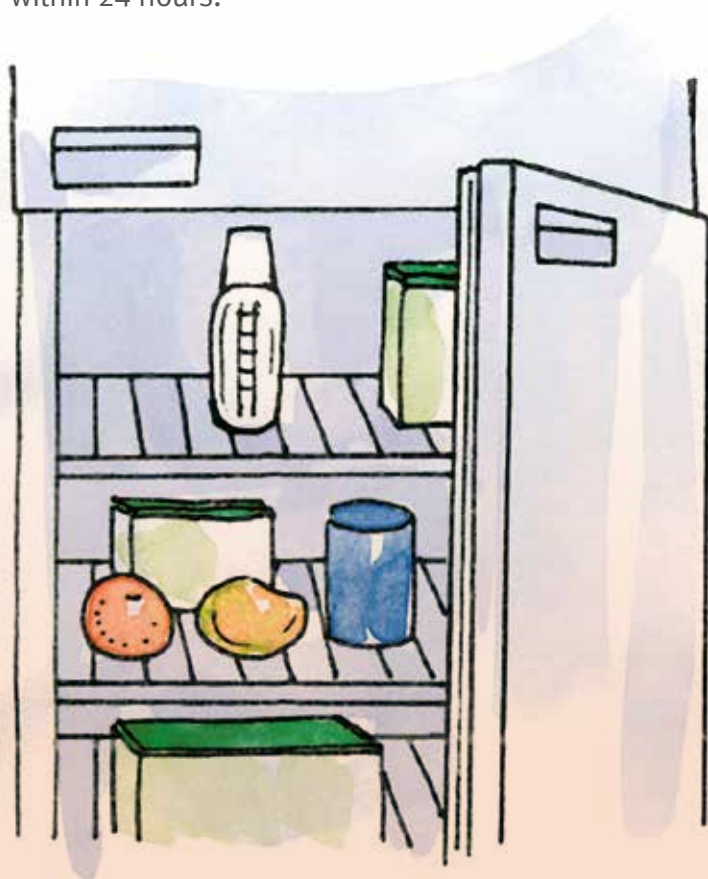


*Always test  
the temperature  
before giving it  
to Baby*



## Transporting expressed breastmilk

- Store expressed breastmilk in a sterilised container.
- Put the container in an esky bag with a freezer brick or crushed ice to keep it cool and use within two hours.
- If you can, place the breastmilk into a fridge and use within 24 hours.





**NEVER**  
refreeze breastmilk.  
Throw any  
leftovers out.

# Growing Strong

## Feeding you and your baby

For more information contact your local health worker  
or call 13 HEALTH (13 43 25 84).



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