

A Parent's Guide to Donor Human Milk and COVID-19

Safety is Our Top Priority

Mothers' Milk Bank of North Texas has safely connected generous mothers to fragile babies for more than 15 years. Numerous safeguards are in place to protect the quality and integrity of every bottle processed including strict donor screening, validated pasteurization and third-party microbiological testing.

Our laboratory exceeds standards set by the Human Milk Banking Association of North America (HMBANA), which were developed with involvement of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA).



Heat Inactivation of SARS-CoV-2 (COVID-19)

The temperature at which donor milk is pasteurized has been shown to destroy the virus (Chin et al., 2020). All donor milk dispensed from our facility undergoes heat treatment of 62.5°C for 30 minutes. This process, called the Holder method, preserves immunological properties and nutritional composition. We will continue to vigilantly monitor the COVID-19 outbreak to safeguard our donor milk supply. In 15-years of operation and 5 million ounces dispensed, donor human milk processed in our laboratory has never harmed or infected an infant.

Breastfeeding Safety

The immunological properties of breastmilk protect babies against many illnesses. Breastfeeding mothers should follow these CDC guidelines: "Whether and how to start or continue breastfeeding should be determined by the mother in coordination with her family and healthcare providers. A mother with confirmed COVID-19 or who is a symptomatic PUI should take all possible precautions to avoid spreading the virus to her infant, including washing her hands before touching the infant and wearing a face mask, if possible, while feeding at the breast." (CDC, 2020).

Chin, A. W., Chu, J. T., Perera M. R., Hui, K. P., Yen, H. L., Chan, M. C., Peiris, M., & Poon, L. L. (2020). Stability of SARS-CoV-2 in different environmental conditions. *The Lancet Microbe*. Advanced online publication. DOI:10.1016/S2666-5247(20)30003-3

Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). (2020). Interim guidance on breastfeeding for a mother confirmed or under investigation for COVID-19. Retrieved from <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/specific-groups/pregnancy-guidance-breastfeeding.html>

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