

## HUMAN MILK DONOR INFORMATION SHEET

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You have been provided with this information sheet because you have expressed an interest in providing donor human milk for another baby. You are under no pressure to provide donor milk and you can say no (or ask to stop the process) at any stage.

### RISKS AND BENEFITS OF HUMAN MILK

Human milk is the ideal food for babies. It is especially important for preterm or sick infants as it provides not only the appropriate nutrition that is easily digested, but important protective factors that help protect them from infections.

Donor expressed milk can be beneficial for baby and may be given in situations where biological parents are unable to provide their own milk due to maternal choice, illness, medication or low milk supply.

However, untreated (unpasteurised) human milk is not sterile and carries a risk of disease transmission. Also, alcohol, illicit drugs, medication and nicotine are passed into milk and can potentially affect the baby, especially if baby is premature or sick.

For these reasons Hutt Hospital's recommendation is that a human milk donor must complete a full health screen (including blood screening) before providing donor milk for baby (see below).

### SCREENING

If you are interested in providing donor milk then you will need to complete the process. The screening process is an important safety check for the baby and it will require you to answer questions about your health and lifestyle. In particular, we will ask for information about whether you:

- Use recreational drugs or have a drug history – prescription (e.g. contraception) or over the counter medication – herbal supplements.
- Are smoking
- Drink alcohol when lactating
- Have required a blood transfusion in the last 12 months or blood products such as Anti-D
- Have received an organ transplant
- Are at risk of Creutzfeldt-Jacob disease (have lived or travelled to the UK between 1980 and 1996 for a total of 6 months).
- Are vegan and do not supplement diet with Vitamin B12
- Have a current thrush infection in the breast or nipple.
- Have had a tattoo or needle procedure in the last 12 months
- Verbal screening to exclude exposure to or close contact with someone exposed to Covid-19 infection

**Regarding Covid -19** There is no current evidence to support transmission of Covid-19 via human milk. As a safety precaution, all donors are required to be verbally screened and return a negative result in order to donate their milk. Additional hygiene measures around handling of donor milk bags are also in place to mitigate the risk of transmission via surfaces such as donor milk bags.

We will also arrange blood screening for you so that we can test for:

- HIV 1 and 2 (the virus responsible for the development of AIDS)
- Human T cell Lymphotropic Virus 1 and 11 antibodies (leukaemia viruses that are rare in New Zealand. They are acquired by blood contact and through breast milk).
- Hepatitis B and C antibodies (These are viruses that infect the liver cells and can cause inflammation of the liver. They are carried in the blood and are usually only acquired by blood to blood contact).
- Syphilis antibody (a sexually transmitted disease)
- Cytomegalovirus

You will receive a copy of your screening results and will have the opportunity to discuss them before the donor process continues.

We will not discuss your health history or blood test results with the baby's parent/guardian or anyone else without your consent. We will send a copy of your results to your GP. We will ask you to undergo a re-screen every three months that you remain on the donor pool to ensure it is safe for you to continue to donate longer term.

It may be possible for you to provide donor milk for a baby without having gone through this full screening process if it is a private arrangement. However, the screening is an important safety check for the baby and it is Hutt Hospitals recommendation that all human milk donors undergo screening.

### **ADDITIONAL FACTORS**

As a baby gets older, there is a difference in the composition of the milk. Ideally the donor and recipient babies should be close in age. Any questions on suitability can be discussed with the lactation consultant.

### **COLLECTING AND STORING THE DONOR MILK**

It is very important human milk is collected and stored safely in order to reduce the risk of contamination. Please ensure you follow the guidelines below. You will be given more detailed information on the correct procedure for the collection and storage of donor milk to help to reduce the risk of contamination, along with labels and syringes for when you express milk.

Donor milk should be frozen immediately after expressing at -20° to prevent the growth of unhealthy bugs (bacteria etc).

It is important to understand that Hutt Hospital cannot provide pasteurisation for human milk, but freezing milk can help to reduce some of the risks.

The donor milk will only be kept for 3 months. The Hospital will dispose of any milk that is no longer needed, that is older than 3 months, or that has been at risk of contamination.

### **CONSENT AND NEXT STEPS**

If you would like to proceed after discussing this information sheet with your health professionals, you will be asked to sign a consent form and undertake the screening tests. If it is not appropriate for you to donate, we will not discuss your confidential health history or blood results with the baby's parent/guardian or anyone else without your consent, except to advise the baby's guardian(s) that the proposed donation is not suitable.

If it is appropriate for you to donate, then the recipient baby's guardian(s) will be advised that the health screening is satisfactory and a note to this effect will be recorded in the recipient baby's notes.

You may change your mind about being a human milk donor at any time – just let us know.

### **GUIDELINES FOR EXPRESSING AND STORAGE OF HUMAN MILK**

- Wash hands prior to expressing or handling expressed milk
- Express milk into sterile syringe or container with a lid
- Ensure each syringe or container is labelled with a sticker with your NHI number, time and date clearly written on it.
- Bags of expressed milk will be cleansed with a detergent wipe on arrival to the postnatal ward
- If private whānau/family arrangement please include the recipient baby's surname.
- If you have several syringes, ensure they are placed in one container and each is clearly labelled.

<b>Storage times of human milk:</b>	<b>Storage tips for human milk:</b>
4 hours at room temperature	Keep milk at the rear of the fridge, not in the door.
2 days in the fridge	Milk can be stored in the freezer for about 4 months (6 months in a deep freezer).
4 months in the freezer	<b>Hutt Hospital will only keep frozen donor milk for a maximum of 3 months (after which time it will be disposed of).</b>