

Can I reuse breast-milk storage bags?

- No. Breast-milk storage bags are not meant to be reused.
- It comes sterilised so that your breast-milk will be safe for your baby. These bags cannot be sterilised after use.
- If you put fresh breast-milk in a used storage bag, it will expose your baby to harmful bacteria.
- Always use a new breast-milk storage bag or a sterilised container to store your breast-milk.



This brochure was produced by the National Breastfeeding Coordinating Unit (NBCU) under the Directorate of Women's Health of the Ministry of Health, Trinidad and Tobago.

This series of brochures was developed to assist mothers with any breastfeeding concerns.

Visit the Directorate of Women's Health Website for more information: www.health.gov.tt/womenshealth or speak with a Breastfeeding Counsellor at your nearest health centre or The Breastfeeding Association of Trinidad and Tobago (TBATT):

NWRHA: 623-2954 ext 2823

NCRHA: 662-7153 ext 2144

SWRHA: 225-1813

ERHA: 226-1107

TRHA: 660-4744 ext 3123

TBATT: 468-5412 (Available 24/7)

TTAM-679-8008

TABS-688-7688

How to Safely Store Breast-milk

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How can I store breast-milk after expressing?

You can store breast-milk in a clean, sterilised container or in special breast-milk storage bags.

It can be stored:

- In the deep-freezer up to 6 months.
- In the freezer of a 2-door fridge up to 3 months.
- In the coldest part of the refrigerator up to 1 week.
- On the counter at room temperature up to 8 hours.

You must mark the date on every storage bag or container so that you will know when the milk has been stored.

The oldest bag (first-in, first-out) should be used when you're ready to feed your baby.

Should I fill the breast-milk storage bag?

When freezing breast-milk, you should leave space at the top of the bag. This is recommended since breast-milk expands as it freezes.

How much milk should I store at a time?

You should freeze breast-milk in small portions to avoid wasting breast-milk that might not be finished during a feed.

It is ideal to store approximately 60 ml to 120 ml or the amount of milk that will be offered in one feeding.

What is personal milk-banking?

Personal milk-banking refers to you expressing and storing your breast-milk in large quantities.

Your baby can have your breast-milk as a meal even if you are not around (e.g. at work, daycare, babysitter, etc.).

How do I defrost frozen breast-milk?

You can defrost frozen breast-milk by putting it in a container of warm water or placing it under warm running water. Do not use a microwave.

You can also leave it to defrost on the kitchen counter.

How do I warm breast-milk that was stored in the refrigerator?

You can warm the milk by placing the storage bag or container in another container of warm water for a few minutes.

Do not use a microwave to heat or defrost breast-milk since:

- Nutrients are lost when overheated.
- It may cause "hot spots", which can burn your baby's mouth.

What do I do with leftover, defrosted breast-milk after I feed my baby?

- Leftover breast-milk can be stored in the refrigerator for up to 24 hours.
- Defrosted breast-milk left beyond 24 hours must never be used.
- Never refreeze breast-milk after it was thawed.