



## Supporting Breastfeeding

As a child care professional, your support of mothers who are breastfeeding is important. Breast milk is the perfect nutrition for infants and provides many health benefits including:

- It's easier for the baby to digest
- It has all the nutrients, calories, and fluids a baby needs to be healthy
- It has growth factors that ensure the best development of the baby's organs
- It has substances that protect against many diseases and infections
- Breastfed babies are **less** likely to have:
  - Ear infections
  - Diarrhea
  - Pneumonia and bronchiolitis
  - Other bacterial and viral infections
- Research also suggests that breastfeeding may help to protect against obesity, diabetes, sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS), asthma, eczema, celiac disease, and some cancers.

### **The following information will help you support breastfeeding mothers and help develop your policies and procedures for serving breast (human) milk.**

Welcome breastfed infants into your child care program by creating a comfortable environment (private space if possible) for mothers to breastfeed at drop off and pick up.

Communicate with parents about their infant's feeding habits and hunger cues.

Always ask parents about preferences for unused milk before discarding.

### **Special Instructions for the Storage and Preparation of Human Milk:**

- Frozen human milk may be transported and stored in single use plastic bags or containers and placed in the back of the freezer (not a compartment within a refrigerator but either a freezer with a separate door or a stand-alone freezer).
- Non-frozen human milk should be transported and stored in a clean and sanitary bottle with a nipple to be used to feed the infant. The bottle of human milk should be kept refrigerated.
- The bottle or container should be properly labeled with the infant's full name and the date/time the milk was expressed. Do not accept unlabeled bottles or containers.
- Bottles made of plastics containing BPA or phthalates should be avoided (labeled with #3, #6, or #7). Glass bottles or plastic bottles labeled BPA-free or with #1, #2, #4, or #5 are acceptable.
- The caregiver/teacher should check for the infant's full name and the date/time on the bottle so that the oldest milk is used first.
- Thaw the container of breastmilk in the refrigerator, under warm running water, or in a container of warm water (do not exceed 98.6°F). Record the date/time the milk was thawed.
- A microwave should **never** be used to defrost or warm milk because too much heat destroys the nutrient quality in human milk, it can cause hot spots, and could burn the infant.
- After warming, bottles should be mixed gently by swirling. Never shake human milk as this could destroy some of the cellular components of the milk. The temperature of the milk should be tested before feeding.
- The mother's own expressed milk should only be used for her own infant. Infant formula should not be used for a breastfed infant without the mother's written permission.

- Expressed human milk should not be used if it is in an unsanitary bottle, is curdled, smells rotten, has been sitting out after being fed to an infant, or has not been stored following the storage guidelines below. Follow parent preferences for unused milk.

**Maximum Storage Time and Temperature for Breastmilk at a Child Care Site\***

	<b>Room Temperature (countertop) 77 °F or colder (25 °C)</b>	<b>Refrigerator 40 °F (4 °C)</b>	<b>Freezer 0 °F or colder (-18 °C)</b>
<b>Freshly Pumped Breastmilk</b>	Do not use after 4 hours	Do not use after 3 days (72 hours)	Within 6 months is best. Do not use after 12 months.
<b>Thawed Breastmilk</b>	Do not use after 1–2 hours	Do not use after 1 day (24 hours)	Never refreeze thawed breastmilk.
<b>Leftover from a feeding (baby did not finish the bottle)</b>	Do not use after 2 hours after the baby is finished feeding.		

\*Per policy memorandum CACFP 02-2018: Feeding Infants and Meal Pattern Requirements in the Child and Adult Care Food Program

**Additional Information:**

- The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) recommends that mothers exclusively breastfeed their infants for the first six month of life. Then at six months, age-appropriate foods are added to the infant’s diet. AAP recommends that mothers continue to breastfeed until the child is at least one year.
- Labels with the infant’s name and date/time should not come off when washing and handling. This is especially important when the frozen bottle is thawed in running tap water. There may be several bottles from different mothers being thawed and warmed at the same time in the same place.
- Refrigerator and freezer temperatures should be monitored and recorded on a daily log to ensure that human milk is stored at the appropriate temperature.
- Although human milk is a body fluid, it is not necessary to wear gloves when feeding or handling human milk. Unless there is visible blood in the milk, the risk of exposure to infectious organisms either during feeding or from milk that the infant regurgitates is not significant.
- The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) does not list human breast milk as a body fluid to which universal precautions apply. However, breast milk needs to be labeled and stored appropriately because if breast milk is mistakenly fed to another child the CDC has steps that must be taken to inform both families. Contact your local Child Care Nurse Consultant (CCNC) or local public health for additional guidance.

**References:**

American Academy of Pediatrics, American Public Health Association, National Resource Center for Health and Safety in Child Care and Early Education. CFOC Standards Online Database. Aurora, CO; National Resource Center for Health and Safety in Child Care and Early Education; 2020. <https://nrckids.org/CFOC/Database/4.3.1.3> Accessed 05/12/2021

Breastfeeding Your Baby (Copyright © 2005 American Academy of Pediatrics, Updated 8/2012 and 06/06/2018) <https://www.healthychildren.org/English/ages-stages/baby/breastfeeding/Pages/Why-Breastfeed.aspx>

CDC: What to Do if an Infant or Child Is Mistakenly Fed Another Woman’s Expressed Breast Milk [https://www.cdc.gov/breastfeeding/recommendations/other\\_mothers\\_milk.htm](https://www.cdc.gov/breastfeeding/recommendations/other_mothers_milk.htm) Accessed on 05/12/2021

Feeding Infants in the Child and Adult Care Food Program U.S. Department of Agriculture Food and Nutrition Service FNS 786 March 2019 <https://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/feeding-infants-child-and-adult-care-food-program> Accessed 05/12/2021