

Supporting Breast/Chestfeeding While Traveling



Importance of breast/chestfeeding

Breastmilk offers numerous health benefits to both, lactating individuals and their infants. This includes reduced rates of type 1 diabetes, gastrointestinal problems including constipation and diarrhea, reduced ear infections in babies, and reduced rates in type 2 diabetes, ovarian, and breast cancer in lactating individuals. **The American Academy of Pediatrics and World Health Organization recommend exclusive breastfeeding for 6 months and continued breastfeeding for up to 2 years and beyond, as long as mutually desired.**

Transporting Breast/chest Milk Through Airport Security



Can travelers bring breastmilk in their carry-on? How do liquid or gel regulations apply?

Yes! Breastmilk is a medically necessary liquid, and therefore exempt from TSA liquid regulations (nursing parents can bring more than 3.4 ounces of expressed milk).

How much can travelers bring?

As much as they need.

Does the baby need to be present for these rules to apply? No, and TSA agents should not ask about the baby's location in order to transport the breast/chest milk.

Are TSA agents permitted to test the breast/chest milk?

TSA agents may test liquids for explosives or concealed prohibited items, but they may not open containers without consent nor place anything inside the milk.

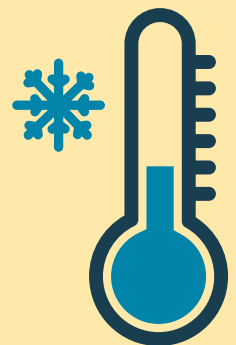
Can travelers bring freezer packs on the plane?

Yes, accessories for cooling milk are permitted as carry-ons including ice and gel packs. Even if these items are only partially frozen or slushy, they are still subject to the same screening requirements as the milk.

We use gender inclusive language because people of different genders may lactate and lactation rights apply to everyone

Storing Breast Milk

- Breast/chest milk can be stored up to 24 hrs. in an insulated cooler with frozen ice packs
- Breast/chest milk can sit at room temperature (77 degrees F or colder) for only 4 hours
- It can stay up to 4 days in a refrigerator (40 degrees F)



Breast/chestfeeding at the Airport

Are airports required to provide a lactation room?

Yes, beginning January 1, 2021 medium and large airports are required to have one lactation room per terminal available after security screening that is not a restroom. Beginning January 1, 2023, small airports are subject to the same requirement.

References

1. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (n.d.). Why it matters. <https://www.cdc.gov/breastfeeding/about-breastfeeding/why-it-matters.html>
2. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2022, January 22). Proper storage and preparation of breastmilk. https://www.cdc.gov/breastfeeding/recommendations/handling_breastmilk.htm
3. Transportation Security Administration. (n.d.). Traveling with children. Transportation Security Administration. Retrieved October 17, 2022, from <https://www.tsa.gov/travel/special-procedures/traveling-children>

How can you help? Some expected and unexpected scenarios...

A mother asks for your help after she discovers that she forgot her ice packs at home and needs to keep her breastmilk cool. How can you help?

You may suggest that she go to the closest food vendor/restaurant after the security screening and request ice.

During screening you find a slushy ice pack cooling breastmilk as the nursing parent explains that it was a long drive to the airport. How can you screen this ice pack?

If the ice pack is slushy, it can be inspected like breastmilk by asking them to transfer a small amount into an empty container for testing. If you cannot inspect the ice pack because it is sealed, you may suggest that they obtain some ice from a restaurant/food vendor past the security point.

During inspection a nursing parent expresses concern about you contaminating their breast pump or their milk packs. How do you respond?

You can reassure the parent that you will not open any containers without their permission and also use a new pair of gloves. You can also provide parents with alternative forms of testing.

A parent is upset about how TSA agents screened their breast/chest milk and wants to file a complaint. What information can you share?

You can direct them to TSA's website to file an online complaint at:
<https://www.tsa.gov/contact-center/form/complaints>



What must a lactation room contain?

The lactation room must be a clean, private space that is not a restroom. The room must have a door that can lock, a place to sit, a flat surface to place any breast/chestfeeding accessories, and an electric outlet to connect a breast pump, if needed. The room must also be accessible to people with disabilities.

