



Human Milk Storage and Use

Parent/Caregiver/Whānau Information – Neonatal Services

The guidelines for human milk storage times for a pēpi (baby) in the Neonatal Unit are the same as the guidelines for well and healthy full-term pēpi at home. However, storage time for fresh milk within the Neonatal Unit can be up to 4 days.

STORAGE CONDITIONS	STORAGE TIME	HANDY HINTS
In a room (< 26°C)	4 hours	Cover the breastmilk and keep in the coolest place possible.
In the fridge	3 days	Store milk at the back of the fridge.
Frozen		
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Freezer box in fridgeSeparate fridge/freezerDeep chest freezer	<ul style="list-style-type: none">2 weeks3 to 6 months6 to 12 months	Use the frozen breastmilk to mix with your baby's food when you introduce this from 6 months.

Reference: <https://www.healthinfo.org.nz/index.htm?Breast-pump-breast-milk-storage.htm>

Equipment for storing breastmilk

As your pēpi is in the Neonatal Unit the following equipment should be used:

- Sterile syringes provided by the hospital in your colostrum pack.
- Bottles provided by the Neonatal Unit as they are sterile.

Hygiene and safety

1. Always wash your hands well before expressing and when handling expressed breastmilk.
2. During your pēpi's hospital stay, sanitise the expressing equipment following thorough cleaning.
 - a) Expressing and feeding equipment should be washed in a bowl especially for this purpose. **Never** use your kitchen sink. Thoroughly wash expressing equipment in hot soapy water and rinse well before placing in sanitising solution.
 - b) Sanitise in Precept/Milton solution for a minimum of 1 hour. Change solution once every 24 hours. The Neonatal Unit will provide 10 days' worth of cold-water sanitising tablets. You will need to purchase your own tablets after this which are available at the supermarket.
3. Always label and date the expressed breastmilk with labels provided by the Neonatal Unit.
4. Do not mix milk together from different expressions. However, you can place the milk into one bottle from the same expression if double pumping.
5. Avoid over filling the bottles.

Transporting breastmilk to the hospital

Fresh

- Keep milk in the fridge until visiting the hospital.
- Use a chilly bin or chiller bag with an ice pack to keep chilled milk cool on the way to your pēpi.

Frozen

- Store in home freezer then transport frozen in a chilly bin or chiller bag to go to hospital freezer.

Thawing frozen expressed milk

- Thaw frozen expressed human milk slowly in the fridge. If you need to thaw more quickly, place the container of frozen expressed milk in a container of warm (not hot) water.
- Never use a microwave to thaw or warm expressed milk. It destroys some of the properties of expressed human milk and heats the milk unevenly.
- Gently swirl or shake before testing milk temperature on the inside of your wrist.

Using thawed expressed milk

- Use the oldest-dated expressed human milk first.
- Use any thawed milk within 24 hours. Do not refreeze.
- Once warmed, use within one hour. Do not reheat.

For further information and breastfeeding support beyond your hospital stay:

CanBreastFeed



Mama Aroha app



HealthInfo

