

**DONATE BREAST MILK**

**TO THE MILK BANK**

**TO SAVE BABIES**



***Information  
for  
Women***

**FERNANDEZ  
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**Healthcare for Women & the Newborn**

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**How does a Donor Milk Bank operate ?**

Donor Milk Bank receives milk from lactating mothers who are carefully screened for health behaviors and communicable disease, similar to the way Blood Banks screen donors. After mothers feed their own babies, they express the extra milk into special containers. This milk is then pasteurized, screened for infections and then stored in a deep freezer. When the need arises, the frozen milk is thawed and fed to a newborn.

**Comments from some Mothers**

*“Donor milk meant the difference between life and death for my baby.”*

*- Michelle Valdez*

*“My child might not have lived if it weren’t for breast milk donations. She is adopted and I couldn’t provide her with mother’s milk....”*

*People don’t realize that some children can’t survive on formula and some mothers can’t provide their own breast milk.”*

*- Mary Jane Pfuetze*

**DONATE BREAST MILK  
AND SAVE A SICK BABY.**

## Hospital Policy on Breastfeeding and Donor Milk

1. To promote breastfeeding for all healthy term neonates
2. To promote expressed breast milk (EBM) for preterm and sick neonates in the NICU, if EBM is not available or is inadequate, then to use Donor Human milk from the Milk Bank as a substitute.

## Human Milk

Nature desires that every baby should have breast milk. Human milk is species-specific and provides unique benefits. The unique composition of human milk includes nutrients, enzymes, growth factors, hormones, immunological and anti-inflammatory properties, that cannot be duplicated in any other milk. Human milk provides optimal nutrition, promotes normal growth, and reduces the risk of illness / disease. Babies fed on breast milk have lesser allergies / asthma and higher IQs compared with those on formula. Human milk is the standard food for infants and young children including premature and sick newborns. In situations where a mother's own milk is not available, provision of pasteurized, screened donor



milk is the next best option, particularly for ill, or high-risk infants. Premature babies fed on human milk have lesser gut infections (Diarrhea, Necrotizing, Enterocolitis), lesser sepsis and better feed tolerance. These babies require lesser days on intravenous fluids and hence are discharged earlier from the NICU.

## Mothers donating milk to the Milk Bank also have the following advantages

- Less pain due to breast engorgement.
- Increased milk output for their own baby.
- The more the milk expressed from the breast, the more milk produced.
- Satisfaction of helping sick and premature babies for their survival and early discharge from hospital. It is a service to humanity.

The myth that donor milk causes unknown infections is not true, as the process of pasteurization destroys the deadliest viruses, such as HIV.

## What is a Donor Milk Bank ?

A Donor Milk Bank is a service established in our hospital for the purpose of collecting, screening, processing by pasteurization, and distributing the donated human milk to meet the specific medical needs of newborns, for which it is prescribed.