

Supporting Breastfeeding Mothers and Infants in Child Care

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Some mothers may wish to continue breastfeeding while their children are in child care. They may choose to adjust their work schedules so they can come and nurse the baby at your home, they may collect and store breast milk for you to use while they are away, or they may have you feed the baby formula during the day but continue nursing at home. The following information about breastfeeding babies can help child care providers be better informed and support nursing mothers and their babies.

Supporting Nursing Moms

- **Be supportive and understanding.**

Breastfeeding is an important way for mothers to bond with their babies. It also offers important advantages for babies. Breastfed babies usually

- are sick less often
- spit up less
- have less constipation
- have less odor in stools

- **Create a quiet, comfortable space for nursing mothers in your child care setting.**

Some mothers may come to child care and nurse the baby at mealtime. They also may wish to nurse their baby before they go home. Breastfeeding mothers may feel quite comfortable nursing the baby while visiting with you and the other children, or they may prefer a quiet corner or another room.



Preparing and Storing Breast Milk

- **Breast milk does not look like cow's milk or formula.** In spite of its thin appearance and blue color, breast milk is rich and nutritious. Thawed milk often has small pieces of fat floating in it that makes it look curdled. Warming and shaking the breast milk gently will help fat dissolve.

- **Breast milk can be stored up to 48 hours in the refrigerator.** Label all bottles with the baby's name and date. Breast milk will last up to one month in the back of a freezer that stays at zero degrees. Be sure milk is labeled with name and date. Use older milk first.

- **Be sure to shake breast milk that has been refrigerated or frozen and thawed.** Breast milk is not homogenized, and the cream separates out and rises to the top.

Feeding Breastfed Babies in Child Care

- **Breastfed babies need to eat frequently.** Breast milk is digested more quickly than formula, so breastfed babies may get hungry more often. Expect to feed infants approximately every two to three hours.
- **Occasionally, breastfed babies may have trouble accepting the bottle.** This may be because babies suck the breast nipple and the bottle nipple in different ways. A breast-shaped nipple may help solve this problem. A long, soft nipple may help the younger baby get more milk from the bottle. An older baby may drink from a sippy cup with a narrow plastic spout on the lid.
- **Watch for six to eight wet diapers during the day.** This indicates that baby is getting enough food. If the baby is not wet often enough, offer bottles more frequently.
- **Frequent, loose daily stools are normal for breastfed babies in the first two months.** Stools may look like cottage cheese and mustard.

This resource area was created by the: [Better Kid Care America](#) community

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