Let's Talk About...

Human milk for the hospitalized baby

If your baby is in the hospital, you can still feed your milk to your baby by collecting and storing it. This is a very good thing to do for your baby and can help him stay healthier in the hospital. This handout will tell you about the positive benefits of feeding your milk to your baby, the best diet for you, and how to store your milk. You should start pumping as soon as you can after your baby's birth. See the handout: ***"Let's Talk About... Breastpumping while your baby is in the hospital."***

What are the benefits of mother's milk?

Benefits of mom's milk are immediate and can last a long time, too. Pre-term babies who get mom's milk for the first month can have half as many infections as those who do not get mother's milk. Pre-term milk gives your baby more protection than milk from mother whose babies were born at term. It also has more protein, calories and extra vitamins and minerals your baby needs. Babies who receive mom's milk have fewer ear and lung infections. They also have less diarrhea, less constipation, fewer respiratory infections, and fewer urinary tract infections. See the handout ***"Breastfeeding: Benefits for your baby"***

What is colostrum?

Colostrum is the golden yellow milk that you pump the first days after your baby's birth. It is packed with everything your baby needs to grow and provides extra antibodies (disease-fighting substances) that help your baby fight infections and other complications. After the first few days, your milk will become thinner and less yellow until it becomes mature milk. Mothers who deliver pre-term infants produce colostrum longer. This gives their baby more antibodies and extra protection for a longer time.

How should I store milk?

- Milk can be kept at room temperature for four hours.
- Human milk can be kept in your refrigerator for two days. Always place it in the back area of your refrigerator or freezer, not in the door.
- Stored human milk will last for three to four months in your freezer or up to six months in a deep freezer.
- Never add warm milk to milk that is already cold.

How should I warm milk?

- Use the oldest milk first (as long as it's not too old to be used).
- Defrost or warm milk by placing the container in warm (not too hot) tap water.
- Allow 12 hours if you defrost milk in the refrigerator, so that it defrosts slowly.
- Never use a microwave to thaw or warm milk.
- Shake thawed milk gently to blend in the fat layer.
- Once thawed, use human milk within 24 hours.
- Do not refreeze thawed milk.
- Throw away remaining milk, if your baby does not finish the bottle of breast milk.

What about medications I take?

Most medicines that you take are safe for your baby. Let your doctor know that you are breastfeeding or providing milk for your baby before he prescribes medications so he can recommend the best one for you. If you have questions about a medicine, it is best to pump and store your milk until your questions are answered. Pregnancy Risk Line is a good resource if you have questions about medications you are taking. Their phone number

is 801.328.2229. See the handout ***"Breastfeeding and Prescription Pain Medication"*** for additional questions.

What should I eat and drink?

What you eat and drink is important when you're breastfeeding. You can produce good milk for your baby even if you do not have a perfect diet. Sit down and eat at least three balanced meals and two healthy protein snacks every day. Have your partner or mother prepare food ahead of time for you. A plate of sliced apples, cheese, and a few crackers in the refrigerator is easy to take out and eat. There are no forbidden foods unless you have a family history of food allergy.

It is a good idea to continue taking your prenatal multivitamins. They will provide extra nutrients you may need. If you have special nutrition needs or questions, please let your nurse or dietitian know. Once you have a full milk supply (25-35 ounces each day), gradual weight loss should not interfere with breastfeeding. However, keep in mind that diets less than 1800 calories per day are often low in vitamins, minerals and iron and often lead to fatigue and low milk supply.

It is a good idea to drink six to eight full glasses of water. If you are thirsty, drink more fluids. Drinking fluids beyond your thirst will not increase your milk supply. You may benefit from.

Skin-to-skin (kangaroo care)

Hold your baby so your bare skin touches your baby's bare skin. Snuggling skin-to-skin feels great to a baby and it's nice for mom and dad too. Skin-to-skin has many benefits for pre-term and hospitalized infants. Ask your nurse or doctor if your baby is healthy enough to do skin-to-skin. Skin-to-skin helps your baby keep his temperature normal and can help you increase milk production. If you are only pumping, skin-to-skin is very important. Through this contact, you will make specific antibodies against the bacteria and organisms in your baby's environment. These antibodies are then in your breast milk and help your baby.

Our thanks

We would like to thank you for providing us with your special milk.

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