

# Preserve Precious Breastmilk

by Rallie McAllister, MD, MPH



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When my boys were babies, I was determined to breastfeed them. I knew that it would help boost their immunity and protect their teeth from cavities. Breastfeeding also saved me time and money. I didn’t have lengthy maternity leaves, and when I went back to work, I wanted to continue to nurse my babies. This meant I had to pump and store my breastmilk.

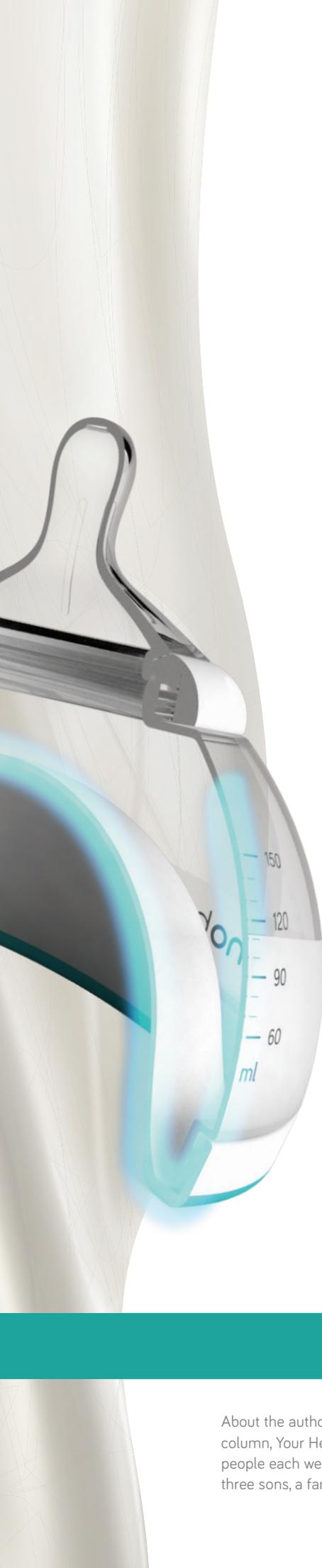
Any woman who’s pumped will tell you, breastmilk is more precious than gold. It’s a time-consuming process. I was always careful to collect every single drop of that “liquid gold,” pour it into bags, and freeze it for safe keeping.

Then when I was ready to feed my babies, I warmed the breastmilk in bottles in a pan of water on the stove—the conventional method at the time. Little did I know I was overheating and damaging the milk.

Breastmilk is such a complex, amazing substance that it’s sometimes called “miracle milk.” It’s the perfect blend of proteins, essential fats, enzymes, and hormones. It offers nourishment, of course, and it also has antioxidant, antibacterial, prebiotic, probiotic, and immune-boosting properties.

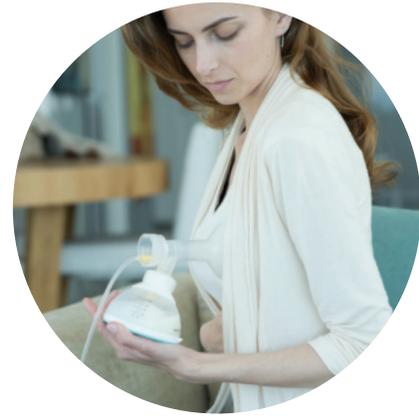
When we feed our babies breast milk via the intended “delivery device”—Mom!—it’s perfectly fresh and at the ideal temperature.





But like many other foods, breast milk isn't shelf stable. If you let it sit out at room temperature, bacteria quickly multiply. Once breast milk is expressed, you should use it, refrigerate it, or freeze it within four hours. This slows the growth of bacteria, protecting and preserving the milk. It's safe to store breastmilk in the fridge for a few days or in the back of a deep freezer for up to a year. Label each bag with the date so you know which one to use first.

Of course, now that you've refrigerated or frozen the milk, you need to warm it back up when you're ready to feed it to your baby. Babies' milk preferences are a lot like Goldilock's choices: They don't like it too cold or too hot. They like it just right: at body temperature, 98.6° degrees Fahrenheit. If the milk is too cold, it can disrupt your baby's digestion and contribute to colic. If the milk is too hot, it can burn your baby's mouth and degrade the nutrients in the milk.



When you warm breastmilk, it's important to warm the milk evenly. A new breast milk bottle by nanobébé has a concave shape bio-medically engineered to spread the milk into a thin layer, this new innovation warms bottles at faster rates to protect against nutrient damage while simultaneously providing quick access to nutrition when baby is hungry. Once the milk is warm, test the temperature by placing a few drops on the inside of your wrist. Then sit back, hold your baby in your arms, and enjoy one of the most beautiful, rewarding experiences that life has to offer—feeding your baby.

by Rallie McAllister, MD, MPH



About the author: Rallie McAllister, MD, MPH, is a nationally recognized health expert. Her nationally syndicated newspaper column, *Your Health*, appeared in more than 30 newspapers in the United States and Canada and was read by over a million people each week. Rallie has been the featured medical expert on more than 100 radio and television shows. She is a mom of three sons, a family physician, and coauthor of *The Mommy MD Guide to Your Baby's First Year*. She resides in Lexington, KY.

# Doctor Spotlight

## Doctor Rallie McAllister

Dr. Rallie McAllister is a family physician, a nationally recognized health expert and a prolific writer and speaker.

Each week, one million people across the United States and Canada read her column, Your Health, which was featured in more than 30 newspapers across North America. In 2009, she founded Momosa Publishing LLC, a company voted to the empowerment of mothers everywhere through the spreading of precious medical advice and expertise. A mom of three sons, and now a grandmother, Dr. McAllister coauthored The Mommy MD guides, a manual that Barnes & Noble called “a must-have for new moms.”

Dr McAllister’s health-related articles and interviews landed on publications such as USA Today, Women’s Day, Better Homes and Gardens, Redbook, Family Circle, Parenting, Prevention, Men’s Health, Women’s World, Cosmo, and Glamour.



An avid and enthusiastic public speaker, and eager to share her knowledge with as many people as possible, she often appears on television and radio shows. Her TV features include Good Morning America Health and Fox Health News. In the past, she even hosted a talk radio show.

She resides in Lexington, KY.