

Child Care Sheet: How to Handle Pumped Milk



Breastfed Babies Welcomed Here!

As a result of supportive child care centers and homes such as yours, we are seeing an increase in mothers continuing to breastfeed their babies after returning to work or school. This is good news for everyone: children are healthier, parents miss less work, and childcare absenteeism is lower. Praise your mothers for providing precious milk to their breastfed babies and follow a few basic safety guidelines listed below.

Accepting Pumped Mother's Milk

- Most centers have a preference whether pumped mother's milk shall arrive as liquid or frozen milk. Ask mother to bring enough milk each day, plus some extra for hungry days, in serving sizes ready to serve.
- Pumped milk arrives each day with the mother and baby's name on each container

Mother's milk is a food and should be handled with care

Keep milk frozen or refrigerated until feeding time.



- Wash hands as for food preparation
- Send unused milk home with mother each day
- Milk left after each feeding must be discarded within an hour of being taken out of the refrigerator

Labels on containers of milk

- Parents will bring containers of milk each day labeled
- Date the milk when milk is unfrozen (thawed ready to use)

Mother's name
Baby's name
Frozen 7/18
Thawed 10/7



Frozen milk can be stored safely up to a year. Always return unused milk to mother.

Warming Milk to Thaw (unfreeze)

- Milk should be thawed by running cool water over the container or swirling the container in a bowl of warm water. **NEVER USE A MICROWAVE TO THAW OR WARM MILK.** (Too much heat can change or destroy important proteins and vitamins. You also risk burning your baby's mouth and throat.)
- It is not necessary to warm milk but some babies prefer it.
- Mother's milk separates as it sits in the refrigerator. Shake the bottle back and forth gently to mix layers back together. It does not look like baby formula or regular milk. It may have a green or blue tint.

Storing and Feeding

- Once frozen milk is thawed, use it within 24 hours and do not freeze again.
- Keep unfrozen milk refrigerated.
- Avoid wasting mother's precious pumped milk. Feeding bottles or cups should have just the amount both you and the mother think the baby will take at each feeding. This may be 1 to 2 ounces for very young infants.

For More Information

Call your local community WIC Program Breastfeeding Coordinator. To locate call North Carolina Family Health Resource Line: 1-800-FOR-BABY (1-800-367-2229). TTY for hearing-impaired in English and Spanish: 1-800-976-1922.
Open Monday - Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. except holidays.

North Carolina Child Care Health & Safety Resource Center: www.healthychildcarenc.org

State of North Carolina Department of Health Human Services
Division of Public Health • Nutrition Services Branch
www.nutritionnc.com

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