

FAQ: RECEIVING HUMAN MILK DONATIONS

This document is provided for nurses, lactation consultants and any other professionals who may be asked questions from mothers whose babies receive human milk donations. If you have any further questions please contact Laraine Lockhart Borman, Director of Outreach at Mothers' Milk Bank at 303.869.1888 or mothersmilkbank@rmchildren.org.

Where do your human milk donations come from?

Milk is provided to this hospital from Mothers' Milk Bank. The milk bank processes milk donated by healthy mothers who are carefully screened. Statistically, woman who donate are married, young, financially secure, well-educated and healthy. However we encourage all healthy women to consider donating their excess milk. They are not paid for their donations. After being processed in the Denver facility to eliminate bacteria, donated milk is frozen and transported to our location overnight to ensure safety.

What kind of screening process do your human milk donors go through?

Our milk bank adheres to the following requirements for human milk donors established by Mothers' Milk Bank Medical Advisory Council and HMBANA:

- Women with milk in excess of their own babies' needs
- Excellent health without any chronic illness
- Received no blood or blood products in the past 12 months
- No history of hepatitis (after age 11) or illicit I.V. drug use
- No history of intimate contact with anyone at risk for HIV/AIDS
- Non-smoker
- Take only certain approved medications or herbs
- Motivated to carry out meticulous milk collection and storage
- Blood testing required
- Provider forms signed by her and her baby's own healthcare providers

Prospective milk donors undergo thorough lactation assessment and medical history screening by milk bank personnel to determine if they meet the health requirements. Blood from prospective donors is tested for Hepatitis B and C, HIV-1/2, HTLV-I&II, and syphilis. All donors receive detailed instructions in the hygienic collection and handling of milk.

Are milk donations safe for my baby?

In the more than 100 years milk banking has existed, there has never been a recorded medical issue with any baby as a result of milk donations through a HMBANA milk bank.

Why don't I just feed my baby formula instead of milk from Mothers' Milk Bank?

The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends babies be breastfed exclusively for the first six months. For babies who cannot breastfeed, human milk donations are the next best option. Human milk has all of the vitamins and minerals a baby requires and it helps with the baby's digestion. It also provides natural immune protection against diseases. As for formula, none of the antibodies naturally found in human milk exist in any formula and it's more likely to cause gas or constipation in babies.

Are your milk donations provided from websites? I heard that is unsafe.

None of our donations are provided from online milk sharing websites. The American Academy of Pediatrics spoke out against that practice in 2013 due to unsafe screening and handling procedures and recommended all milk donations come from approved human milk banks such as Mothers' Milk Bank.

Can I continue using donated milk after my baby leaves the hospital?

Yes. In order to release the milk we need a prescription written by the baby's doctor and you will need to pay the processing fee of \$4 per ounce.