

## Donor Human Milk Recipient Information

### **PLEASE CAREFULLY READ ALL INFORMATION**

Human milk is the preferred food for babies. A mother's own milk is always preferable but when it is not available, milk given generously by screened donor mothers is the next best thing. Human milk is vital for infants that are pre-term or medically fragile because they are at greater risk for infections and complications. Human milk contains antibodies to fight disease and infection. Donor Human Milk is most often received by babies with a medical need. **Milk is dispensed by prescription from the baby's health care provider.**

#### **Availability of Milk**

Because we depend entirely on volunteer donors for our milk supply, our supply varies and we must prioritize recipients. Our priority is to provide donor human milk to premature, critically ill and medically fragile infants. Babies with a medical necessity for donor human milk are served first. Elective use of donor human milk for healthy infants is available if supplies allow and all babies with a medical need at the time are served.

Milk is dispensed according to the medical priority of the recipients.

#### **Financial Responsibility**

Our donors are entirely volunteer and receive no compensation for the gift of their breastmilk, however, testing and processing the milk is very costly. Heart of America Mothers' Milk Bank at Saint Luke's Hospital (**HAMMB**) is a not-for-profit health system and charges a processing fee that is a fraction of the actual cost of processing the milk, screening donor mothers, lab testing mothers and testing the processed milk.

The current processing fee is \$4.50 per ounce for Term milk in 4 ounce bottles. Shipping charges are additional if shipping is required. Overnight shipping is required.

HAMMB does not file insurance. The entire balance of processing fees is the responsibility of the recipient's guarantor. Payment is expected at the time the milk is ordered. A receipt will be provided.

#### **Quality and Safety**

**HAMMB** adheres to the guidelines set forth by the Human Milk Banking Association of North America.

#### **Our Donors**

Our milk bank donors are special, generous mothers. They are healthy, conscientious people who care about others, particularly babies. They are nursing their own babies, have an abundant milk supply, and donate their surplus milk to the HAMMB. For this generous act, they receive no payment or compensation, only the personal satisfaction that comes from knowing they have helped improve the health of at least one child. All donors receive explicit instruction in the collection and handling of their

milk, including hand washing, and sterilization of their breast pumps and equipment. HAMMB does not regulate a donor's diet, but donors are screened for use of medications or herbs and she and her family must be well during the entire time she donates.

### **Quality of Donor Milk**

All donor human milk your baby receives has been pasteurized in order to eliminate any bacteria or other infecting organisms that may have been present in the milk. A small percentage of nutritional properties are destroyed by this process, but pasteurized milk still remains an excellent food for your baby, containing many special properties that cannot be duplicated by commercial formulas. Human milk has numerous immune properties to help protect your baby from illness, as well as easily digested nutrients to help your baby grow and thrive. All donor mothers have been uniformly screened and all milk is pasteurized and stored in accordance with the most current milk banking standards.

### **Human Milk and AIDS**

Milk donors represent a very low-risk population for the AIDS virus. These mothers have been screened in a multi-step process that involves verbal, written (by both the donor and her physician) and serologic (blood) techniques. No one is accepted as a donor unless she has no risk factors for AIDS and has also tested negative for the AIDS virus. As an extra precaution, all milk is pasteurized (which kills the AIDS virus). These procedures adhere to the standards established by the Human Milk Banking Association of North America, in conjunction with the Food and Drug Administration and the Centers for Disease Control. These standards are very similar to blood banking standards.

### **Milk Banking**

Milk banking has been a common practice in European countries and Scandinavia for over a century and in the United States for sixty years. HAMMB is one of thirteen donor human milk banks in operation in the United States.

**If you are interested in receiving donor milk for your baby, please contact our office at 816-932-4888 during regular business hours or [kcmilkbank@saint-lukes.org](mailto:kcmilkbank@saint-lukes.org)**