



Guidance for Donor Milk Usage

Pasteurized donor milk for families with vegan and vegetarian diets

The Rogers Hixon Ontario Human Milk Bank

Many preterm babies in hospitals do not have access to a full supply of their mother's own milk, putting them at higher risk for some life-threatening complications related to preterm birth.

Donated human milk can help save a hospitalized preterm baby's life.

The Rogers Hixon Ontario Human Milk Bank, located at Mount Sinai Hospital, collects, pasteurizes and distributes donated human milk to hospitals across Ontario. Donated human milk is given by prescription to the most vulnerable babies.



Donor milk for your hospitalized baby

Some families who follow a vegetarian or vegan diet may have additional questions with respect to the diet of donor mothers.

Each batch of donor milk is comprised of human milk from four to five donors, to blend for nutrients. We screen for adequacy of the diet of donors, but we do not have batches of donor milk from solely vegetarian or vegan mothers.

Knowledge of the health protective effects of human donor milk is important in your decision making about the use of human donor milk.

For babies who are born preterm or who are medically fragile, studies have shown that human milk provides not only nutrition, but also protection from some of the most severe health complications.

While mother's own milk is ideal for the baby, many will require a supplement to this, particularly in the first days after birth.

Donor milk may be prescribed for your baby according to specific eligibility criteria.

Frequently asked questions

What is pasteurized human donor milk?

Breast milk that has been donated to a milk bank and pasteurized in a heat treatment process that eliminates harmful bacteria and viruses.

The pasteurization process is similar to that used to ensure the safety of cow's milk. Pasteurized donor milk goes through a rigorous testing process to ensure its safety.

Does pasteurization change breast milk?

Most of the unique nutrients and components, such as immune factors, found only in human breast milk are retained after pasteurization.

How does the Milk Bank maintain high standards of quality?

The Milk Bank follows guidelines set by the Human Milk Banking Association of North America (HMBANA) and public health regulations governing the handling, processing and storage of food.

Who will be offered donor milk?

Fragile, hospitalized babies, including low birth weight babies when there is not enough of their own mother's milk.

"Every parent wants the best start for their baby. When mother's own milk is not available, human donor milk offers these babies protection against life-threatening illnesses so that they can become stronger and healthier."

**Dr. Sharon Unger –
Medical Director, Milk Bank**

Want to know more?

For more information and to find out if you are eligible to donate, please visit milkbankontario.ca

Funded in part by the Government of Ontario

The Rogers Hixon Ontario Human Milk Bank is a non-profit organization and member of the Human Milk Banking Association of North America.



Located at:
Mount Sinai Hospital
Joseph & Wolf Lebovic Health Complex
18-252 600 University Avenue
Toronto, Ontario M5G 1X5
info@milkbankontario.ca
milkbankontario.ca