



**Australian  
Breastfeeding  
Association**

# Power blackouts and frozen expressed breastmilk

During emergencies, electricity may be lost for hours, days, or sometimes weeks. The information in this fact sheet will help you to protect your frozen expressed breastmilk if a power blackout occurs.

## Preparing for a power loss:

If you have warning that a power loss might occur, there are some things you can do to keep your milk frozen for longer.

- Put your breastmilk in the centre of your freezer. The other items in the freezer will act as ice packs for your milk.
- Completely fill your freezer. A freezer that is full of frozen goods will stay cold longer than one with lots of air pockets. You can use containers of water to do this.

## If you lose power:

- Don't open the freezer. This will keep the cold air in, which will help the contents stay frozen longer. Breastmilk will remain frozen for up to 48 hours depending on how big your freezer is and how full it is when the power goes off.
- When the power comes back on, check your milk straight away. If your milk has started to thaw but still has some ice crystals in it (like in the photo to the right), you can safely refreeze it.
- Any milk that has completely thawed will need to be thrown out. It may not be safe for your baby to drink.

## Moving your expressed breastmilk

If you have a friend or family member nearby who has not lost power, you may be able to transport your milk and store it in their freezer.

Move the expressed breastmilk as soon as you can do so safely. Use an insulated cooler and ice packs (or other frozen goods) if you have them.

Check your milk is still at least partly frozen before you put it back in a freezer. If it has defrosted fully it will need to be discarded, as it may not be safe for your baby to drink.



## Concerned about feeding your baby in an emergency?

Call the **National Breastfeeding Helpline** (free and available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week) or speak to a healthcare worker.



**1800mum2mum**  
Breastfeeding Helpline 1800 686 268