

Storing Breast Milk/ Thawing Frozen Breast Milk

What is it?

- The storage and safe handling of expressed breast milk for use when mother and baby are separated or unable to breastfeed




Collect Equipment

- First choice - glass containers with a tight lid (for example, small jars and bottles with lids)
- Second choice - bisphenol A and phthalate free plastic containers/bottles
- Third choice - special breastmilk freezer bags for short term storage only

Storage Guidelines

- Store in 60 - 120 ml (2 - 4 oz) portions to prevent wasting milk
- Always cool freshly expressed milk before adding it to already cooled or frozen milk
- Always add a smaller amount of cooled milk to frozen milk
- Leave a 2.5 cm (1 in) space at the top of the container when freezing
- Do not refreeze breast milk once it is thawed
- Place containers at the back of the fridge or freezer where it is the coldest
- Label the container with the date the breast milk was expressed. After the storage time has passed, discard the milk

The following guidelines apply to mothers who have a healthy, full-term baby and are storing their milk for home use.

<u>Place</u>	<u>Temperature</u>	<u>Storage Time</u>
Room temperature	≤ 25°C or 77°F	6 to 8 hours
Fridge		5 days
Insulated cooler with ice pack	≤ 4°C or 40°F	24 hours
Freezer of a 1 door fridge 	- 15°C or 5°F	2 weeks
Freezer of a 2 door fridge 	- 18°C or 20°F	3 to 6 months
Deep Freezer 	- 20°C or -4°F	6 to 12 months
Previously frozen breast milk (in the refrigerator)	0 to 4°C	24 hours

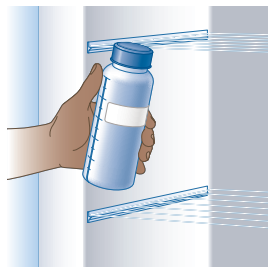
Cleaning of Equipment

- For healthy, full-term babies receiving breast milk, wash containers in hot soapy water and rinse well with hot water. Let the containers air dry. It is unnecessary to sterilize items
- If the baby is still in hospital, check with the hospital staff about sterilization

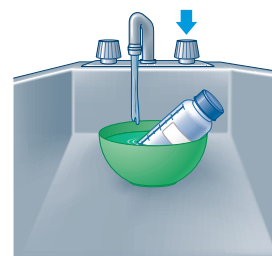
Thawing Frozen Breast Milk



Check the date on the stored breast milk. Use the container with the earliest date.



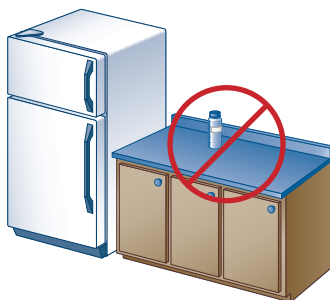
Thaw frozen breast milk by leaving it in the fridge for 4 hours
OR...



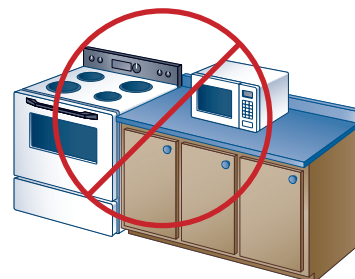
...place container under cool running water. Once it has begun to thaw, run warm water to finish thawing



Warm breast milk by placing container in a bowl of very warm water



Never thaw at room temperature



DO NOT heat on stove or in microwave oven

For more information, call Region of Peel—Public Health at 905-799-7700
Monday to Friday 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
Caledon residents call free of charge at 905-584-2216
www.peelregion.ca