

## **Recommendations from the Breastfeeding Coalition for Storage of Expressed Breast Milk (EBM) for Healthy Term Infants (July 2005)**

There is apparently much confusion amongst health care providers and the public, resulting from inconsistencies in the literature, pertaining to the length of time that EBM can be stored in the refrigerator.

As a result of this, representatives from the Breastfeeding Coalition undertook a literature review that concentrated on storage times and temperatures, with particular attention to milk safety (bacterial count). Resulting from the review, the Breastfeeding Coalition is making the following recommendations for storage of expressed breast milk:

- Expressed milk should be refrigerated as soon as possible and within a day of collection;
- In a **well-used refrigerator\*** with no thermometer, milk should be used within 3 days;
- Provided the refrigerator remains at **4° C or below at all times**, milk may be stored for up to 8 days;
- If the refrigerator temperature has risen above 4° C after 3 days storage, use the EBM that day or discard;
- Store in a deep freeze for up to 6 months;
- If milk smells sour, discard immediately.

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\* A well-used fridge is one in which the door is opened and closed frequently, and where the amount of food contents may vary from being very full, to partially full, or near empty. As a result, a well-used fridge may run between 7 and 10° C, particularly near the front or in the door.