



Feeding Your Baby Another Mother's Milk

*Your milk is the most nutritious and safest food for your baby.
However, if you are struggling with your milk supply,
you may be faced with a tough decision.
What do you feed your baby?*

If a mother does not have sufficient milk for her baby, MilkWorks recommends the use of banked human milk.

What is banked human milk? This is milk that is donated by mothers who have extra milk. These moms are pre-screened for illnesses/diseases and their donated milk is then pasteurized at a milk bank. Banked human milk has most of the benefits of a mother's own milk. At the same time, it has the least potential to expose a baby to unknown illnesses/diseases. However, while banked human milk is ideal to use on a short-term basis, it is difficult to use long term because of its cost (~\$3-4 an ounce).

If banked human milk is not an option, we recommend hydrolyzed protein formula (such as Alimentum or Nutramigen). Hydrolyzed protein formula is less likely to irritate a baby's digestive system than regular formula.

Why don't we suggest that a mother feed her baby milk from another mother? (We call this shared milk.) It has to do with balancing risks.

Any formula has the potential to increase an infant's risk of certain acute or chronic illnesses, including lung infections, ear infections, diarrhea and diabetes. However, shared milk also carries a risk in that it has not been screened, and the mother who produced the milk may be carrying illnesses/diseases that she is not aware she has.

Shared milk has the potential to expose a baby to an illness or disease that the mother (who is sharing her milk) has been exposed to, including HIV (which can be fatal) and hepatitis. Other substances, such as nicotine, alcohol, or prescription/over the counter/street drugs could also be present in the shared milk.

Well meaning friends and family members may offer their own pumped milk to help a mother avoid using formula. Their intentions may be good, however, it is important for you as a mother to make an **informed consent** and weigh all the factors involved.

The Human Milk Banks of North America (HMBANA) use the following criteria for excluding a prospective donor:

- She has had a positive blood test result for HIV, HTLV, hepatitis B or C, or syphilis.
- She, or her sexual partner, are at risk for HIV.
- She uses illegal drugs, smokes or uses tobacco products, or regularly drinks 2 ounces or more of alcohol per day.
- She has received an organ or tissue transplant or has had a blood transfusion in the last 12 months.
- She has been in the United Kingdom for more than three months, or in Europe for more than five years since 1980.
- She was born in, or has traveled to, Cameroon, Central Africa Republic, Chad, Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Niger, or Nigeria.

Where can banked milk be found?

MilkWorks keeps a small amount of pasteurized banked milk on hand. We pay \$14.25 for a 4 ounce bottle and we make it available to mothers at the same cost.

You may also contact the Denver Milk Bank directly at Presbyterian/St. Luke's Medical Center, toll free (877) 458-5503.