

Human Milk Insights

February 2022

The Human Milk Insights newsletter presents the latest breastfeeding topics and clinical practice solutions, addresses coding issues challenging the lactation community, features a lactation service, and announces upcoming webinars and conferences.

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FEATURED STORIES THIS MONTH

NEWS YOU CAN USE

- Breastfeeding and Support
- Breastfeeding and COVID-19
- Breastfeeding and Infant Health
- Breastfeeding and Inpatient Practices
- Human Milk and Maternal Health
- Organizational Statements

HUMAN MILK EDUCATION

- Medela's 15th Global Breastfeeding and Lactation Symposium – On-Demand Available
- Human Milk Monthly Webinar Series
- Neonatal Perspectives Blog
- Professional Resources

CLINICAL PEARLS IN LACTATION

- The Incredible Breastfeeding Health Benefits for Mothers – Part 2 Reduced Cardiovascular Risk

TOOLS YOU CAN USE

- CDC's Vaccine Messaging for Pregnant and Lactating Women

SPOTLIGHT ON PRACTICE

- Valtra Harris, BSW, IBCLC

NEWS YOU CAN USE

BREASTFEEDING AND SUPPORT

Medela Partners with Ronald McDonald House Charities®

According to the World Health Organization, 1 in 10 babies are born more than three weeks early each year. To ensure that breastfeeding families have the support they need, we are glad to provide select Ronald McDonald House® locations around the world with breastfeeding supplies to offer to families with an infant in the NICU.

Medela is committed to fighting maternal and infant mortality. In celebration of Medela's 60th anniversary, we are providing an in-kind donation to benefit 60 participating Ronald McDonald House programs in Australia, China, United Kingdom and the USA. The donation includes a Symphony® breast pump with trolley and kits, as well as accessories so that families have one less thing to worry about. To learn more about this initiative, visit [Medela Cares](#).

BREASTFEEDING AND COVID-19

Pregnant during the COVID-19 pandemic: an exploration of patients' lived experiences

[Sabrina Kolke](#).../December 2021
Qualitative exploration of pregnancy, delivery, postpartum and breastfeeding during the COVID-19 pandemic. [Article](#)

Remote provision of breastfeeding support and education: Systematic review and meta-analysis

[Anna Gavine](#).../December 2021
Exploration into remote provision of breastfeeding support and education,

which sharply increased during the COVID-19 pandemic, and its effectiveness and impact on recipients.

[Article](#)

BREASTFEEDING AND INFANT HEALTH

Population-Based Survey Showing that Breastfed Babies Have a Lower Frequency of Risk Factors for Sudden Infant Death Syndrome Than Non Breastfed Babies

[José Leonardo Landa-Rivera](#).../December 2021
Exploration of multiple infant care and breastfeeding practices and frequency of SIDS. [Article](#)

HUMAN MILK AND INPATIENT PRACTICES

A Mixed-Methods Examination of Inpatient Breastfeeding Education Using a Human Factors Perspective

[Elizabeth Lerner Papautsky](#).../December 2021
Examination of breastfeeding education in postpartum and inpatient settings, including barriers and outcomes, with an aim to improve and support educational practices in these settings. [Article](#)

HUMAN MILK AND MATERNAL HEALTH

Breastfeeding Is Associated With a Reduced Maternal Cardiovascular Risk: Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis Involving Data From 8 Studies and 1 192 700 Parous Women

[Lena Tschiderer](#).../January 2022

Review of evidence linking breastfeeding with improved cardiovascular health. [Article](#)

Organizational Statements and Resources Regarding COVID-19:

CDC: The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Updated the webpage, “Breastfeeding and Caring for Newborns if you have COVID-19.” Guidelines regarding breastfeeding and newborn care for those with COVID-19. [Article](#)

Organizational Statements and Resources:

ODPHP: The Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion

Published science-based nutritional dietary guideline handouts for different life stages, including nutrition during breastfeeding. [Article](#)

Organizational Statements and Breastfeeding:

FMR/GSA: The Office of Government-wide Policy, General Services Administration

Clarified and reaffirmed lactation space for federal employees and lactation rooms for the public authorized to be present at a given location. [Article](#)

AHRQ: The Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality

Annual report which includes an overview of healthcare quality and disparities. Includes breastfeeding exclusively through three months as a core health measure. [Article](#)

HUMAN MILK EDUCATION

Symposium On-Demand Available



Our live Symposium was a great success, with over 1,400 registered attendees from all over the world. If you were not able to join the live event, no worries! Through June 2022, you can still get full access to all the great content. Click [here](#) for more information and to register for the on-demand event.

Webinars

On Wednesday, February 16th [Dr. Thomas Hale](#) will present his topic [Transfer of Opioids, Bipolar Meds, and Cannabis into Human Milk.](#)

Complimentary registration is now open! For more information or to register, visit www.MedelaEducation.com.

Neonatal Perspectives Blog



[Is it Safe to Breastfeed with COVID-19?](#)

Dr. Sharifa Glass, MD, IBCLC, of The Vine Pediatrics and Lactation penned a guest article discussing the safety of and current best practices around breastfeeding with COVID-19.

Professional Resources

2022 Human Milk Monthly Clinical Education Webinar Schedule

We are happy to announce that the 2022 webinar schedule is now available. For a copy of this schedule click [here](#).

We Listened to Your Feedback!

We received great feedback from the Professional community regarding moms who were using the Personal Fit Connectors with their Pump in Style with MaxFlow, which can cause milk back-up and irreversible damage to their pump. We worked with our R&D teams to modify the tubing to protect their breast pump experience. The change to the tubing includes lengthening and narrowing the tubing adaptor so it no longer fits with the PersonalFit connector used with Symphony, but still works with the PersonalFit Flex connector used with Pump in Style with MaxFlow. This is a rolling change and you should start seeing the new tubing in the market around early March, but be reassured it is normal. For more information around this change, please reach out to your sales rep or reference the [FAQs](#).



Clinical Pearls In Lactation

This column is for lactation practitioners to share clinical challenges and successes, observations and pearls with colleagues. To share a clinical pearl, [submit it here](#). If your submission is selected for publication in a future issue of Human Milk Insights, you will receive a \$25.00 VISA gift card.

The Incredible Breastfeeding Health Benefits for Mothers – Part 2: Reduced Cardiovascular Risk

Many parents and healthcare professionals are familiar with the myriad health benefits of human milk and breastfeeding for infants and children, but they aren't aware of how important lactation is for the mother. In Part 2 of the incredible health benefits of breastfeeding for mothers, we'll look at a recently published systematic review and meta-analysis in the Journal of the American Heart Association, which supports that breastfeeding is associated with reduced maternal cardiovascular risk in later life.

This very important meta-analysis looked at eight studies and more than one million mothers and found that those who breastfed their children for any length of time had an 11% lower risk of developing cardiovascular disease, a 12% lower risk of coronary heart disease, a 12% lower risk for stroke, and a 17% lower risk of dying in later life from cardiovascular disease than mothers who did not breastfeed. They also found that there seems to be a dose-response relationship: women who breastfed longer in their lifetimes, up to 12 months, received the most health benefit. The benefits of longer lifetime breastfeeding were not clear, because few women in the study population breastfed for more than 2 years, but longer definitely seems to be most beneficial.

There are several theories as to how lactation affects cardiovascular risk. One suggests that the hormones prolactin and oxytocin have beneficial effects such as lowering blood pressure, vasodilation, antidiabetic actions, antioxidant effects, decreasing inflammation and lowering fat mass. Another hypothesis proposes that lactation may reset maternal metabolism by reestablishing glucose and lipid homeostasis. Another study demonstrated that women who breastfed ≥ 3 months had a significantly lower risk for aortic calcification and coronary calcification compared with women who did not breastfeed.

What are the clinical implications and what does this mean for practitioners?

When discussing benefits of breastfeeding to mothers, we need to raise awareness of the many evidence-based benefits to mothers' lifelong health. Not only does this improve the health of women, but it improves the health of the community, which has long-term social, cultural, and financial implications. Once women choose to breastfeed, the community needs to facilitate a network of support for families through education, positive birth experiences and providing breastfeeding-friendly workplaces, so breastfeeding can continue for as long as mothers and babies desire.

Reference: [Journal of the American Heart Association](#). 2022;11:e022746.

TOOLS YOU CAN USE

CDC's Vaccine Messaging for Pregnant and Lactating Women

We are all sick and tired of having to deal with the COVID-19 pandemic, however it is still here and is not only placing a continued burden on the entire healthcare system, but each and every one of us. Even though many have received their vaccines and booster, there are still many people who are not yet vaccinated and some who are still fearful. Many pregnant and breastfeeding mothers are afraid that the vaccines will harm their babies. The California Department of Public Health's Office of Communications has put together a [toolkit](#) to use when talking to pregnant and breastfeeding patients about the risks of contracting the virus and the safety of COVID-19 vaccinations. The Pregnancy and COVID-19 Vaccine fact sheet helps people understand important health and safety information and is available on their website in English, Spanish, Arabic, Armenian, Chinese Simplified and Chinese Traditional, Hmong, Khmer, Korean, Punjabi, Russian, Tagalog, Thai and Vietnamese.

In addition to the fact sheet, there are also social media images that can be used in conjunctions with the following messages:

- **If you are pregnant, you are at higher risk for severe COVID-19.** Pregnant people are at higher risk for getting very sick with COVID-19 than people who are not pregnant.
- **If you contract COVID-19, it may complicate your pregnancy.** Pregnant people who contract COVID-19 are at higher risk for pregnancy complications such as high blood pressure, bleeding disorders, death, and stillbirth.
- **If you are pregnant, you may receive the COVID-19 vaccine.** Pregnant and lactating people may receive any of the three COVID-19 vaccines currently authorized for use in the U.S. For more about vaccines currently available in California, visit our [Get the Facts on Vaccines](#).
- **The COVID-19 vaccine may provide your baby some protection from COVID-19.** Recent studies show that vaccinated pregnant people pass antibodies to their developing baby in the womb, so the baby is born with some protection from day one.
- **COVID-19 vaccines are safe for you and your baby.** The CDC has followed more than 35,000 people who were vaccinated during or just before pregnancy. Researchers have found no obvious safety concerns for pregnant people receiving the #COVID19 vaccine.

Click [here](#) for more information on pregnancy and COVID-19 vaccines.

SPOTLIGHT ON PRACTICE

This column is for lactation practitioners and facilities who wish to acknowledge the work of others. We invite you to submit suggested practitioners or facilities you would like to spotlight. If you have a suggestion, email education@medela.com.

*This month we are spotlighting Valtra Harris, BSW, IBCLC
Athens, GA*



Hailing from Athens, Georgia, Valtra Harris, BSW, IBCLC, is the Lactation Program Coordinator at Grady Memorial Hospital, a Baby-Friendly designated facility in Atlanta. In her role, she oversees the hospital's lactation program, consultants, and their Baby-Friendly Hospital Initiative. While Valtra attended college with the intention of majoring in Health Education and becoming involved in the healthcare field, she was inspired to become an IBCLC after her son was born at 23 weeks and 3 days nearly 30 years ago, and survived.

She went on to become the first African-American IBCLC in the state of Missouri and also invented and implemented the NICU breast milk storage box system used at Children's Mercy Hospital in Kansas City, Missouri, after recognizing the need for a consistent system for NICU-involved healthcare professionals that met all current breast milk storage guidelines.

Valtra cites current challenges as including staffing, particularly finding African-American IBCLCs, and overall health illiteracy that can oftentimes be made even more challenging with confusing policies and unorganized planning and program design within the healthcare community. She notes that she would love to help create change and resolve some of these challenges by implementing a program designed for minority high-risk populations to support breastfeeding education and provide important resources.

In her spare time, Valtra enjoys hiking, cooking, and gardening, and is always ready for a good book. Thank you for all the positive impacts you have made throughout your career and for your commitment each day to moms, babies, and families throughout Georgia and beyond!