

## MOTHERS:

### *Will you donate your extra milk?*

---

*This gift means health, and even life, to a baby in need.*

---



#### **What is the Provincial Milk Bank?**

The Provincial Milk Bank at BC Women's Hospital & Health Centre screens milk donors, collects and heat-treats (pasteurizes) donated milk and sends it to hospitals for babies in need. Most of the milk is given to sick or very tiny babies in one of BC's neonatal intensive care units (NICUs).

#### **Why is donor human milk needed?**

Milk from a baby's own mother is always the first choice. When her milk isn't available, donor milk is the next best thing. Donor milk has active beneficial properties and is similar to mother's own milk. It provides babies with

antibodies to fight disease and infection. Human milk is best for all babies. It is especially important for sick and very tiny babies.

#### **How much need is there for donor human milk in BC?**

The demand for milk is high and often exceeds supply. New donors are always needed.

#### **Who can donate?**

If you are a healthy, non-smoking mother who has more milk than you need for your own baby, you can donate your milk.

To make sure your milk is safe for other babies, you will be asked to fill out a short survey about your health (takes 5 minutes) and have blood drawn. Blood tests are ordered by your physician. Blood tests include HIV (Human Immunodeficiency Virus), HTLV (Human T-Lymphotropic Virus, related to HIV), syphilis and hepatitis. All the screening is arranged by the staff at BC Women's.



## Is there a minimum amount of milk I need to be a donor?

We ask each mother to donate a total of 4.2 litres (150 ounces) or more of milk to help offset the costs of screening. If you pump one or two extra ounces of milk each day for 3 months, you will have enough milk to make a donation. Some mothers have donated hundreds of ounces, even thousands! Mothers are not paid money to donate their milk, they donate because they know their milk will help other babies.

## How does it work?

Express your milk and put it into a bottle/bag in your freezer. When you have collected enough frozen milk, drop it off at a milk depot (see [www.bcwomens.ca](http://www.bcwomens.ca) - search for Milk Bank - for locations). The milk depot will send the milk to the Provincial Milk Bank at BC Women's to be heat-treated (pasteurized). The Provincial Milk Bank will send the pasteurized milk to Neonatal Intensive Care Units (NICUs) in BC.

Mothers need to supply their own breast pump and bottles/bags.

## Make a financial donation today and help save the lives of sick babies

You can make a difference by giving a gift to BC Women's Hospital Foundation in support of the Provincial Milk Bank. Please visit BC Women's Hospital + Health Centre Foundation at [www.bcwomensfoundation.org](http://www.bcwomensfoundation.org) or e-mail [info@bcwomensfoundation.org](mailto:info@bcwomensfoundation.org) or phone 604-875-2270.

## How do I become a milk donor?

Please visit [www.bcwomens.ca](http://www.bcwomens.ca) (search for Milk Bank) for information on donating

OR

Call BC Women's Provincial Milk Bank Reception at 604-875-3743