

# MOTHERS' MILK ALLIANCE, Inc. Recipient Guidelines for Milk Handling

*local wealth for local health*

All Mothers' Milk Alliance milk should be marked with two dates: the date of donor baby's birth, **DOB**, and date of milk collection, **DOC**. The DOB is the anonymous donor identifier. The DOC tells you how long ago the milk was pumped. Pay special attention to the DOC in order to use the oldest milk first. Please discard any cracked or leaking bags, as they may be contaminated.

**Always wash and dry hands thoroughly** before handling fresh, frozen or thawed milk. While human milk has properties that protect against maternal skin flora, these factors may not be as effective when bacteria from other people are introduced. Lather hands with soap and water for 15 seconds, paying special attention to areas under your finger nails. Do this routinely before and after feedings and diaper changes. If using bar soap, use a rack to allow the bar to dry between uses. Avoid antibacterial soaps and detergents. Avoid fragranced and colored soaps and hand lotions.

The fresher the milk, the higher its nutritive value. If you obtain fresh, refrigerated milk, use it within 72 hours or freeze it. Store frozen milk in the rear or bottom of your refrigerator and freezer, where temperatures are coldest and most even. If you have a deep freezer, please store milk there.

If you are a recipient struggling to establish your milk supply through frequent, long-term pumping, please know that a hospital-grade pump may be available from MMA for your use upon request.

We recommend two ways to defrost frozen milk:

- Place milk bag in a clean container in your refrigerator the night before you plan to use it. Refrigerator defrosting takes about 12 hours.
- Place the milk bag in a clean warm water bath. Don't use hot water or heat the milk, as this can destroy valuable immunologic components.

You may notice a white, thicker milk on top and a more watery milk on bottom. Non-homogenized milk separates while sitting, and the cream rises to the top. Gently swirl the container to mix the milk. Also, color, consistency and odor of breastmilk vary due to donor differences in diet and time and frequency of pumping.

**Defrosted milk should be used within 24 hours and never refrozen.** Thawed milk quickly loses its antimicrobial activity.

If you plan to pasteurize your donated milk, use the thawed milk to follow the easy, evidence-based stove-top instructions found in the MMA document, "Guidelines for Flash-Heat Pasteurization".

Your milk is ready to use at room temperature or warmed briefly in a luke-warm water bath. **Never microwave breastmilk.** Microwaving can change the milk's protein and immunological composition and create "hot spots".

For babies fed primarily or exclusively pumped and stored milk, we recommend a dye- and additive-free vitamin C supplement. Research has shown significant loss of vitamin C during pumping, freezing and storage. MMA also supports standard vitamin D3 supplementation guidelines .

Your baby knows best regarding how much milk is enough at each feeding. Trust your infant's cues! However, if you are just beginning supplementation and wondering how much milk to defrost at a time, we offer these general ranges:

#### **Average intake by age:**

0-2 months - 2 to 5 oz. per feeding  
2-4 months - 4 to 6 oz. per feeding  
4-6 months - 5 to 7 oz. per feeding

#### **Average intake by weight:**

8 lbs. - about 21 oz. in 24 hours  
9 lbs. - about 24 oz. in 24 hours  
10 lbs. - about 27 oz. in 24 hours  
11 lbs. - about 29 oz. in 24 hours  
12 lbs. - about 32 oz. in 24 hours