



Carer's guide to the breastfed baby

Baby's name	Notes <i>eg. usual feed, sleep, play times</i>
Mum's name	
Contact no.	

Breastmilk looks different to cows' milk or formula. Breastmilk will form layers after standing. You can gently swirl it to mix it again. Breastmilk can have a slight blue, green, yellow or pink tinge.

Breastfed babies often have smaller and more frequent feeds than babies who have formula.

Preparing breastmilk


Frozen breastmilk can be warmed quickly or thawed slowly in the fridge, then warmed. Do not leave frozen breastmilk to thaw at room temperature. To thaw quickly, move the bottle or bag of frozen breastmilk about in a bowl of warm water. As the water cools, add a little hot water to the bowl and keep moving the breastmilk around until it all becomes liquid.

Test how warm the milk is by dropping a little onto your wrist. It is right when it feels warm.


Hygiene and food safety

- Wash your hands before you start to prepare a feed.
- Milk that has been thawed in the fridge can be stored for 24 hours in the fridge or for no more than 4 hours at room temperature.
- Breastmilk should not be frozen or heated more than once.
- Throw away any unused milk at the end of the feed.
- Do not overheat or use a microwave to thaw or heat breastmilk.

Preparing expressed breastmilk



Storing expressed breastmilk





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Feeding expressed breastmilk

A teat feels and tastes very different to a baby than their mother's skin. This can take some adjustment for some babies. If the baby refuses to drink from a bottle, you can try feeding the milk in a small cup or a spoon. Older babies may have success with a straw or sipper cup.

Helping baby take expressed breastmilk



Settling baby

Many breastfed babies are used to being cuddled or rocked to sleep.

Fast, gentle back patting combined with slow side-to-side movement may soothe baby.

Using a front-carry baby sling may help you settle baby. The baby should be held high in this type of sling, close enough that you could easily kiss the baby's head.

When mum is returning soon

If the baby becomes unsettled, try holding and talking to them softly or feed a small amount of breastmilk. When mum returns, she may want to feed her baby as soon as possible - for her own comfort and to help her milk supply.

Pacing bottle-feeds

Pacing bottle-feeds allows the baby to drink the amount they need. This means mum doesn't need to pump extra milk.

Paced bottle-feeding



- Check if a nappy change or a cuddle is needed before offering a feed.
- Watch for signs that the baby is hungry. This could be sucking fingers or moving their head around with an open mouth.
- Hold the baby in an upright position. Support the baby's head and neck with your hand.
- Use a slow-flow teat.
- Gently brush the teat down the middle of the baby's lips. Do not push the teat into the baby's mouth.
- Tip the bottom of the bottle up just far enough for the milk to fill the teat.
- Let the baby rest every few minutes.
- Allow the baby to decide when to finish the feed. Don't worry about throwing out a small amount of unused milk.

What to do if you are running out of expressed breastmilk

Feed the baby the last of the breastmilk. If they need more to drink before their mother returns, check with her what you should do. She may be able to return sooner or send extra milk. Young babies who are not having solids should not have water either.