

I Want to Donate My Milk

Your expressed milk can be donated in honor of the precious baby you lost. For some mothers/ birth parents, donating the milk they have collected to other babies in need can be healing. Donating your milk to a nonprofit milk bank is a generous, compassionate act. Human milk donated to milk banks is used to feed medically fragile babies when their mothers' milk is unavailable or in short supply.

According to the FDA, donating through a nonprofit milk bank, where the milk is screened and pasteurized, is a safe way to share your milk.

We invite you to call the Minnesota Milk Bank for Babies, which is the nearest milk bank for those living in the Upper Midwest. The contact information is on the back of the brochure. Their Donor Coordinators will help you complete the 3 simple steps to become a donor. The steps include:

- Completing a 20-minute phone screening
- Completing a written questionnaire
- Having blood testing done (expenses covered by the milk bank)

Once approved you can drop off your milk at a nearby depot (milk collection site) or ship your milk to the bank. Any amount of milk is gratefully accepted. There is no minimum.

You may also donate your milk for research if you prefer not to go through the 3 steps outlined above.

The Minnesota Milk Bank for Babies is a member of the Human Milk Banking Association of North America (HMBANA). For a complete list of milk banks, visit the HMBANA website at www.hmbana.org or call **817.810.9984**.

Our mission is to improve infant health outcomes by ensuring that medically vulnerable babies - in Minnesota and the Upper Midwest - have access to safely pasteurized life-giving donor human milk when mothers' milk is unavailable or in low supply.

“Giving my milk to help babies born too soon was healing for me. It didn't bring back my precious baby, and it didn't ease my pain, but it helped me to have a purpose. I gave milk in honor of my beautiful girl who wouldn't need it, so it was a gift from the two of us to those who would live because of it”

- Michelle
bereaved mother

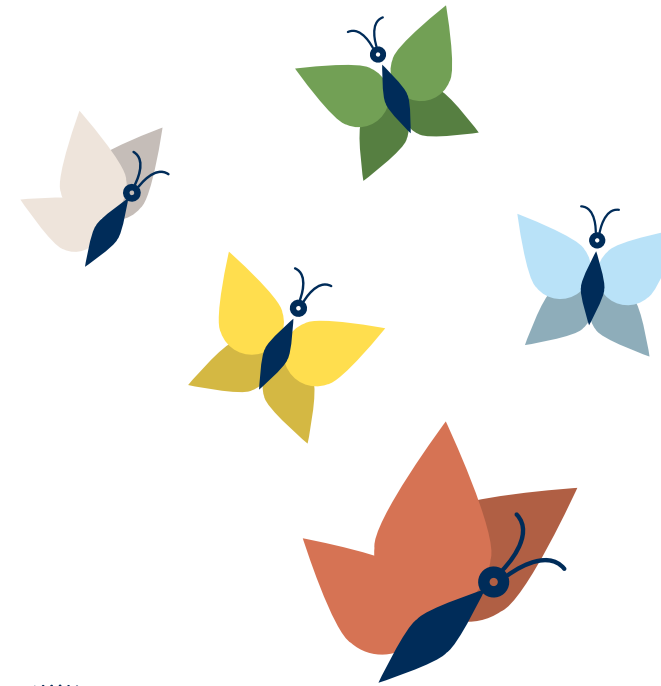


Minnesota Milk Bank for Babies

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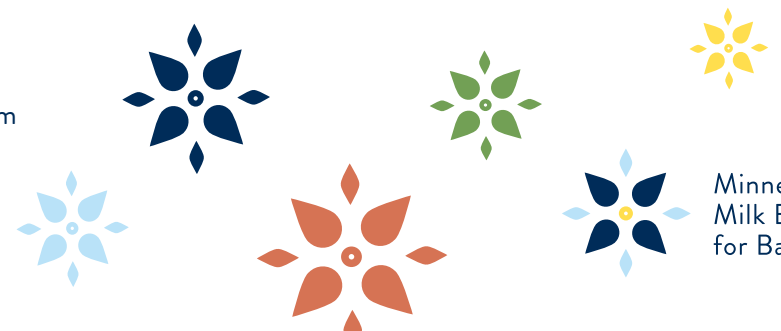
763.546.8051

Monday-Friday | 8am - 4:30pm
MNMILKBANK.ORG



Teardrops With Milkdrops

Lactation options after
the loss of your baby



Minnesota
Milk Bank
for Babies

The first days and weeks after the passing of your baby will be especially difficult. Please accept our deepest sympathy for your loss.

We hope this brochure will help support and guide you as you decide on the best option for you with the milk that your body is making.

Why am I producing milk when I do not have my baby?

During your pregnancy, your breasts have been changing to prepare to feed your baby. The birth of your baby signals hormones that tell your body to make milk for your baby. When your baby dies, your body will not know your child is no longer with you and will continue to make milk.

Your body will first produce small drops of early milk (colostrum) hours after your baby's birth. More milk will come in about 3-5 days after you have given birth. Your breasts will become fuller and may leak milk. Increasing pressure from the milk in your breasts can cause discomfort.

Some bereaved mothers/birth parents feel the presence of milk is upsetting, while others find making milk to be a comforting reminder of their babies. There is no right or wrong way to feel. Be gentle with yourself and know that whatever feelings you are experiencing are perfectly normal and okay.

Whether your milk is just coming in, or you have been making milk for a while, follow the path that is best for you and do what helps you to begin to heal from your loss.

Ways to help your body stop making milk

You will naturally stop producing milk if you do not remove milk from your breasts. You may choose to do this as soon as your milk first comes in, or later after you have been expressing and collecting milk. This may take a few days to several weeks.

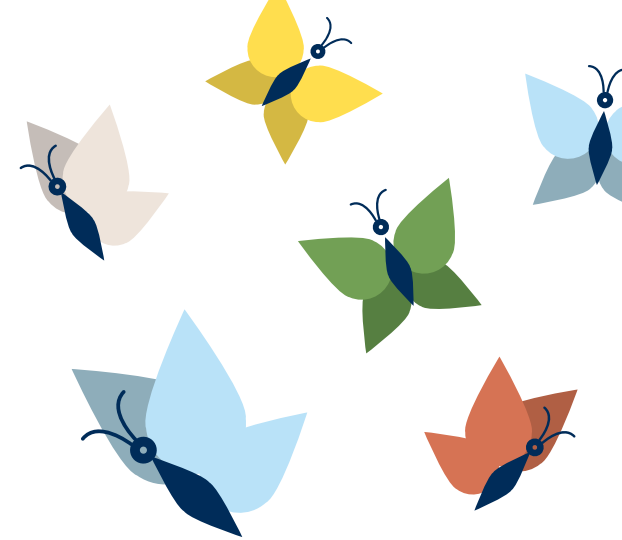
While your milk is drying up, there may be discomfort and leaking of milk.

Suggestions to help you include:

- Wearing a comfortable, supportive bra and using pads to absorb leaking (Make sure the bra is not binding, as a very tight bra may cause plugged ducts that can lead to a breast infection)
- Using cold cabbage leaves or cool compresses for 20 minutes at a time to relieve swelling and minor discomfort
- Taking ibuprofen or acetaminophen to help with pain and swelling
- Expressing a small amount of milk, by hand or with a breast pump as needed, to relieve uncomfortable pressure

If you have been pumping or breastfeeding before your baby passed away, you will need to gradually reduce your milk production to avoid engorgement, plugged ducts and mastitis. For example, if you have been pumping 6 times a day, decrease pumping to 5 times a day for several days, then drop to 4 times a day for a few days. Continue this process until you are no longer pumping.

Call your healthcare provider, lactation consultant or a nearby milk bank for further questions or help.



I want to express my milk

You can choose to express your milk for a short time or a long time. You do not have to decide right away. You can express milk by hand or with the help of a breast pump. Early stimulation of your breasts will develop a good milk supply.

It is recommended to express your milk 8 times a day for the best results. If you already have established a good supply before your baby's passing, continuing to express milk is an option until you are ready to decrease your supply and stop lactating.

Call your healthcare provider, lactation consultant or a nearby milk bank for further questions or help.

Your expressed milk can be donated as a legacy for your forever baby.



MINNESOTA
Milk Bank
FOR BABIES