

Pasteurized Donor Human Milk for Your Baby

Why pasteurized donor human milk?

Your own milk is best for feeding your baby. When your milk is not available or you are not making enough milk yet, pasteurized donor human milk (or donor milk) from a regulated milk bank is the next best choice. Donor milk provides many of the benefits found in your own milk.

It is best to continue to work on increasing your milk supply while your baby is getting donor milk as your own milk is always the best.

In British Columbia (BC), donor milk is available to babies through the BC Women's Milk Bank. The Milk Bank follows the guidelines from the Human Milk Banking Association of North America to make sure the safest product possible is provided. Donors are checked for health concerns that could be passed to your baby.

Please discuss any questions you have about the use of donor milk with your baby's health care team.

For more information, see:
Feeding Baby When Supplementing is Needed.



Milk Donors and Donor Milk

Milk Bank donors volunteer to give their milk. Only healthy breastfeeding people who are non-smokers and have a healthy lifestyle are accepted as donors.

Donors are selected based on:

- Their responses to questions about their health and lifestyle.
- Information from their family doctor about their health.
- The results of their blood tests that confirm they do not have any of these diseases:
 - Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV)
 - Human T-Lymphotropic Virus related to HIV (HTLV)
 - Hyphilis
 - Hepatitis.

The donor milk is tested before and after being heat treated (pasteurized) to make sure it is safe.

Donor milk is a bodily fluid. Although there are no known cases, there is a very small chance that an infection might be passed on through donor milk to your baby and your baby could become sick.

While donors are screened for a healthy lifestyle, donor milk is not tested for medications or substances that could be passed to babies through donor milk.