



## **Pumping and the collection and storage of breastmilk**

### **Pumping and collecting breastmilk:**

Every breast pump is different, so it is very important to familiarize yourself with your pump before you use it for the first time. If you have a friend or family member who is familiar with your pump consider asking them for a tutorial!

- Wash all of the pump pieces in hot, soapy water before the first use. Rinse with cold water and allow to air dry. \*If you have access to a refrigerator between pumping sessions, you may store your pump pieces in a clean container between each use instead of washing them each time. Be sure to wash your parts every 12 hours or prior to each use if not refrigerated. DO NOT wash the tubing.
- Try to ensure that you are warm and relaxed during pumping. You may find that you get less milk in your collection bottles if you feel stressed while pumping. Remember that pumping is a learned skill- it will take a few tries before you feel comfortable with it!
- Remember that pumping should NEVER hurt. If you feel pain or discomfort during pumping, turn the suction on the pump down or take a look at your flanges (the cones that fit over your breasts). There are many different sizes available and nipple pain while pumping may indicate that yours are an incorrect size.
- Unless you have decided to pump and feed your baby expressed milk or your baby is unable to feed directly at your breast, it is best to wait until breastfeeding is well-established (about 4 weeks) before introducing bottles.
- Begin pumping approximately 2 weeks before returning to work to ensure that you will have some stored milk available prior to your return. You can accomplish this by pumping the other breast once a day if your baby only takes one per feeding. If your baby eats from both breasts during each feeding, you can try pumping in between feedings (milk production is at its highest in the early morning, so pumping between those feedings will yield the most milk).
- Once you return to work or are separated from your baby, it is best to pump every 3-4 hours for 15-20 minutes at a time to maintain your supply. Remember that pumps only “suck” at your breast- they don’t compress like your baby does! Hand expressing for a minute or so each time you pump will help to full empty your breasts and increase the amount of milk you collect!

### **Storage:**

The two most common containers used for the storage of breastmilk are bottles (either glass or plastic) or bags (available at stores like Target or Babies R Us). Please be sure that you wash your hands thoroughly before transferring milk. Always date your milk when placing it in the refrigerator or freezer to ensure that you are using the oldest milk first. Your breastmilk may be stored at the following temperatures for the following timeframes:

<b>Location</b>	<b>Duration</b>	<b>Notes</b>
Room Temperature	6-8 hours	Container should be covered and kept as cool as possible
Insulated cooler bag (with ice pack)	Up to 24 hours	Minimize opening the bag as much as possible
Refrigerator	5 days	Store milk towards the back of the refrigerator. Do not store in doors
Freezer compartment of refrigerator (with separate doors)	3-6 months	Store milk towards the back of the freezer. Do not store in doors
Deep freezer or chest freezer	6-12 months	

Reference: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (n.d.). Proper Handling and Storage of Human Milk. Retrieved May 24, 2017

-Breastmilk naturally separates during storage, resulting in a fatty layer on top of watery-appearing milk. Swirl the bottle before use to combine the two layers. Do not shake the bottle as this damages the nutrients within.

-Thaw/heat milk by placing it in the refrigerator overnight or in a bowl of warm water. DO NOT place breastmilk in a microwave. Microwaving heats milk unevenly, resulting hot spots that can scald your baby.

-Do not refreeze thawed or warmed milk.

**\*\*A word on supply\*\***

The average amount of breastmilk a baby eats during each feeding is 3-5 ounces. Formula-fed babies may require larger feeds because formula is more difficult to digest and less well-absorbed. A sufficient milk supply is one that provides your baby with enough milk for each feeding, not with lots of extra milk for freezing. If you feel that your milk supply is insufficient please call the office (517-484-3000) or a Lactation Consultant.