

Collecting, Labeling, Storing and Transporting Your Breast Milk

This sheet will answer the most frequent questions asked by parents about milk collection and storage. If you do not find answers to your questions here, please ask your baby's nurse or the lactation staff for more information.

WHAT KIND OF PUMP DO I NEED TO USE?

The type of pump you use really does make a difference in how much milk you produce. The electric pumps available for your use at the hospital are designed to stimulate the most milk flow. These pumps are available to rent. Ask your nurse or the lactation staff for more information. If you are not able to rent a hospital-grade pump, talk to the lactation staff about other options that best fit your needs.



HOW DO I COLLECT MY MILK?

- **Always wash your hands before pumping.**

This is the best way to remove germs on your hands before pumping. Use warm water and soap. Wash your entire hands, including between fingers and under your nails. Avoid touching the inside of the milk container. If you have to cough or sneeze, do not use your hand to cover your mouth/nose, use the crook of your arm instead.

- **Wash all equipment that touches your breast and the milk.**

After each pumping, wash all pump pieces that come in contact with your breast or the milk. You do not need to clean the tubing. You will need cold and warm water, dishwashing soap (do not use the antibacterial soap in the hospital), and a baby bottle brush. Follow these steps to wash all pump pieces:

- Take apart all pump pieces, including yellow valve and white membrane.
- Rinse with COLD water to remove milk residue.
- Use warm soapy water and bottle brush to reach hard-to-reach areas.
- Rinse with WARM water to remove all soap.
- Place on clean paper towel, covering with another clean paper towel.
- Air dry or dry with paper towels.



- **Sterilize your pump equipment once a day.**

You can use one of three different ways to sterilize your equipment:

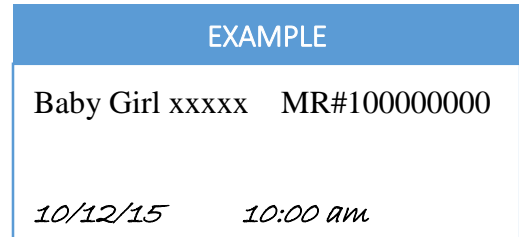
1. Boil the pieces (NOT the tubing) in a large pot of boiling water for about 15 minutes.
2. Place the pieces in a dishwasher that has a hot-water sanitizing cycle. Be sure yellow valve and white membrane will not fall to bottom of dishwasher heating element.
3. Use a microwave sanitizing bag. Microwave ovens are available for this use in the Pavilion NICU lactation area and the West Tower Milk Bank. Follow these steps:
 - Place your clean pump pieces into the bag.
 - Add 2 ounces of water to the bag and close it tight.
 - Place in the microwave and set the timer per the instructions on the bag (varies with microwave type).
 - Be careful! Protect your hands when removing the bag because the contents of the bag are hot.
 - Remove parts and allow to air dry on a clean paper towel.

When washing your equipment at home, always wash separately from the family dishes, using hot water that has not been used to wash other dishes. To ensure that you always have a clean set available, you may want to have an extra breast shield set. These can be purchased in the Bella Luna Boutique.

- **Milk storage containers.** The nurse or lactation staff will give you bottles for storing your milk. These containers are clean and meet hospital standards for food storage. The containers are available in 1 and 4 ounce sizes and fit directly on the breast shield of the electric pump in your room.

HOW DO I LABEL MY MILK CONTAINERS?

- **Baby's hospital labels.** The nurse or lactation staff will provide you with your baby's hospital labels which are printed with his or her name and medical record number.
- **Date and time milk expressed.** Write the date and time you pump on these labels so that the milk will be stored properly and fed within a safe period of time.



HOW DO I STORE MY MILK?

The best place to store your milk is in the Texas Children's Hospital Milk Bank. With commercial-grade refrigerators and freezers that are monitored daily, we are able to store your milk at the ideal temperature. Delivering your milk within 24 hours from the time you express it will ensure that it is properly stored. Use the following guidelines to decide how best to store your milk until you can deliver it to the Milk Bank:

- **Room temperature** - Your milk can be stored at room temperature for 4 hours and safely fed to your baby
- **Refrigerator**- It is best to refrigerate your milk if you are not able to deliver your milk to your baby's bedside or the Milk Bank within a few hours.
- **Freezer**- Put your milk in the freezer if you are not able to deliver your milk to the Milk Bank within 48 hours



HOW DO I TRANSPORT MY MILK?

- **Keep it cold.** Put cold or frozen milk containers in an insulated cooler, with ice packs, that will keep the milk cold and prevent thawing during your trip. If you are coming from a long distance, you may need

IS THERE ANY OTHER INFORMATION I NEED?

Pumping milk for your baby takes work, even though the efforts are well worth the benefits. Here are some tips that other women have found to be helpful.

- Keep a pumping record to track your milk volume and review with the staff.
- Use pumping time to do other things (reading, listening to music, watching TV, meditation).
- Get a "hands-free" bra that is worn during pumping to allow you to multi-task.
- Have more than one milk collection kit so that a clean one is always available.
- Have a pump partner! Ask family or friends to help with the pumping process (washing, storing, labeling containers and transporting milk).

QUESTIONS?

LACTATION/MILK BANK SERVICES – 832-824-6120

(8A.M. – 5 P.M. DAILY)

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