



## Expressing Milk

Our breasts are taught how much to make by the regular removal of milk. The more frequently you remove milk from your breasts, especially in the first few days and weeks, the more milk you will make and the greater benefit your long-term supply will have.

## Expressing equipment

- You can simply use your hands to express but women often rent or buy a pump. Your choice of pump will depend on your reasons for expressing and your circumstances.
- Regular showering is sufficient cleansing for the breasts when you are expressing milk
- Hand washing before expressing or handling expressing equipment or milk is important
- Use clean pump kits and bottles.
- Equipment is cleaned by rinsing with cold water after use to remove residue milk, washing with hot soapy water and rinsing. Drip dry on a clean paper towel. Alternatively, pieces can be cleaned in the dishwasher.

## Storage containers for milk

Bottles are ideal for storage and the milk bank will supply bottles on request. Some mothers may prefer to collect their milk in a breastmilk storage bag. These bags can decrease the available fat in breastmilk so if possible, we ask you to use the bottles for donation. We do not accept milk in plastic sandwich bags as they tear easily on handling.

## Labelling of milk containers

Containers of breastmilk need to be clearly labelled with your name and date of birth. We also ask you to put the date that you expressed on the container. The Queensland Milk Bank will supply labels when required

## Storage

Expressed breastmilk can be stored in the fridge for up to 48hours before being moved to the freezer. You can add fresh breastmilk to a container in the fridge once it has cooled down; fill containers till they are  $\frac{3}{4}$  full. Expressed breastmilk is best stored in the body of the refrigerator and not in the door as the temperature varies with the door opening and closing. The freezer temperature should be set to keep ice cream hard. It may be helpful to store the milk in a box or container with a lid.

## Transport

Frozen expressed breastmilk is transported in an insulated bag or esky. The bag/esky will be packed to limit the empty air spaces. Extra space can be filled with frozen gel packs and paper towelling. Avoid using ice cubes as the temperature will be higher than the frozen milk and will increase the rate of thawing.

## Further information on expressing:

Can be found at [www.breastfeeding.asn.au/bf-info/breastfeeding-and-work/expressing-and-storing-breastmilk](http://www.breastfeeding.asn.au/bf-info/breastfeeding-and-work/expressing-and-storing-breastmilk) or [www.childrens.health.qld.gov.au/chq/information-for-families/fact-sheets/](http://www.childrens.health.qld.gov.au/chq/information-for-families/fact-sheets/)