

1. All bottles or storage containers of breastmilk should be labeled (with water resistant ink) with the child's name, when it was collected, and when it was thawed if it was initially frozen.
2. Since breastmilk is a body fluid, it is very important to make sure that the **right breastmilk** is given to the **right child**. If breastmilk is mistakenly given to the wrong child, a provider should follow these steps:
 - Notify the child's parents right away and encourage them to notify their child's health care provider of the exposure
 - Inform the child's parents that, depending upon the results from the mother whose milk was given mistakenly, their child may soon need to undergo a baseline blood test for hepatitis B, hepatitis C, or HIV.
 - Notify the mother who expressed the breastmilk and ask when the breastmilk was expressed and how it was handled, and if she has been tested for hepatitis B, hepatitis C, and or HIV. If she has been tested, ask if she is willing to share her results. If she has not been tested, recommend that she contact her health care provider right away.
 - Assess why the wrong milk was given and develop a policy/procedure to prevent the mistake from occurring again. Share policy/procedure with parents and staff.
3. Infants should be **fed on demand** unless the parent and the child's health care provider give written instructions otherwise. It is important to remember that breast fed infants commonly eat more frequently and less amounts at each feeding than formula fed infants since breastmilk is easier to digest.
4. Bottles or containers of breastmilk should be immediately stored in the refrigerator or freezer. A thermometer in the refrigerator should be checked daily to be sure the temperature is 39 degrees F or below. Bottles and containers of breastmilk should not be kept in the door of the refrigerator because the temperature of the liquid will not stay as stable as it would on an inner shelf.
5. Unused breastmilk should be discarded after 5 days if refrigerated; by 2 weeks if frozen (5 degrees F) and stored in a small dorm fridge freezer compartment; by 3-6 months if frozen (0 degrees F) and stored in a freezer compartment of refrigerator with separate doors; by 6-12 months if frozen (-4 degrees F) and stored in deep freezer. Unused frozen breastmilk which has been thawed should be used within 24 hours. Never refreeze breastmilk.
6. Thaw frozen breastmilk in the refrigerator or under cold water. Thawing breastmilk at room temperature can allow unsafe levels of bacteria to develop.
7. If breastmilk is stored in storage bag, the bag should be checked for holes or leaks before placing in container of water for thawing.

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8. Fat is present in breastmilk and has a tendency to separate and rise to the top or stick to the sides of collection bags or containers. It is important to mix any fat that may have separated by gently swirling the container or kneading it in the bag.
9. Breastmilk should be heated in an individual container of warm water separate from other bottles. Fresh water should be used each time a serving of breastmilk is heated. Breastmilk should never be heated in hot water, on the stove, in a crockpot, or in a microwave. High heat and radiation destroy the precious components in the breastmilk. Microwaving can also cause “hot spots” that can cause burns.
10. Breastmilk only needs to be heated to body temperature (98.6 degrees F). When tested on top of the hand, it should feel slightly cool or undetectable. If it feels warm, it is probably too hot.
11. Gloves are not required when handling breastmilk, but they are recommended if the provider has any cuts or sores on his/her hands.
12. Prepare a clean work space to make a bottle by sanitizing the counter or by placing a clean paper towel on the counter.
13. Always wash your hands with soap and water before preparing or feeding an infant a bottle.
14. Keep nipple covered and place on the counter cover down. If there is not a cover, place ring on counter upright, so that the nipple is not touching anything.
15. If you need to mix the breastmilk in a bottle, the cover should be on the bottle. If no cover is available, cover nipple with clean paper towel or washcloth. Don't use your bare finger to cover nipple. It is also important not to vigorously shake breastmilk. Excessive shaking may damage some of the valuable cells in the breastmilk. Gently swirl the contents in the bottle or rock back and forth.
16. **A bottle that has been fed over a period that exceeds an hour from the beginning of the feeding or has been unrefrigerated one hour or more should be discarded.** Once an infant has nursed from a bottle, germs from their mouth are introduced into the breastmilk. Neither refrigeration nor reheating will prevent these germs from growing. Label bottle with time the bottle was heated or offered to an infant to ensure that a bottle is not fed past one hour.
17. The same bottle should not be used for two feedings. A clean bottle should be used for each feeding.

Source used: "Caring for Our Children" National Health and Safety Performance Standards: Guidelines for Out-of-Home Child Care Programs, 2nd Edition, 2002. Academy of Breastfeeding Medicine, 2010.

Selected Standards for Caring for Our Children: National health and Safety Performance Standards; Guidelines for Early Care and Education Programs, 3rd Edition, 2011.

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