



Tips for Caregivers

When a mother must be separated from her baby, it is important that baby's caregiver (dad, family members, day care providers) understand the handling and storage of human milk, as well as tips on introducing baby to a bottle or cup.

Preserving Breastfeeding for Mom and Baby

If baby is cared for away from home, try to allow some quiet time for mom to breastfeed when she drops baby off and picks baby up. This allows her to shorten the time until baby feeds at the breast again and will **help to preserve her supply**.

If baby is in day care for an entire work day, **try not to feed baby within 1-2 hours** of the time that mom will arrive to pick baby up. If formula supplement is needed because breast milk is in short supply on a certain day, try to give it earlier in the day or give a small amount later in the day. **Formula takes longer to digest** and may decrease baby's appetite when mom arrives and would like to breastfeed.

Giving a Bottle

(For additional information, see La Leche League's *Breastfeeding Answer Book*, Employment section.)

Parents may want to introduce a bottle to baby before leaving baby with a caregiver for the first time. Some babies will take a bottle easily. Others will resist. You may find it easier if the bottle is introduced around 3-4 weeks of age. If baby resists the bottle, it may be helpful if **someone other than mom offers the bottle**.

Remember that babies were not born to be bottlefed. It is something that they have to learn. The following are some tips if baby resists the bottle:

- Offer the bottle **before baby is too hungry**. It is hard to learn something new when you are starving.
- Tickle baby's mouth with the bottle and wait until baby opens wide. **Don't force the bottle nipple** into baby's mouth.

MilkWorks is a Comprehensive Resource to Help You Breastfeed Your Baby

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- Try different feeding positions. Some babies like to be held close in a cradle position. Others prefer to sit facing outwards. Feel free to experiment. You may also find it helps to stand and rock or sway while offering the bottle. You may also try offering the bottle while baby is in a car seat.
- Breastfed babies usually do well with a **slow flow nipple** that is standard size. The slow flow means baby does not have to worry about too much milk coming out and the standard size means that baby can easily open all the way around the nipple. Some wide mouth nipples are hard for a baby to get on deep, even though advertising may promote them as “more like mother’s breast”.
- **Be patient while baby learns.** If baby is older than 3 months, you may want to think about using a feeding cup with a flow valve on it. (This means that baby must suck to get the milk out.) It is not necessary for an older baby to learn to take a bottle. They can drink milk in a cup.
- Babies generally take between 2 and 4 ounces at a feeding 8 to 12 times per day. It is very unlikely that a baby will comfortably take a bottle that contains more than 5 ounces. Between one and six months of age, babies will generally consume **approximately 28 ounces of milk per day**.

Storing Milk

(For detailed information, see Medela’s *Collection and Storage of Milk*.)

- Human milk may not look like formula or cow’s milk. It is normal to be white, bluish, yellowish or even brownish in color.
- Human milk is not homogenized, so it naturally separates into layers of milk and cream. There may even be particles of fat floating in the milk. Shake gently to mix the milk.
- Human milk is very durable and does not spoil easily. Milk may be kept at room temperature for 6 hours. Spoiled milk will smell sour or taste bad.
- Frozen milk can be defrosted in the refrigerator, or by putting in a pan of warm water, or standing at room temperature. Do not microwave and do not heat above body temperature. Defrosted milk should not be re-frozen and is good for up to 24 hours if stored in the refrigerator.

Breastfed Babies and Their Stools

- Breastfed babies may stool frequently.
- Their stools are generally mustard yellow and semi liquid. There may be small curds in the liquid.