



Breastfeeding
Committee
for Saskatchewan

www.thebcs.ca

Storage times for breast milk (for home use with a healthy, full-term baby)

Freshly expressed Room temperature

16-29°C: 4-6 hours

Refrigerator

4°C: 4-8 days

Freezer

Single door fridge

- 2 weeks

Separate door fridge freezer

- 3 to 4 months

Upright or chest freezer

-20°C: 12 months

Note: Keep in the coolest part of the freezer.

Previously frozen

Thawed breast milk can be kept in the fridge for up to 24 hours.

Do not refreeze breast milk.

For further information contact:

Local Public Health Nurse

International Board Certified
Lactation Consultant (IBCLC)

Local breastfeeding support
Group

Saskatchewan HealthLine 811

PUMPING YOUR BREASTS

TO ESTABLISH and/or BUILD A MILK SUPPLY

Initiating pumping:

- If your baby is not latching after delivery, keep your baby in close skin-to-skin contact. Make sure you know how to hand express; every drop of colostrum is valuable. Ask for guidance from someone experienced in breastfeeding to help you make a feeding plan.
- If your baby is in NICU, hand expressing and pumping your breasts tells your body to start producing milk. Start as soon as possible after delivery.
- A double electric hospital grade pump is the most efficient in order to stimulate a greater milk production.

How often to pump:

- If baby is not at the breast, pump approximately every 2 to 3 hours during the day and at least once at night (a minimum of 8-12 times in 24 hours).
- Pumping 15-20 minutes on each side will help your milk to come in. After a full supply is established, you can adjust the time spent pumping as needed to obtain the required milk.
- If you are pumping to increase your supply, pump after baby has been at the breast as many times per day as practical. Pump until two minutes after the last drop of milk. (Note: If your baby latches and sucks well, breastfeeding more frequently will help; every 1 ½ to 2 hours in the day and at least every 3 hours at night).

Pumping Instructions:

- Wash your hands with soap and water.
- Assemble your pump equipment.
- Center your nipple in the flange.
- Start with the lowest suction setting.
- Gradually increase suction (as long as it is comfortable), until the milk is being extracted easily from the breast.

**Combining pumping and hand expression can help your milk supply. (When babies breastfeed, they use suction and compression to get milk. A pump just uses suction).



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Cleaning pump equipment:

In hospital, please ask for instructions for cleaning pump equipment.

At home:

- After each time you pump, wash the parts that come in contact with the breast milk with hot, soapy water then rinse with water and let air dry OR just rinse and place all parts of the pump kit in the refrigerator in a sealed plastic bag.
- Once every 24 hours, sterilize all parts that are in contact with breast milk by boiling for 5 minutes.
- Always follow manufacturer's advice for your pump.

To help the milk let down:

- Stimulate your milk letdown by massaging your breast prior to pumping
- Try to relax and minimize distractions. Do some deep breathing. Your emotions can affect the amount of milk you can pump.
- Have a drink of water, milk or juice before or during pumping.
- Look at your baby's picture or if possible, pump beside baby.
- Breast compressions while pumping may help.

Collecting breast milk:

- Clean the container with hot soapy water and rinse well prior to using.
- Plastic storage bags designed for breast milk, glass or hard plastic containers (BPA free) may be used in the refrigerator.
- Milk can also be frozen in the above; glass containers with an airtight lid are ideal for freezing as they give the best protection for nutrients. Do not freeze in plastic storage bags for premature or hospitalized babies.
- Label the bottle with your name, date, and time of collection.
- Use the longest stored/oldest milk first.

References:

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