

- ▶ Any unused portion of milk that has been suckled on by infant must be discarded as bacteria can travel from baby's mouth into the nipple.
- ▶ Breast milk that has been frozen and thawed may smell different to fresh milk and have white flecks (flocculation). This is normal.

## 12. How do you thaw frozen milk?

*For immediate use - Rapid Thawing*

- ▶ Tighten cap on bottle.
- ▶ Hold the bottle of milk under lukewarm running tap water.
- ▶ Allow milk container to stand in a cup of warm water to thaw.
  - Excessive heat should NOT be used
  - Water level should NOT touch the bottle cap
  - Do NOT microwave!

For later use

- ▶ Place 24 hour supply of frozen EBM in refrigerator to start thawing of individual bottles as needed.
- ▶ A 12 hours supply may be rapidly thawed, but not warmed.
  - Place in refrigerator in anticipation of feeding.
- ▶ It is possible to remove a portion of milk from thawed bottle for feeding.
  - Remove the remainder in refrigerator for later feedings.

After thawing

- ▶ Tighten the cap on the bottle.
- ▶ Shake bottle gently to distribute fat content.
- ▶ Warm milk to room temperature immediately prior to feeding.

**If you have any further questions about our BC Women's Milk Bank or pasteurized donor milk please ask your nurse, doctor or midwife.**

Developed by: C&W Lactation Service

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CW600 (N/S)

# Donor Milk: Common Questions

*Human milk is uniquely superior for infant feeding and is species-specific; all substitute feeding options differ markedly from it.*

*AAP 1997 Statement on Breastfeeding and the Use of Human Milk.*



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### **1. Why use donor milk?**

Mother's own milk is the first choice for her child. When mother's own milk is not available then donor milk is the next choice because it contains active beneficial properties and is of similar composition.

### **2. Is it safe?**

We follow the Human Milk Banking Association of North America Guidelines. All our donors and their milk are screened. Milk is also heat treated (pasteurized) and tested. The Milk Bank began in 1974 and we have never had a reason to recall milk since our bank opened over thirty years ago. Many hospitals around the world offer pasteurized donor milk - the number of milk banks is growing.

### **3. Where does the donated milk come from?**

All our donors provide milk on a voluntary basis. Only healthy breastfeeding women who are non smokers and have a healthy lifestyle are accepted as donors.

### **4. Are the donors screened?**

All potential donors are triple screened for lifestyle factors and infections:

- ▶ verbal and written screening of the donor
- ▶ written questions to the doctor of the donor mother
- ▶ blood testing for infection.

### **5. What kind of blood test are done?**

The blood testing is done at the time of donation even if it has been done during pregnancy.

The blood tests include:

- ▶ HIV
- ▶ HTLV (related to HIV)
- ▶ syphilis
- ▶ hepatitis

### **6. Who gets donor milk?**

Pasteurized donor milk is provided to children in need. A doctor's or midwife prescription is required.

### **7. Does it cost anything to receive donor milk?**

In hospital, pasteurized donor milk is provided at no cost. On discharge if donor milk is still required a fee of \$3/75 mls (21/2 ounces) is charged. This fee is to partially cover the cost of screening and processing the milk.

### **8. How do I get donor milk for my baby?**

Your primary nurse, doctor or midwife can help you get donor milk for your baby while you are in hospital. If you are in the community, you need to contact your doctor or midwife to get a prescription and call the Milk Bank at 604-875-2424 local 7634. Please call the Milk Bank before coming to pick up milk.

### **9. Does the milk bank ever run out of milk?**

Our supply depends on how many donors we have and how quickly we can process milk. Sometimes our supply is low and we have to prioritize our recipients. The sickest babies are provided with milk first. Every baby using donor milk needs to have another feeding plan in case our supply is low and we cannot provide donor milk.

### **10. How do I become a donor?**

To become a milk donor please call 604-875-2282 and the lactation consultant will provide information on screening. If you wish to contribute financially to our bank please contact the BC Women's Foundation.

### **11. How do I handle frozen donated milk?**

- ▶ Only thaw one bottle at a time - keep additional bottles frozen.
- ▶ Thawed, frozen, pasteurized donor milk should be kept at room temperature only for the completion of feeding, then discarded. It may be kept in the refrigerator about 24 hours but should not be refrozen.