

# Expressing Breastmilk

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

As we are a registered charity with a Deductible Gift Recipient (DGR) Item 1 status, if you keep your receipts, you can claim the cost of the storage bags that you have given us, as a tax deduction.

### BREASTMILK STORAGE

#### How do I store my breastmilk?

You can store breastmilk in the fridge or freezer in a breastmilk storage bag. Make sure the bag is well sealed so milk can't escape or take on the odour or taste of other foods.

#### 5 important tips about storing breastmilk:

1. Cool your breastmilk in the refrigerator before adding it to another lot of breastmilk.
2. Do not use Ziplock bags to store your breastmilk. It must be stored in a sterile breastmilk storage bag or bottle.
3. Do not overfill the breastmilk storage bags as this can cause the bag to split when it freezes.
4. Write the date and time you expressed on the breastmilk storage bags — this will help you keep track.
5. Never refreeze breastmilk which has already been thawed and offered to your baby.

BREASTMILK	ROOM TEMPERATURE	REFRIDGERATOR	FREEZER
Freshly expressed into a clean container	6-8 hours (in a room 26°C or cooler) or store in the fridge if you can	No more than 72 hours and store at the back of the fridge	2 weeks in the freezer of a fridge/freezer combination (-15°C). 3 months in the freezer with a separate door (-18°C). 6-12 months in a deep freeze (-20°C).
Thawed EBM (not warmed)	4 hours or less e.g. the next feed	In the refrigerator for 24 hours	Do not refreeze EBM which has already been thawed
Thawed EBM in warm water	Don't reoffer; throw out what the baby doesn't drink	Hold for 4 hours or until the next feed	Don't refreeze
When baby has started feeding	Throw out what the baby doesn't drink	Throw out	Throw out



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### HOW WOULD I EXPRESS MY BREASTMILK?

#### Hand expressing

- First, wash your hands with soap and water and dry them
- Get a clean, sterile breastmilk storage bag to collect your breast milk.
- Try to relax, think about your baby so you can let-down and your milk flows. Gently role your nipple between your finger and thumb and massage your breasts.
- Place your thumb and forefingers in a V shape on your breast, about 2 centimetres behind your nipple and gently squeeze.
- Rotate the position of your fingers and thumb on your breast so all your milk ducts are emptied.
- Try and mimic your baby's sucking rhythm and keep squeezing until you see milk coming from your nipple.

Be patient, it can take time to let down and for the milk to flow when expressing.

#### Using a pump

- Wash your hands and dry them well.
- Follow the manufacturer's recommendations on how to wash, sterilise and assemble the pump. Some pumps are dual action e.g. they express both breasts at the same time, others are a single design.
- Have a trial run and practise using the pump so you get comfortable with it.
- Start with using a low suction and then increase as you feel comfortable.
- You could try expressing one breast while your baby is feeding on the other.

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### CLEANING EQUIPMENT

#### How do I clean my expressing equipment?

Hand wash using hot soapy water and rinse well. You could also use a dishwasher set on the hottest cycle.

You don't need to sterilise your expressing equipment as long as your baby was born at term and is healthy and meeting their milestones.

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### STORAGE

#### Do you supply breastmilk storage bags?

Unfortunately not, but as we are a registered charity with a Deductible Gift Recipient (DGR) Item 1 status, if you keep your receipts, you can claim the cost of the storage bags that you have given us, as a tax deduction.

Please note, we can only accept donated milk is sterile, single use storage bags. We cannot accept breastmilk that has been stored in Ziplock bags.

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### AMOUNT OF MILK

#### Is there a minimum amount that I need to donate?

Due to the cost of transportation and pasteurisation, we require donors to donate a minimum of 2 litres. If you live outside of a major capital city, a higher minimum amount may apply.

Mothers Milk Bank Charity is required by law to ensure the confidentiality of its donor mothers.

Contact Us  
(07) 3260 6609

enquiry@mothersmilkbank.com.au  
mothersmilkbank.com.au



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Visit Us  
Lot 9, Unit 15  
62 Crockford Street  
Northgate, QLD 4013

Monday - Friday  
9:00am to 5:00pm AEST