

American Academy of Pediatrics Guide to Storing Fresh Breast Milk

Place	Temperature	How Long	Things to Know
Countertop, table	Room temp (up to 77°F)	Up to 4 hours is best. Up to 6 to 8 hours is okay for very cleanly expressed breast milk.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Store breast milk in small batches. 2 to 4 ounces is recommended to prevent waste. • Any remaining breast milk left in a bottle after your baby is finished with a feeding should be used within 2 hours, or, if quickly refrigerated, used for the next feeding. You can always thaw an extra bag if needed.
Refrigerator	39°F or colder	Up to 4 days is best. Up to 8 days is okay for very cleanly expressed breast milk.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Store breast milk in the back of the refrigerator. • To warm breast milk from the refrigerator, place the bottle in a bowl of warm water or run it under warm water. Heating breast milk in microwaves is not safe.
Freezer	0°F or colder	Up to 9 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Store breast milk toward the back of the freezer. • Breast milk expands as it freezes, so do not fill the milk all the way to the top of the storage container. • To thaw breast milk from the freezer, put the bottle or bag in the refrigerator overnight, hold it under warm running water, or set it in a container of warm water. Heating breast milk in microwaves is not safe. • Once breast milk is thawed, it can be stored in a refrigerator and must be used within 24 hours.
Deep freezer	-4°F or colder	Up to 12 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Store breast milk toward the back of the deep freezer. • Breast milk expands as it freezes, so do not fill the milk all the way to the top of the storage container. • To thaw breast milk from the deep freezer, put the bottle or bag in the refrigerator overnight, hold it under warm running water, or set it in a container of warm water. Heating breast milk in microwaves is not safe. • Once breast milk is thawed, it can be stored in a refrigerator and must be used within 24 hours.