

Pasteurized Human Breast Milk

Mother's milk is the best food for babies. However, sometimes a mother's own milk isn't available or usable, or your baby may have unique nutritional needs. This may require supplementation. If your baby requires supplementation while in the hospital, pasteurized human breast milk (PHM) may be recommended. PHM is easier to digest than infant formula, especially in baby's first few days.

What is pasteurized human milk?

Pasteurized [PAST-chur-eyezd] human milk is breast milk donated to a milk bank and specially treated so it can be given to any baby. It is carefully screened and heat-treated to ensure your baby is not exposed to any drugs or germs.

While in the hospital, some babies receive pasteurized human milk for only a week or so. Others may need it longer. This depends on several things, including the reason the doctor prescribed pasteurized human milk.

What are the benefits of pasteurized human milk?

Donated mother's milk contains some of the same benefits as your own breast milk, a powerful mix of nutrients that help babies:

- Easier on baby's tummy for digestive health
- Fight infections
- May help prevent development of allergies

Is pasteurized human milk safe?

Yes. Intermountain Health providers and federal regulatory agencies like the FDA (Food and Drug Administration) and the CDC (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention) recommend using donated milk from an approved human milk bank.

It is possible that donated human milk could transmit a harmful substance. However, there has never been a known case of infection caused by milk from a certified human milk bank.



How do milk banks keep donated milk safe?

The bank keeps the milk safe by:

- Carefully screening donors. Screening ensures a woman who donates her milk is healthy, doesn't take any regular medicines, and has more than enough milk to meet her own baby's needs. She can't smoke, misuse drugs or alcohol, or take part in risky behavior. Her blood will be tested for certain infectious diseases. Once a woman is accepted as a donor, she must follow strict rules to safely keep the milk she collects.
- Pasteurizing and testing donated milk. Pasteurization is the process of heating milk enough to destroy any harmful bacteria or viruses. This does not hurt the milk's special nutrients, other healthy ingredients, or ability to fight disease. After pasteurization, the milk bank also tests the donated milk to make sure it's safe to feed a baby.

What if I want to breastfeed?

Speak with your healthcare provider (Lactation consult) about how to support your breastfeeding goals while supplementing with PHM. These experts can help you build your own breast milk supply and help with breastfeeding when your baby is ready. They can also help you learn how to pump or express your milk to establish or maintain your supply.

Where can I learn about milk banks or the milk my baby is getting?

Intermountain Health uses pasteurized human milk from the following milk banks:

- **Utah/Nevada:** Mountain West Mothers' Milk Bank, Salt Lake City, UT.
801-415-9393
- **Colorado:** Mothers' Milk Bank, Arvada, CO.
303-869-1888 or mothersmilk@rmchildren.org

If you have any questions about the milk your baby is getting, contact the milk bank directly.

Where can I learn more?

To learn more about human milk banking, visit the **Human Milk Banking Association of North America (HMBANA)** website at hmbana.org.

This organization provides more information about human milk processing and pasteurization. It also offers breastfeeding resources and details about HMBANA milk banks throughout the U.S.



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