

Toddlers, Breast Milk, and Child Care

Many families desire to breastfeed past the first year and want to continue providing breast milk to their child while in child care.

Breastfeeding beyond the first year is beneficial to baby and parent

Health experts encourage longer breastfeeding for more health benefits for the breastfeeding parent and baby. The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends breastfeeding for at least one year, and the World Health Organization recommends at least two years.

While it is common for toddlers to transition to cow's milk or alternative types of milk at 12 months, *breast milk continues to provide optimal nutrition and health protections*, including:

- Protections against viruses and infections
- Substantial amounts of protein, calcium, fat, vitamin A, Vitamin C, and other nutrients
- Increased protections against certain chronic conditions and certain cancers
- Stability and bonding during a period of rapid growth and development, comfort when the child is frightened and hydration when they are sick

Offering breast milk in a cup

In Colorado, *there are no health or licensing regulations that prohibit serving breast milk in a cup* to children in the toddler room. Feeding breast milk from a cup at a child care program is both allowed and encouraged by licensing and health departments.

There is no need for a note from a medical provider or to complete any additional paperwork such as a special diet form. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention does not list breast milk as a body fluid to which universal precautions apply.

When a toddler is drinking breast milk at a meal or snack at child care, the same safe mealtime practices for toddler classrooms apply, including supervision of drinking and eating to ensure no sharing of cups, food, or utensils occurs.

Guidelines for handling breast milk in a cup for any type of child care center can be found here:

www.colorado.gov/pacific/cdphe/breastfeeding-friendly-child-care-professionals#Breast%20Milk%20Storage

What Colorado regulations and national authorities say

Child Care Health Sanitation Guidelines 7.12.3.C & E govern storage, handling, and labeling breast milk.

Colorado Department of Human Services Rules Regulating Child Care Centers 7.707.41.B.18 requires a policy on transitioning child from breastfeeding to bottle/cup feeding or from bottle to cup; 7.707.73.O provides recommendations for use of bottles and formula, not warming breast milk in the microwave, and providing space for breastfeeding parents to breastfeed on site.

The Center for Disease Control and Prevention states that risk of transmission of infectious diseases through breast milk is very small. However, if a child mistakenly drinks breast milk intended for another child, child care staff must contact their local public agency and their health consultant.

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1bFzg2KIG7PK6g1ERnvrXskp1KWMeLqXF/view>

Reimbursement to child care settings for meals

The Child Care and Adult Food Program (CACFP), reimburses participating child care programs for qualifying meals and snacks. The guidelines for inclusion of breast milk into the qualifying meal. Appendix A, questions 9-12, covers toddlers and breast milk: fns-prod.azureedge.net/sites/default/files/cacfp/CACFP06-2017os.pdf