



# 3

## Feeding the Breastfed Baby

**B**reastmilk is the best food for babies. It is the only food a baby needs during the first 4 to 6 months of life, and it continues to be an important source of nutrients for the first year. Breastmilk contains the right balance of nutrients to meet the baby's needs and changes over time. Breastmilk is easy to digest and contains natural substances that help protect babies from infection and food allergies. Babies fed breastmilk tend to have fewer illnesses. Breastfeeding also benefits the mother by:

- helping her body recover from pregnancy and get back into shape more quickly,
- saving her time and money, and
- possibly protecting her against breast cancer.

By causing certain hormones to be released into the mother's body, breastfeeding brings feelings of relaxation and well-being to the mother. Breastfeeding also builds a special closeness between a mother and her baby.

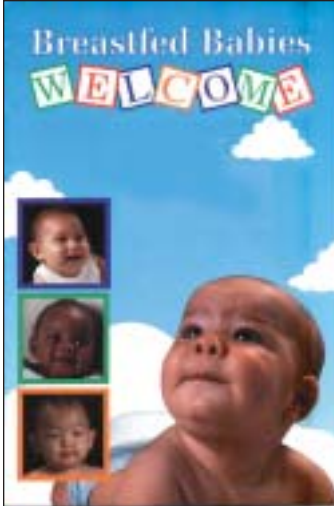
Consult with your State agency for more information on reimbursement for meals containing breastmilk. For more information on how to help breastfeeding mothers with babies in child care, refer to FNS' "Breastfed Babies Welcome Here" packet. This packet includes an attractive poster, a guide for child care providers, and a mother's guide. This packet is available, at a small cost, from:

NFSMI  
University of Mississippi  
Attn: Sales Department  
P.O. Drawer 188  
University, MS 38677-0188  
Phone: 1-800-321-3054  
Website: <http://www.olemiss.edu/depts/nfsmi>

### Supporting Breastfeeding Mothers

Encourage breastfeeding mothers to continue breastfeeding when returning to work or school. Babies in child care who are breastfed may be:

- breastfed by their mothers during visits to the facility,
- bottle-fed their mother's expressed breastmilk by the caregiver, and/or



- bottle-fed the type of infant formula prescribed by the baby's doctor while at child care (caregivers should feed formula **only** if the mother requests its use with her baby).

To help the mother breastfeed successfully:

- If she wishes to breastfeed her baby when she comes to the facility, offer or provide her a:
  - Quiet, comfortable, and private place to breastfeed (this helps her milk to letdown),
  - Place to wash her hands,
  - Pillow to support her baby on her lap while nursing,
  - Nursing stool or stepstool for her feet so she doesn't have to strain her back while nursing, and
  - Glass of water or other liquid to help her to get enough fluid for nursing.
- Encourage her to get the baby used to being fed her expressed breastmilk by another person before the baby starts in child care.
- Discuss with her the baby's usual feeding schedule and whether she wants you to time the baby's last feeding so that the baby is hungry and ready to breastfeed when she arrives. Ask her to leave her schedule with you and ask her to call if she is planning to miss a feeding or is going to be late.
- Encourage her to provide a back-up supply of frozen or refrigerated expressed breastmilk in case the baby needs to eat more often than usual or her visit is delayed.
- Share with her information about other places in the community that can answer her questions and concerns about breastfeeding.
- Give her a copy of the "Mother's Guide" from the "Breastfed Babies Welcome Here" packet and discuss it with her.

### **Use of Breastmilk for Babies Over 12 Months of Age**

Some parents may request that the caregiver continue feeding their babies breastmilk after 12 months of age. Continue to serve babies their mother's milk as long as the mother is able and wishes to provide it. Mothers who wish to continue providing breastmilk for their babies older than 12 months of age can do so without having to submit a medical statement. Breastmilk is a substitute for cow's milk in the meal pattern for children.

## **Guidelines on Storing, Handling, and Feeding Breastmilk**

Breastmilk needs to be stored and handled safely to keep it from spoiling. Follow the specific health and safety regulations that are required by your State and local authorities for safe food handling. General tips for handling breastmilk follow.


### **Handling of Breastmilk Before Arriving at the Facility**

Ask mothers to:

- Store their breastmilk in the refrigerator or freezer right after they express it and label the bottles with:
  - the baby's name, and
  - the date and time the breastmilk was collected.
- Store the milk in hard plastic bottles if possible because these are unbreakable.
- Fill the bottles with the amount of breastmilk the baby usually drinks at one feeding. Some babies may consume less than 4 ounces at a feeding. The mother can freeze some bottles with 1 to 2 ounces of breastmilk for times when the baby wants some extra breastmilk.
- Carry bottles of fresh or frozen breastmilk to the facility in a cooler with an ice pack to keep the milk at a cold temperature.

### **Handling and Storing Breastmilk at the Facility**

- Breastmilk from a mother is designed specially to meet the needs of her baby. If more than one baby or child is drinking from bottles, make sure that each bottle is clearly labeled with the respective baby's or child's name and never accept an unlabeled bottle from a parent. Do not use unlabeled bottles that have been accidentally accepted.
- Refrigerate bottles immediately when they arrive and until ready to use.
- Use bottles of breastmilk only for the baby for whom they are intended.
- To prevent spoiling, do not allow bottles of breastmilk to stand at room temperature.

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- Use refrigerated bottles of fresh breastmilk, kept at 40° Fahrenheit or below, within 48 hours from the time they were collected. Throw out unused breastmilk if not used within 48 hours. Although some suggest that fresh breastmilk can be stored for longer than 48 hours, the 48-hour period assures safety.
  - Breastmilk can be stored in a freezer (with a separate door from the refrigerator), for up to 3 months from when it was collected. Freezer temperature should be 0° Fahrenheit or below. If the freezer is not working or if there is a power failure, frozen milk may thaw out and become spoiled before 3 months. See page 74 on checking the temperature of your freezer.
  - Rotate frozen breastmilk, using the oldest milk first.
  - Protect breastmilk in an air-tight container (hard plastic bottles are recommended) while in the freezer. Once the breastmilk is removed from the freezer and thawed, refrigerate it at 40° Fahrenheit or below and use it within 24 hours; do not refreeze it.
  - Do not save and reuse breastmilk leftover from bottles.
  - Wash skin on which breastmilk has spilled with soap and water immediately.

### **Preparing and Using Stored Breastmilk for Feeding**

- Wash your hands, as described on page 71.
- Thaw a bottle of frozen breastmilk in the refrigerator or hold it under running cold water. Thaw only as much frozen breastmilk as you think a baby will need for a feeding.
- Do not thaw frozen breastmilk at room temperature, by heating on a stove, or in a microwave. Liquid may become very hot when microwaved even though the bottle feels cool. The hot liquid could seriously burn babies. Also, heating damages special substances in breastmilk that protect baby's health.
- If breastmilk has a bad odor after thawing, it may have spoiled and should be thrown out.
- Once thawed, do not refreeze breastmilk.
- For those babies who prefer a warm bottle, hold the bottle under running warm (not hot) water immediately before

feeding the baby. Warm only as much breastmilk as you think a baby will need for a feeding. Feed breastmilk immediately after warming.

- Shake the bottle of breastmilk before feeding the baby because breastmilk separates into two layers when it is stored.
- After a feeding, throw out any unused breastmilk left in a bottle and wash the bottle with soap and hot water immediately.
- Follow the baby's lead in the amount of breastmilk to feed. Feed the baby until he or she is no longer hungry.

### **Cleaning Bottles**

- Clean and sanitize bottles and their parts before reusing or filling with new expressed breastmilk as shown in Figure 4a, Steps 1-4 on page 29 in Chapter 4 on Preparing Formula. Throw out disposable nursing bags, if used, after each use.

See Figure 3 on how to store, handle, and feed breastmilk, on pages 20-21.

Figure 3

## How to Store, Handle, and Feed Breastmilk

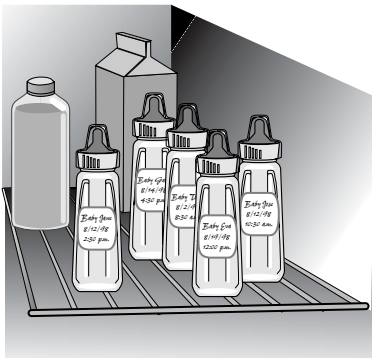
Breastmilk needs to be stored and handled safely to keep it from spoiling. Follow health and safety regulations required by your State and local authorities for safe food handling. Here are general tips for handling breastmilk:

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### Handling of Breastmilk Before Arriving at the Facility

Ask mothers to:

- Store their breastmilk in the refrigerator or freezer right after they collect it and label the bottles with:
  - the baby's name, and
  - the date and time the breastmilk was collected.
- Store the milk in hard plastic bottles if possible because they do not break.
- Fill the bottles with the amount of breastmilk the baby usually drinks at one feeding. The mother can freeze some bottles with 1 to 2 ounces of breastmilk for times when the baby wants some extra breastmilk.
- Carry bottles of fresh or frozen breastmilk to the facility in a cooler with an ice pack to keep the milk at a cold temperature.



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### Handling and Storing Breastmilk at the Facility

- Breastmilk from a mother is designed specially to meet the needs of her baby. Make sure that each bottle is clearly labeled with the correct baby's or child's name. Never accept an unlabeled bottle from a parent.
- Refrigerate bottles immediately when they arrive and until ready to use.
- Use bottles of breastmilk only for the baby for whom they are intended.
- To prevent spoiling, do not allow bottles of breastmilk to stand at room temperature.
- Use refrigerated bottles of fresh breastmilk, kept at 40° Fahrenheit or below, within 48 hours from the time they were collected. Throw out unused breastmilk if not used within 48 hours.
- Breastmilk can be stored in a freezer (with a separate door from the refrigerator), for up to 3 months from when it was collected. Freezer temperature should be 0° Fahrenheit or below. If the freezer is not working or if there is a power failure, frozen milk may thaw out and become spoiled before 3 months. Rotate frozen breastmilk, using the oldest milk first.
- Protect breastmilk in an air-tight container (hard plastic bottle) while in the freezer. Once the breastmilk is removed from the freezer and thawed, refrigerate it at 40° Fahrenheit or below and use it within 24 hours; do not refreeze it.
- Do not save and reuse breastmilk leftover from bottles.
- Wash skin on which breastmilk has spilled with soap and water immediately.



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### Preparing and Using Stored Breastmilk for Feeding

- Wash your hands well (see Figure 10 on “Hand Washing Tips”).
- Thaw a bottle of frozen breastmilk in the refrigerator or hold it under running cold water. Thaw only as much frozen breastmilk as you think a baby will need for a feeding.
- Do not thaw frozen breastmilk at room temperature, by heating on a stove, or in a microwave. Liquid may become very hot when microwaved even though the bottle feels cool. The hot liquid could seriously burn babies. Also, heating damages special substances in breastmilk that protect baby's health.

Figure 3 (continued)

## How to Store, Handle, and Feed Breastmilk

- If breastmilk has a bad odor after thawing, it may have spoiled and should be thrown out.
- Once thawed, do not refreeze breastmilk.
- For those babies who prefer a warm bottle, hold the bottle under running warm (not hot) water immediately before feeding the baby. Warm only as much breastmilk as you think a baby will need for a feeding. Feed breastmilk immediately after warming.
- Shake the bottle of breastmilk before feeding because breastmilk separates into two layers when it is stored.
- Follow the baby's lead in the amount of breastmilk to feed. Feed the baby until he or she is no longer hungry.
- After a feeding, throw out any unused breastmilk left in a bottle and wash the bottle with soap and hot water immediately.
- Clean and sanitize bottles and their parts before reusing or filling with new expressed breastmilk (See Figure 4a, Steps 1-4 for more information). Throw out disposable nursing bags, if used, after each use.



### **IMPORTANT STEPS TO PREVENT BABIES OR CHILDREN FROM DRINKING ANOTHER CHILD'S BOTTLE OF EXPRESSED BREASTMILK:**

- Make sure that parents clearly label each child's bottle of breastmilk with the child's name and date and time expressed. Only use a bottle labeled for the correct child.
- Never accept an unlabeled bottle from a parent.
- Do not use any unlabeled bottles that have been accidentally accepted.
- Do not leave any bottles of expressed breastmilk sitting around so that other babies or children could accidentally drink them.
- After a feeding, throw out any unused breastmilk left in a bottle and wash the bottle with soap and hot water immediately. Do not leave the bottle anywhere where other children can reach it.
- Do not let babies or children carry around bottles (or cups) of expressed breastmilk. If a child drops a bottle, pick it up immediately, place it out of reach of other children, and clean up any spilled breastmilk with soap and water.
- At the end of the day, send all bottles that contained expressed breastmilk home with the parent who brought the bottles. Never leave used bottles sitting around.
- If a child has been mistakenly fed or has drunk from another child's bottle of expressed breastmilk, follow the newest guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) for steps to take (check CDC's web site at <http://www.cdc.gov>).

Recent guidance from CDC on safe handling of breastmilk is in:

*"The ABCs of Safe and Healthy Child Care: A Handbook for Child Care Providers,"* Department of Health and Human Services, U.S. Public Health Service, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 1996. This publication can be downloaded through the above web site or obtained by writing to:

Office of Health Communication  
National Center for Infectious Diseases  
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention  
Mailstop C-14  
1600 Clifton Road  
Atlanta, GA 30333