

Donor Breast Milk and Informal Breast Milk Sharing

Benefits of Breast Milk

- Helps fight infections
- Is the ideal food for babies
- Is easy to digest

Donor Breast Milk

Donor breast milk is human milk that is not from the child's mother. There are 2 types of donor milk:

- Banked breast milk is milk from a certified milk bank.
- Informal shared breast milk is milk from a source that is not a certified milk bank.

Certified Milk Bank

Pros:

- It is pasteurized which kills harmful bacteria.
- The donors follow many steps such as:
 - Health screening
 - Health history
 - Blood test
 - Medicine history
 - Agree to only take medicine from an approved list.
- Milk is safely collected, stored, and transported.
- Milk from many donors is mixed. This lowers the risk of being exposed to harmful components.

Cons:

- It is expensive
- It may not be covered by insurance
- Supply may be limited

Informal Shared Breast Milk

Pros:

- The milk may be easier to find than milk from a certified milk bank

Cons:

- The milk is likely not pasteurized
- There have been reports of milk diluted with cow's milk, water, and infant formula when milk has been purchased through websites like Facebook, Craigslist, or Ebay
- It may not be safely collected or stored
- Donors may not be screened

Rules for Informal Breast Milk Sharing

There are no formal rules, but we suggest that you:

- Ask the care team about risks, benefits, and other options.
- Research options from the list at the end of this handout.
- Ask her about her health and lifestyle, even if she is someone you know.
- Ask your donor to have her blood tested or request a copy of her recent blood tests.
- Ask all donors to follow the guidelines to safely collect and store breast milk at the end of this handout.
- Avoid choosing a donor from websites like Facebook, Craigslist, or Ebay.
- Avoid donors who ask for payment beyond normal breast milk storage supplies and shipping costs.

Although the FDA, USDA, and the American Academy of Pediatrics advise against informal breast milk sharing, this may be your preferred option. If so, please work with your health care team to know the benefits and risks.

To find out more about the benefits and risks, check out:

- Academy of Breastfeeding Medicine
<http://www.bfmed.org/>
- American Academy of Pediatrics
<https://www.aap.org/>

How to Safely Collect and Store Breast Milk

- Wash and dry your hands before pumping and any time you touch your pump parts.
- Pump and store breast milk in BPA free bottles or breast milk storage bags.
- Label each bottle or bag with the date and time it was pumped.
- Store it in the back of your fridge where it is coldest. Milk may be kept in the fridge for up to 4 days from the time it was pumped. If the milk will not be used by that time, freeze it.
- Breast milk expands when it freezes so, leave ½ inch of space at the top of the bag or bottle. Freeze milk in the back of the freezer where it is the coldest. It may be frozen for up to 12 months in a stand-alone freezer and up to 6 months in a freezer attached to a fridge.

Cleaning Breast Pump Parts

- Wash and dry your hands.
- Separate each part that touches milk.
- Rinse each piece that touches milk and then wash it in warm, soapy water. Use unscented dish soap and avoid antibacterial soaps.

- After washing, rinse each part and place it on a clean, dry towel.
- You may also wash your rinsed pieces in the top rack of your dishwasher, only if dishwasher safe.
- Check pump tubing for moisture and mold. You can remove water by running the pump with only the tubing attached. If mold is present, replace with new tubing.

Check out the new CDC guidelines on cleaning breast pump parts at:

<https://www.cdc.gov/healthywater/hygiene/healthychildcare/infantfeeding/breastpump.html>.

Certified Donor Breast Milk Banks

The Human Milk Banking Association of North America

<https://www.hmbana.org/>

Mother's Milk Bank of the Western Great Lakes

<http://www.milkbankwgl.org/>

Informal Breast Milk Sharing Resources

Mothers Milk Alliance

<http://www.mothersmilkalliance.org/>

Eats on Feets

<http://www.eatsonfeets.org/>

Who to Call

If you are a UW Health patient and have more questions, please contact UW Health at one of the phone numbers listed below.

You can also visit our website at

www.uwhealth.org/nutrition.

Nutrition clinics for UW Hospital and Clinics (UWHC) and American Family Children's Hospital (AFCH) can be reached: **(608) 890-5500**.

Nutrition clinics for UW Medical
Foundation (UWMF) can be reached at:
(608) 287-2770.

If you are a patient receiving care at UnityPoint – Meriter, Swedish American or a health system outside of UW Health, please use the phone numbers provided in your discharge instructions for any questions or concerns.

Your health care team may have given you this information as part of your care. If so, please use it and call if you have any questions. If this information was not given to you as part of your care, please check with your doctor. This is not medical advice. This is not to be used for diagnosis or treatment of any medical condition. Because each person's health needs are different, you should talk with your doctor or others on your health care team when using this information. If you have an emergency, please call 911. Copyright © 1/2021. University of Wisconsin Hospitals and Clinics Authority. All rights reserved. Produced by the Department of Nursing. HF#609