Breastfeeding – Collection, Storage and Traveling with Breast Milk for the Hospitalized Infant

When you pump and store breast milk the right way, you are making sure your baby is getting the best of your breast milk.

**General Instructions:**

Wash your hands with soap and water before pumping.

- Wash all dirty bottles, breast shields, white membranes and yellow valves with soap and hot water before each use. Bottles that are sealed in a package are clean.
- Do not touch the inside of the bottles after they are clean.
- Follow the instructions on the “Breast Feeding: Hand/Mechanical Milk Expression” handout you received when your baby was admitted.

**Bottles for Storage:**

- Use clear or cloudy hard plastic bottles or bottles provided by the hospital. Breast milk for hospitalized babies should be stored in bottles. Before storing, make sure to leave room in the bottle for the breast milk to expand as it freezes and place a lid on each bottle.
- Please do not use storage bags to store or freeze breast milk while baby is in the hospital. They cannot be put in the milk warmers and are harder for nurses to handle.
- When discharged and milk is being stored at home, bags can be used. Lay them flat for better storage.

**Labeling:**

- Label each bottle with the green label the staff provides, making sure to put the date and time of pumping and any medications you are taking.

  **Milk pumped during the first 14 days is fed to your baby first. Put an orange dot on the bottle lid and number the bottles (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, etc.). Continue to number the bottles through day 14. Your milk will be given to your baby in the order it was pumped.**

**Breast Milk Storage:**

When you start pumping, you may only get small amounts of breast milk. Your supply should increase after the first couple of days.

- When pumping both breasts, you may mix the milk from each breast into one bottle. Do not mix the milk from different pumping times.
- If your baby is only taking small amounts with each feeding (1-10mls), then store the bottles with 30-45ml in each one. This will change over time. Talk with your baby’s nurse to find out how much your baby is taking with each feeding.

See the back side of this sheet for additional information!
Breast Milk Storage (Continued):

- Refrigerate or freeze the breast milk right after pumping. Do not let milk sit out at room temperature.
- When away from the hospital, put milk in the refrigerator and bring it to the hospital cold. The milk will be put in the refrigerator or freezer at the hospital.
  
  *There may be a time when you will be asked to keep your milk at home or the Ronald McDonald House. If this happens, you will need to freeze your milk after pumping.*
- If you are going to be away from the hospital for more than two days, you will need to freeze the milk you pump and then bring to the hospital frozen. Do not let it thaw.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Room Temp</th>
<th>Refrigerator</th>
<th>Freezer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Freshly Pumped</td>
<td>Do not keep at room temperature. (If no refrigerator is available, can be kept up to 4 hours at room temperature.)</td>
<td>48 hours (Can be placed in freezer if not used within 48 hours.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Previously Frozen</td>
<td>Up to 4 hours if thawed in refrigerator but not warmed.</td>
<td>24 hours after thawed (It takes approximately 24 hours to thaw a 60ml bottle in the refrigerator.)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

- When you store the breast milk in a freezer, do not put it in the door. Put it on a shelf closer to the back of the freezer. This will keep the milk from thawing when opening and closing the door.

Traveling with Cold or Frozen Breast Milk:

- Frozen breast milk should stay frozen during traveling. If milk thaws more than 50 percent during traveling, it **cannot** be refrozen and must be used within 24 hours.
- Pack frozen milk tightly in a cooler or breast milk storage box when traveling. Ways you can pack the cooler securely are:
  Use towel(s) for packing.
  Use frozen blue ice.
  Use soft packs of ice (blue, ice bricks).
  **Do not use wet ice.** The temperature of wet ice is warmer than the temperature of frozen milk and the wet ice will thaw the frozen milk.
- If you are pumping away from home, keep the breast milk in a cooler with frozen blue ice or in a refrigerator until you get home. Be sure to place the breast milk in the refrigerator or freezer as soon as you can.

Call the Children’s Mercy Lactation Management Program Help Line at (816) 346-1309 if you have questions or concerns.

The information does not take the place of instructions your doctor gives you. If you have questions about your child’s care, please call their doctor.