

# Ten Tips for Flying with Breast Milk



1. Your breast pump **doesn't** count as a carry-on item because it's considered a medical device. Bring your regular carry-on luggage but be prepared to explain that your pump is a medical device. Your breast milk cooler **does** count as a carry-on item.
2. Bring a watertight cooler, plenty of ice packs and all your empty bottles or breast milk storage bags. Your freezer packs and breast milk storage containers may be more than 3 oz. Bring extra containers for pouring from one to the other. Declare them at security, even when they're empty. Ask the TSA agent to change into clean gloves before he/she inspects them. After you've gone through security, consider sealing your cooler with duct tape.
3. When you book your hotel, ask for a room with a freezer. You may be able to turn the thermostat to the coldest setting in a hotel mini refrigerator and it'll be cold enough to freeze breast milk. If you don't have a freezer in your room, ask at the front desk to have your breast milk cooler stored in the hotel freezer.
4. When you're flying home, you'll need plenty of ice packs to keep your milk frozen for the duration of your flight. Another option is to buy dry ice for your cooler, which you'll be permitted to take through security if you explain that it's for breast milk.

5. You may fly with an unlimited quantity of breast milk, per TSA rules.
6. When going through security, always declare your breast milk. If your milk is frozen solid, the TSA agents don't have to do any special tests, they just visually inspect the milk. Be sure to request that the TSA agent put on clean gloves before touching your cooler. If your milk is thawed or in a semi-solid state, the TSA agent will have to do a special test on each bag or bottle - the bottle is wiped with a piece of paper that tests for explosives. X-rays don't hurt breast milk. Tell the TSA officer if you don't want the breast milk to be opened.
7. If you need to pump in an airport, ask if there's a breastfeeding lounge or baby care area. If not, find a family restroom with an electrical outlet.
8. It's possible to mail or ship breast milk via Federal Express (FedEx). This is useful if you're on a long trip away from your baby and need to get some milk home. You need dry ice, a Styrofoam cooler and a box for shipping. Note: The dry ice can make plastic storage bags or bottles very brittle and they can break during shipping, so it's best to seal your breast milk bags/bottles in Ziploc bags and then put crumpled newspaper around them inside the cooler. You can print out a FedEx shipping label online and deliver to any FedEx shipping office. The U.S. Postal Service doesn't permit dry ice in the mail.
9. These recommendations may not apply to international travel. If you're flying internationally, contact the consulate of your destination country to determine their regulations.
10. Be sure to check the official TSA guidelines for traveling with breast milk at [TSA.gov/Travel/Special-Procedures/Traveling-Children](https://www.tsa.gov/Travel/Special-Procedures/Traveling-Children). Your child doesn't have to be traveling with you for you to bring breast milk. Ice packs, freezer packs, frozen gel packs and other accessories required to keep breast milk cool are allowed, but if they're partially frozen or slushy, they may be subject to additional screening.

## References

Children's MD, 2013. 10 Tips for Flying with Breast Milk:  
[ChildrensMD.org/Browse-By-Age-Group/Newborn-Infants/10-Tips-For-Flying-With-Breast-Milk/](https://www.childrensmid.org/Browse-By-Age-Group/Newborn-Infants/10-Tips-For-Flying-With-Breast-Milk/)

Transportation Security Administration, Traveling with Children: [TSA.gov/Travel/Special-Procedures/Traveling-Children](https://www.tsa.gov/Travel/Special-Procedures/Traveling-Children)

