



Enteral Formula Storage and Handling Guidelines

To help ensure your enteral product's quality, observe these guidelines:

1. Unopened enteral formula should be stored at a room temperature range of 68 - 77° F or per manufacturer guidelines, avoiding direct heat, sunlight and damp places.
2. Do not expose formula to excessive heat or freezing temperatures for any significant length of time. Consult the manufacturer guidelines for temperature excursion information.
3. Do not store enteral formula in the car or trunk of the car. When traveling in hot weather, keep the enteral formula in a cooler with ice packs.
4. If your enteral formula has been exposed to excessive heat or very cold temperatures for an extended period of time, bring the formula to room temperature. Take a sample can from the case and check for leakage. Shake the can, pour it into a glass and visually inspect the formula. If the formula container is leaking or the formula itself is "clumpy" or shows any other abnormal appearance, color or odor, avoid using the formula.
5. Refrigerate formula after opening. Most formulas can be kept in the refrigerator for one to two days but check manufacturer label of the product for precise directions. If the formula will be going through a feeding tube, be sure to bring it to room temperature before use.
6. Once opened, formula can stay at room temperature (and hang in the open system) for no more than the following times based on the American Society of Parenteral and Enteral Nutrition (ASPEN) guidelines:
 - a. 12 hours for commercially sterile, canned formulas.
 - b. Four hours for powdered or liquid concentrate formulas (including breast milk), or any time an additive is mixed into the formula. Also, four-hour hang time for any feeding for a baby less than 1 month old.
7. Once spiked, formula in a closed system can hang for up to 48 hours (see manufacturer's recommendations).

Please contact your local Option Care office if you have any questions regarding enteral formula storage and handling.

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