

Milk Donation, Outreach Centers, and Milk Banks

Donor milk is a way for a baby to receive human milk if a mother is unable to provide her own milk for her own baby. It is particularly beneficial, and may be life-saving, for a premature baby. According to a joint statement by the World Health Organization (WHO) and United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), "The best food for any baby whose own mother's milk is not available is the breastmilk of another healthy mother."

Milk Banks collect, screen, pasteurize and dispense donor human milk. Milk Collection and Outreach Centers (aka Milk Depots) are locations where mothers can donate their milk. Neither Lincoln nor Omaha has a Milk Bank, but they both have Milk Depots. The closest Milk Banks are in Iowa City, Iowa, and Denver, Colorado.



Nebraska Milk Depots Include:

Donates to the Colorado Milk Bank (308) 869-1888

MilkWorks	Lincoln & Omaha
Children's Nebraska	Omaha
St Francis	Grand Island

Donates to the Iowa Milk Bank (877) 891-5347

St Elizabeth's	Lincoln
Methodist Women's Hospital	Omaha
Nebraska Medicine	Omaha
Jennie Edmondson	Council Bluffs
Methodist Health	Fremont

The Process to Donate Milk

If you are interested in donating your breast milk to a Milk Bank, please contact the Milk Bank associated with the Milk Depot you plan to use. The Milk Bank will interview you over the phone to discuss your lifestyle, medication use, and lactation history. There are certain criteria approved by the Human Milk Banks of North America (HMBANA) that will keep a Milk Bank from accepting milk from a mother.

Once you are approved through the interview process, the Milk Bank will schedule a location and time for you to have your blood tested and will assign you a donor number.

The Milk Bank will provide you with storage containers and instructions on storing your pumped milk. Milk Banks vary but many prefer that you donate at least a total of 100-150 ounces of milk while you are breastfeeding your baby, up to one year of age. Milk pumped prior to screening will be accepted if you are approved to be a donor through the interview process.

Once donated milk is received at a Milk Bank, the milk from several donors is pooled together and thoroughly mixed to ensure an even distribution of milk components. The milk is then gently pasteurized to destroy bacteria and viruses. The milk is then tested for bacteria growth after the pasteurization process and any contaminated milk is discarded. The milk is tested once more after pasteurization is complete, frozen, and then stored, ready to be shipped. It usually has an expiration date six months from then. Pasteurized donor milk is shipped overnight on dry ice to keep it frozen.

MilkWorks keeps a small amount of frozen pasteurized banked donor milk on site. We purchase it from the Denver Milk Bank for use during consultations and make limited amounts available for purchase by parents. Most area hospitals make banked donor milk available for babies who meet certain medical need criteria.

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