

## NICU: Transport of Mother's Milk

### Carrying milk to and from the hospital

- Put your freshly expressed milk in a lunch kit, that keeps food hot or cold, or thermal lunch kit, with frozen gel packs. This makes sure the milk is kept chilled while you go to and from the hospital.
- Pack frozen milk in a thermal lunch kit or sturdy-walled cooler with frozen gel packs. To help keep the milk frozen, remove any extra air with crumpled newspaper or paper toweling. If the bottles are full of frozen milk they will stay frozen for 3 hours or longer. If the bottles are partly filled, they thaw more easily and you need to use extra frozen gel packs.

### Shipping Milk

- Call a shipping company. A list is given below. Ask for a late pick up and overnight shipping. Pack your milk as close to pick up time as possible and store in a freezer if at all possible until pick up.
- If you are shipping to our NICU, ship your milk Monday through Thursday and tell the shipping company to deliver the milk to the front desk of the BC Women's NICU.
- BC Women's Hospital is unable to pay for shipping your milk. The cost will remain with your family.
- To ship milk you need:
  - A sturdy cooler and box it fits into
  - Frozen gel packs
  - Plastic bags or zip lock bags
  - Packing tape
  - Shipping labels
  - Old newspaper or styrofoam chips to fill any additional space in the cooler
  - Marking pen

- If you are shipping or carrying milk for longer than 3 hours, pack frozen labeled milk containers into bags and place bags tightly together in the centre of the sturdy cooler. Add the frozen gel packs and use styrofoam chips or crumpled newspaper to fill extra space around the milk. This will keep the milk frozen for about 20 hours depending on the amount of frozen milk and the outside temperature. Use frozen gel packs. Do not use regular ice.
- If shipping for over 20 hours you need to use dry ice **not** gel packs. Call the shipper for more information about using dry ice. Containers with dry ice should **not** be transported by car as it gives off carbon dioxide.
- Weather temperatures should be considered when packing milk for shipping. Add more frozen gel packs in warm weather.
- Place the cooler in a cardboard box, seal up and attach completed shipping label.

### Couriers

Milk can be shipped by bus or courier. Here are some examples:

- **Dan Foss 604-524-5959**  
Areas covered include Okanagan, Fraser Valley, Whistler/Squamish, Greater Vancouver, Vancouver Island and Kamloops
- **Greyhound Couriers Pick up & delivery:**  
604-523-3600 or 604-681-3526  
- Cheaper if dropped off and picked up.
- **FedEx Nationwide:** 1-800-463-339
- **UPS Nationwide:** 1-800-742-5877
- **Purolator:** 1-888-744-7123

## Donating

If you have 100 to 200 ounces or more of extra milk please consider donating it to the BC Women's Milk Bank. All donors must complete a screening process similar to blood screening. Please call 604-875-2282 for more information.

## Airline Travel with Human Milk

The rules about carrying milk through airport security checkpoints change. Check with the airline if you :

- wish to carry on board more milk than your baby would need during your flight.
- are flying without your baby but wish to carry more than 3 ounces of milk.

Otherwise, let security know you are carrying human milk at the security checkpoint so they can inspect it. Separate the milk from any other liquids, gels, and aerosols in zip lock bags. Gel freezer packs must be less than 100ml. Be prepared to check your milk if the airline will not permit carry-on. More information can be found at: <http://www.tsa.gov/travelers/airtravel/children/formula.shtm>



Developed by the  
Neonatal Program Committee  
Children's & Women's Health Centre of British Columbia

Revised February 2011

CW596 - Insert

©2011 Children's and Women's Hospital & Health Centre of British Columbia