



Safe Food for Baby

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You hear the baby start to cry just as the phone rings. You grab the baby and the leftover bottle from the last feeding and race for the phone. Later that evening, baby has a tummyache and diarrhea. It could be a virus, but likely is due to bacteria in the leftover milk. Even a small “dose” of harmful bacteria can make a baby sick.

Refrigerate opened containers of milk, formula or food as soon as possible. Never leave them at room temperature more than two hours. Don't leave a bottle in the crib or allow your baby to keep a bottle to drink from between feedings.

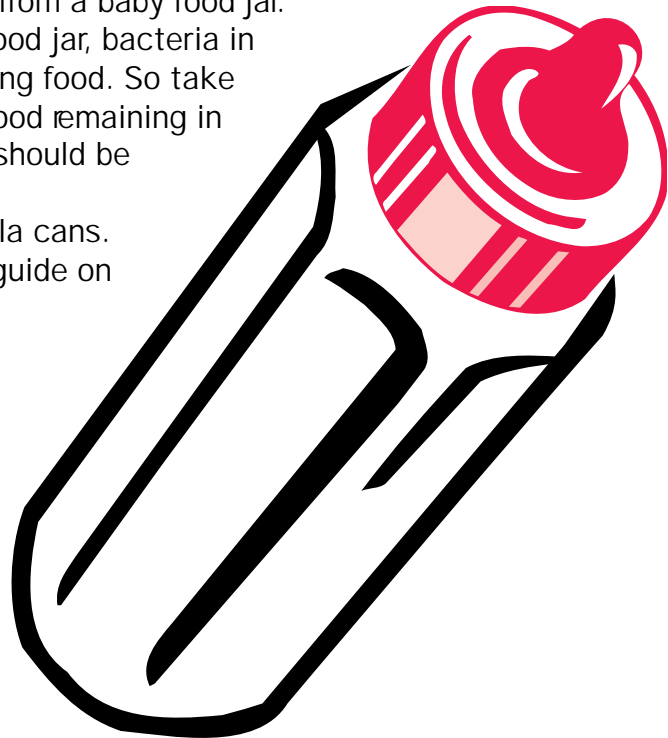
Throw away leftover formula or milk after feedings. Your baby might get food poisoning if you use leftover formula or milk. Harmful bacteria can grow and multiply in the bottle or cup.

Fed your baby from a dish instead of from a baby food jar. When a baby is fed straight from a baby food jar, bacteria in saliva on the spoon spread to the remaining food. So take out a portion for feeding and refrigerate food remaining in the jar. Uneaten food in the feeding dish should be discarded.

Observe the “use-by” dates on formula cans. See the baby food storage and handling guide on page 5 for recommended storage times.

Microwave Safety Tips

A few microwave tips can help avoid infant burns or food poisoning. To microwave baby food, remove a serving from the jar and heat. On high power 15 seconds of heating is usually enough time for 4 ounces of solid food. Stir, let stand 30 seconds and taste-test before using. Don't taste for temperature using the baby's spoon. This spreads bacteria from your mouth to the baby's food.



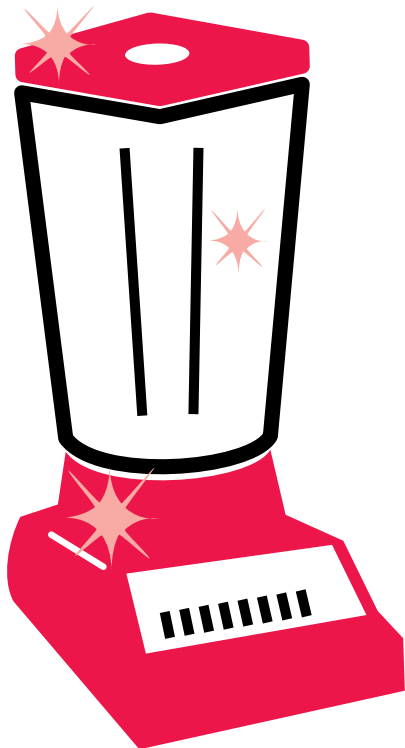
Since fats tend to overheat and spatter in the microwave, do not microwave baby food meat products or eggs. Bottles with disposable liners should not be microwaved, since hot spots in milk could cause the liner to break and spill hot milk on the baby. Hard plastic baby bottles can be warmed in the microwave if you remove the cap and nipple first. For eight ounces of **cold** milk or formula, microwave on high 30 seconds. Let stand for one minute. Cover, shake to even the temperature and **test** on top of your hand before serving.

Baby Food Preparation

If making homemade baby food, use a brush to clean areas around blender blades or food processor parts. Old food particles can spread harmful bacteria to other foods. Use detergent and hot water to wash and rinse all utensils (including the can opener) which come in contact with the baby's foods.

To freeze homemade baby food, put the mixture in an ice cube tray. Cover with heavy-duty plastic wrap until the food is frozen. Then pop food cubes into a freezer bag or airtight container and date it. If using commercial baby foods, push the safety button on the lid to check if it is down. If the button is not down or the jar lid doesn't "pop" when opened, do not use. Discard jars with chipped glass or rusty lids.

Honey should not be put in bottles or on pacifiers of children less than a year old. Honey can contain the botulinum organism that could cause illness or death.



Traveling

When traveling with baby, keep bottles and food in an insulated cooler. During warm weather, place the ice chest inside the car instead of in the trunk. On airplanes and buses, keep food in an insulated bag with cold packs or water frozen in clean, plastic drink bottles.

When Others Feed Baby

When leaving the baby in the care of a sitter or family member, give clear instructions for warming and handling bottles and food. Don't assume the person knows about baby foods or your appliances.

For more information about food safety call the USDA Meat and Poultry Hotline at 1-800-535-4555 or contact your county Extension office.

Based on information released by USDA's Meat and Poultry Hotline.

Baby Food Storage and Handling Guide

Liquids

	Storage Time	
	Refrigerator at 40 F or below	Freezer at 0 F or below
Expressed breast milk	5 days	3 months
Formula mixed with water	1 day	not recommended
Formula in an opened can	2 days	not recommended

Special Handling

1. For shelf storage of unopened cans of formula, observe “use by” dates printed on containers.
2. Heat liquid in disposable bottles in hot tap water not in the microwave.
3. If heating glass or hard plastic bottles in the microwave, remove the cap and nipple first.
4. Shake bottle before testing the temperature on top of your hand.
5. Discard any unused milk left in a bottle.
6. When traveling with baby keep bottles in an insulated cooler. Use ice or containers of frozen water, like clean, plastic drink bottles, to keep bottles cool.



Baby Food Storage and Handling Guide (continued)

Solids - opened or freshly made	Storage Time	
	Refrigerator at 40 F or below	Freezer at 0 F or below
Strained fruits & vegetables	2-3 days	6-8 months
Strained meats and eggs	1 day	1-2 months
Meat/vegetable combinations	1-2 days	1-2 months
Homemade baby foods	1-2 days	3-4 months

Special Handling

1. Observe "use by" date for shelf storage of unopened jars.
2. Check to see that the safety button on lid is down. If the jar lid does not "pop" when opened or is not sealed safely, do not use.
3. Do not heat meats, meat sticks, eggs or jars of food in the microwave.
4. Transfer food from jars to bowls or heating dish. For 4 ounces of food, microwave on high 15 seconds; stir and let stand 30 seconds.
5. Stir and test the temperature of the foods before feeding baby.
6. Don't feed a baby directly from the jar.
7. When traveling, discard unused portions of food in jars unless you have an insulated cooler with a cold pack.

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