



Minnesota
Milk Bank
for Babies

Storing, Handling, and Thawing Donor Milk

Unpack and put frozen bottles of pasteurized donor milk
in a freezer as soon as possible

HAND HYGIENE

Before handling milk or feeding equipment:

- Wash hands with soap and water for 20 seconds, with special attention to the area around and under the fingernails.
- Dry hands with a single-use paper towel.

STORING FROZEN MILK

- Store the milk in a freezer that always keeps ice cream hard (less than 0°F).
- Store in the *back* of a freezer and *NOT* the door to ensure consistent and coldest temperatures.

THAWING FROZEN MILK

- **Never thaw frozen human milk in a microwave oven or hot water.**
- The preferred way to thaw frozen milk is to place it in the refrigerator overnight.
- Frozen milk can be thawed quickly in a container of warm water (not to exceed 98°F). Take care that the water does not touch the lid. When milk is liquid **and** still chilled, dry and refrigerate until use.
- Defrost an entire bottle. Do not pour off partially thawed milk.
- Once the milk is liquid, it may be maintained for up to 48 hours in the **back** of a refrigerator (32-39°F).

HANDLING PASTEURIZED DONOR HUMAN MILK

- Refrigerate milk after thawing in the back of the refrigerator and not the door.
- Thawed milk should NOT be left at room temperature.
- Once milk is thawed, it cannot be refrozen.
- Use thawed refrigerated pasteurized donor milk within 48 hours.
- Pasteurized donor milk offered for a feed that is unfinished may be refrigerated and offered for the next feeding. Discard if not finished within 6 hours.

WARMING FOR FEEDING

- Warm an individual feeding by standing the container of milk in warm water or holding under warm water with the cap above the water.
- Before feeding – swirl gently (do not shake) the container to ensure an equal distribution of the nutrients.