

## THROW-AWAYS

Throw away refrigerated breast milk that your baby doesn't drink within 5 days.

Throw away frozen breast milk that your baby doesn't drink within 3 to 4 months.

Throw away thawed breast milk that your baby doesn't drink within 24 hours.

Don't refreeze thawed breast milk.

Baby didn't finish a bottle? Don't keep leftover breast milk that your baby doesn't drink. Why?

Germ from the baby's mouth contaminate the milk. This may make the breast milk unsafe to drink later.



### PREVENT THE SPREAD OF GERMS. WASH HANDS AFTER YOU...

- ... use the toilet
- ... help a child use the toilet
- ... change diapers
- ... blow your nose or wipe a runny nose
- ... touch raw meat, poultry, fish or eggs
- ... clean up saliva, vomit or bathroom "accidents"

*Keep dirty diapers away from bottles, toys and breast milk. Put only clean diapers in your diaper bag.*

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RUTGERS, THE STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW JERSEY  
NEW BRUNSWICK**

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7500-9906

# HANDLE WITH CARE:



# Keeping Breast Milk Germ-free

THE STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW JERSEY  
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**B**reast milk is the best food you can give your baby. It is nutritious, safe and easy for your baby to digest.

You may decide to pump your breast milk to feed your baby if you are away. Pumped breast milk must be handled carefully so germs do not contaminate it.



Babies are very sensitive to germs. Some germs can cause foodborne illness (“food poisoning”), which can make your baby sick.

The symptoms of foodborne illness may not sound serious—nausea, vomiting and diarrhea. But they can be

serious—kidney failure, meningitis, even death.

It’s easy to stop foodborne illness. Just follow these easy tips to keep your baby’s breast milk germ-free. You’ll have a happier and healthier baby!

## GETTING STARTED

Always work with pumped breast milk in a clean, sanitized place. The kitchen is best.

You can kill germs and keep your baby from getting foodborne illness.

Clean the kitchen counter/table with a sanitizing cleaner.

## SANITIZING CLEANER

Mix 1 tablespoon bleach in 1 quart water and wash counters with this solution. Keep counters wet for 10 minutes. Let them air dry before you work on them.

**TIP:** Use the sanitizing cleaner to clean high chair trays, changing tables/mats, toys and table tops. It helps stop the spread of germs!

Wash up before you pump your breast or work with breast milk. Know how? Use hot running water and soap. Wash for 20 seconds; rinse; then dry with a paper towel.

If you use a breast pump, read the directions. They’ll tell you how to use it and how to clean it. Always clean your breast pump after you use it. This will stop the spread of germs!

Wash bottles, caps and nipples in the dishwasher. Or, hand wash them with hot, soapy water.

Don’t use a towel to dry them. Air-drying is better and won’t spread germs.

## STORAGE TIPS

Store breast milk in a sturdy container:



Plastic breast milk storage bags



Sterilized glass bottles



Regular plastic bags (“Double bag” these. Be sure to squeeze out extra air. Seal them tightly.)

Store pumped milk in 2 - to 4 - ounce portions to limit waste.



Write the date and time the milk was pumped on all bottles or bags. Sending pumped milk to day care? Write your baby’s name on the milk, so it won’t get mixed up.

Put pumped breast milk in the refrigerator or freezer at once.

Keep track of breast milk! Use the oldest first. Here’s how:



Store milk in one spot in the refrigerator or freezer.



Add newly expressed milk in back. Leave older milk near the front.



Always use milk from the front of your stock. Don’t forget—first in, first out!

## USING STORED BREAST MILK

Leave refrigerated bottles/bags of pumped milk in the refrigerator until just before feeding.

Put frozen breast milk on a plate or in a bowl and thaw in the refrigerator. Or, place it under warm, running water to thaw quickly.

Never heat breast milk in a pan on the stove or in the microwave.

Breast milk separates into layers when frozen. This is normal. Gently shake thawed breast milk before feeding. This will mix the layers back together.