



Bottle Feeding Procedures

Transporting and storing bottles

- Label all bottles taken to the service with the child's full name, the contents of the bottle, the date the breastmilk was expressed.
- Store expressed breastmilk/infant formula in sterilised bottles or containers. Use smaller (120mls) bottles for expressed breastmilk to reduce wastage.
- Cool all expressed breastmilk/infant formula in the refrigerator before transporting. Transport frozen breastmilk, and cooled breastmilk/infant formula, in an insulated container with frozen "cooler bricks" (e.g. an esky with a freezer brick).
- Put all breastmilk/infant formula bottles in the refrigerator (or freezer) immediately on arrival at the service.

Storage and use

- Expressed breastmilk may be frozen.
- Any frozen breastmilk that has thawed (wholly or partially) during transport to the service should be immediately stored in the refrigerator and used within 24 hours. Do not re-freeze it.
- Store all bottles in the back of the refrigerator where it is coldest. Do not store bottles inside the refrigerator door.
- Store the breastmilk/infant formula in the refrigerator for the day and throw out all leftovers at the end of the day.
- At home, frozen breastmilk can be stored for up to two weeks in a freezer compartment inside the refrigerator (-15°C), or for up to 3 months in a freezer section of the refrigerator that has a separate door for the freezer (-18°C).
- Once a bottle has been given to an infant, throw out any leftover breastmilk/infant formula after each feed. Do not put back in the refrigerator, and do not leave out at room temperature for later use.

Thawing frozen breastmilk

- Thaw frozen breastmilk in the refrigerator or, if necessary, by placing the bottle in warm water (shake gently if the breastmilk has separated).
- All frozen breastmilk thawed in warm water should be used immediately. Discard any left-overs as soon as the feed has finished.
- Frozen breastmilk left to thaw in the refrigerator can be kept in the fridge for that day. Once it has been taken out of the fridge for a feed, it should be warmed and used immediately.

Warming breastmilk and infant formula

- Feeding an infant cold breastmilk or infant formula is not harmful, but drinks warmed to room temperature flow better from the bottle, and infants seem to prefer them.
- Warm breastmilk/infant formula bottles by standing the bottle upright in warm tap water for no more than 15 minutes just before use.
- Bottle warmers can be used, but they must have a thermostat control. Bottles should only be warmed using this equipment for less than 10 minutes. Follow the manufacturer's instructions.
- Never microwave breastmilk/infant formula.

- Before feeding the infant, shake the bottle and test some of the breastmilk/infant formula on the inside of your wrist to make sure it is not too hot. Only warm the milk once, and discard any warmed milk that has not been used.
- Never refreeze thawed breast milk
- Only permanent staff will prepare milk bottles for babies.
- Bottles will be rinsed after baby has finished feeding and put in the child's bag.
- The time and amount of milk consumed will be recorded on day sheets.

Protocols for the correct identification of expressed breastmilk

- It is very important that the correct breastmilk be given to the correct infant. Giving an infant the breastmilk from a different mother is a major incident.
- Educators should be aware of and follow the correct procedures for identifying and managing expressed breastmilk:
 - If more than one infant is receiving breastmilk at the service, two educators need to check that the correct name is on the bottle for the infant about to be fed. This should also be noted on the infant's feeding record.
 - If an infant is given the wrong breastmilk, the service's usual incident procedures should be followed. This may include reporting the incident to a local authority.
 - Educators should also advise the infant's mother to contact their general practitioner or child health nurse for advice.

Preparing Infant Formula

STEP 1

Wash hands thoroughly with soap and running warm water.

Dry hands using a disposable paper towel.

STEP 2

Always prepare infant formula in a clean, hygienic area. Ensure all bottles, teats and any other equipment used to make up infant formula have been cleaned and sterilised.

STEP 3

Using freshly boiled tap water that has been allowed to cool to lukewarm, measure the required amount of water into the bottle. The water is always added before the powder.

STEP 4

Measure the required number of scoops of infant formula powder into the bottle of water. Use only the scoop that comes with that tin, and read the instructions on the tin to find out how many scoops are needed for the amount of water being used. Tap each scoop lightly but do not pack down the powder. Use a clean knife to level off each scoop. Reseal the opened can of infant formula powder and store in a cool, dry place.

STEP 5

Place the teat and cap on the bottle, and shake vigorously till all of the powder dissolves.

Note: There will now be more infant formula than the original amount of water measured.

STEP 6

Test the temperature of the milk with a few drops on the inside of your wrist – it should feel just warm, but cool is better than too hot. If it is too hot, cool the feed quickly by holding under a running tap or place in a container of cold or iced water.

STEP 7

If the bottle of infant formula is not required immediately, it will be kept for only 20 minutes at room temperature before being tipped out if not consumed.

The Feeding Environment and Safe Positioning

Suitable feeding positions

(i) Infants should be in a semi-upright or upright position when being fed.

Example:

- on your lap facing to the side or in front
- in a semi-reclined seat if requiring trunk and head support
- in a stable baby chair if able to sit independently
- in a high chair (ensure good trunk support and safety strap used through legs to avoid slipping)

(ii) Where possible, feed infants in a quiet area with less distractions.

Unsuitable feeding positions

(i) It is unsafe to 'prop' feed an infant. 'Prop feeding' is when the bottle is propped up by a cushion, towel or other support in order to keep it in the infant's mouth. This means that a person is not holding the bottle and the child is left unsupervised whilst feeding. Prop feeding is an unsafe practice, as it increases the risk of choking and possible overfeeding.

(ii) Avoid feeding in areas that have a lot of noise and distractions.

(iii) Lying infants in a cot, on the floor or on cushions is not recommended for feeding. If infant is supervised, being propped up in a sitting position on a pillow is acceptable.

(iv) Sitting to the side of the infant requires them to turn their head to the side for food. The child's trunk is less stable and they are not feeding with head in the midline position.

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