

Human Milk Insights

June 2020

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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Thank you!

FEATURED STORIES THIS MONTH

NEWS YOU CAN USE

- Human Milk and COVID-19

HUMAN MILK EDUCATION

- Human Milk Monthly Webinar Series
- COVID-19 Breastfeeding and Pregnancy: Fact vs Fiction recorded webinar, YouTube video updates, COVID-19 information website
- Neonatal Perspectives

CLINICAL PEARLS IN LACTATION

- Donor Milk and the COVID-19 Pandemic – Is it Safe?

TOOLS YOU CAN USE

- Resources for Guidance on Breastfeeding and Milk Banking During the COVID – 19 Pandemic

SPOTLIGHT ON PRACTICE

- Caroline Steele, MS, RD, CSP, IBCLC, FAND

NEWS YOU CAN USE

HUMAN MILK AND COVID-19

COVID-19 Related Research:

Johns Hopkins University

COVID-19, Maternal and Child Health, Nutrition – what does the science tell us? A routinely updated collection of peer-reviewed journal articles on COVID-19, including maternal and child health <http://hopkinshumanitarianhealth.org/empower/advocacy/covid-19/covid-19-children-and-nutrition/?eType=EmailBlastContent&eld=e2347c70-8e0a-47ab-abf1-7f81f879a5c4>

Organizational Statements and Resources Regarding COVID-19:

CDC: The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Care for Breastfeeding Women includes updated guidance regarding donor human milk, pediatric well child visits and lactating needs <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/care-for-breastfeeding-women.html?eType=EmailBlastContent&eld=e2347c70-8e0a-47ab-abf1-7f81f879a5c4>

COVID-19 in Racial and Ethnic Minority Groups addresses needs of minority and ethnic groups in the midst of the pandemic

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/need-extra-precautions/racial-ethnic-minorities.html?eType=EmailBlastContent&eld=e2347c70-8e0a-47ab-abf1-7f81f879a5c4>

HMBANA: The Human Milk Banking Association of North America

Milk Handling for COVID-19 Positive or Suspected Mothers in the Hospital Setting.

An evidence-based, detailed infographic regarding handling human milk in the hospital setting.

https://www.hmbana.org/file_download/inlin/e/a593dd72-be78-471e-ae5e-6490309108fd

UNICEF: United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund

Infant and Young Child Feeding Recommendations when COVID-19 is Suspected or Confirmed Resource includes counseling and guidance graphics.

<https://www.advancingnutrition.org/news-events/2020/04/24/infant-and-young-child-feeding-recommendations-when-covid-19-suspected-or?eType=EmailBlastContent&eld=e2347c70-8e0a-47ab-abf1-7f81f879a5c4>

ACOG: American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists/Society for Maternal-Fetal Medicine

Pregnancy & COVID-19: Guidance for Expecting Parents ACOG has made a recording available as a resource for expectant parents

https://www.facebook.com/watch/live/?v=3028036367275710&ref=watch_permalink

ISRHML: The International Society for Research in Human Milk and Lactation ISRHML Activities and Guidance related to COVID-19

Collection of scientific evidence and clinical resources

<https://www.isrhml.com/i4a/pages/index.cfm?pageid=3368&eType=EmailBlastContent&eld=b07fae97-ffc4-45f9-b672-e8a2d10b8ae3>

NIH: The National Institutes of Health
Special Considerations in Pregnancy and Post-Delivery

<https://covid19treatmentguidelines.nih.gov/overview/pregnancy-and-post-delivery/?eType=EmailBlastContent&eld=b07fae97-ffc4-45f9-b672-e8a2d10b8ae3>

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office on Minority Health

Collected a series of COVID-19 resources translated into several languages

<https://www.minorityhealth.hhs.gov/Default.aspx?eType=EmailBlastContent&eld=e2347c70-8e0a-47ab-abf1-7f81f879a5c4>

WHO: World Health Organization

Released the newly updated FAQs, now available in Spanish: FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS: Breastfeeding and COVID-19 For health care workers

https://www.who.int/docs/default-source/maternal-health/faqs-breastfeeding-and-covid-19.pdf?sfvrsn=d839e6c0_5&eType=EmailBlastContent&eld=747b279d-99bd-4ceb-9a3d-93ecc8357971

https://www.who.int/docs/default-source/coronaviruse/breastfeeding-covid-who-faqs-es-12may2020.pdf?sfvrsn=f1fdf92c_8&eType=EmailBlastContent&eld=747b279d-99bd-4ceb-9a3d-93ecc8357971

GHN: Global Health Network

Launched the COVID-19 Research Implementation Hub

For guidance in healthcare settings
<https://coronavirus.tghn.org/>

USLCA: The United States Lactation Consultant Association

Shared Decision-Making: Determining a Need for Infant Separation. Assistive fact sheet when making decisions about infant separation

<https://uslca.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/Shared-Decision-making-for-infant-separation.pdf?eType=EmailBlastContent&eld=e2347c70-8e0a-47ab-abf1-7f81f879a5c4>

HUMAN MILK EDUCATION

On Wednesday, June 3rd, [Jessica Donahue, RN, IBCLC](#) will be presenting [Virtual Breastfeeding Support: Are You Billing for Lactation Support?](#) Complimentary registration is now open! For more information or to register, visit www.MedelaEducation.com.

On Wednesday, June 17th, [Diane Spatz, PhD, RN-BC, FAAN](#) will be presenting [Exploring Human Milk and Breastfeeding for LGBTQ Families](#). Complimentary registration is now open! For more information or to register, visit www.MedelaEducation.com.

On Wednesday, July 15th, [Paula Meier, PhD, RN](#) will be presenting [Marijuana and Mother's Milk in the NICU](#). Complimentary registration is now open! For more information or to register, visit www.MedelaEducation.com.

Recorded webinar [COVID-19: Breastfeeding and Pregnancy: Fact versus Fiction](#), presented by [Kristen Kelley, MPH](#),

[CIC, RN-BSN, FAPIC](#). Click [here](#) to register. Please note, CE's will **not** be available with this recorded webinar.

Medela in partnership with Kristen Kelley, MPH, CIC, RN-BSN, FAPIC are giving weekly updates regarding COVID-19: Breastfeeding and Pregnancy: Fact versus Fiction. Click [here](#) to view on our YouTube channel.

Medela has compiled information about COVID-19. Visit the site by locating the orange banner on the top of the Medela.US website. Click [here](#) to view.

Our 2020 webinar schedule is available! Email education@medela.com to receive a copy.

Neonatal Perspectives

This is a blog for NICU professionals that features clinical information from neonatal consultants, as well as industry news and popular topics. Click [here](#) to read the latest blogs.

Thank You!

Medela wants to send a heartfelt thank you to all of the frontline workers keeping us safe and healthy!

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.

Donor Milk and the COVID-19 Pandemic– Is It Safe?

This is a question many people are asking these days. We know that a mother's own milk is best for her baby – especially if sick or premature and in the NICU – and the World Health Organization states that donor milk is the best substitute if a mother's own milk is unavailable. With some mothers and babies being separated due to infection or exposure to the COVID virus, the possibility exists for even more of a need for the use of donor human milk. The question remains: is it safe? Is banked human milk safe for use with even the tiniest, most fragile infants?

Study after scientific study support that mothers' own breastmilk and human donor milk reduces the risk of infants (particularly preterm infants) developing necrotizing enterocolitis (NEC). Dr. Erin Hamilton Spence, a neonatologist and medical director of the Mother's Milk Bank of North Texas, answers the question of safety in a blog she wrote for the NEC Society newsletter. In a Q and A format, she discusses the current evidence which supports that the SARS-Co-V-2 virus has not been found in breast milk and she concludes that, “. . . donor milk itself is almost certainly safe to feed fragile babies.”

The Human Milk Banking Association of North America (HMBANA) echoes the importance of milk safety and states that its 29 non-profit member milk banks are required to meet certain guidelines. These guidelines, made with involvement of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA), help protect recipients from disease transmission in three ways. First, milk donors are rigorously screened for medical and lifestyle risk factors, their blood is tested for HIV, HTLV, hepatitis B, C and syphilis. Next, the milk is pasteurized (which kills bacteria and viruses) and then cultured. Only after returning a negative culture is the milk dispensed.

Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, there is some concern that the supply of pasteurized donor milk could be adversely affected due to cities' and states' shelter-at-home orders. Mothers may not be able to venture out of their homes and some of the hospitals' drop off sites are not allowing visitors. Some NICUs have even started rationing donor milk, saving it for the smallest and most preterm infants (those weighing <1500 g at birth or earlier than 30 weeks' gestation) in order to prevent NEC.

In her blog, Dr. Spence goes on to discuss the preservation of the donor milk supply chain - how milk banks are being proactive in securing donations from donor mothers, keeping the staff safe

during milk hand-off, and sustaining the national donor supply for all HBANA milk banks and vulnerable infants across the United States. She says, “For all of us invested in preventing necrotizing enterocolitis, I am happy to report that donor milk remains safe.”

So, yes, we can be confident that pasteurized milk from the milk banks is safe and the donor milk supply chain is being carefully monitored. Now is a good time to encourage mothers who may have extra pumped milk on hand during the COVID-19 crisis to donate to a nearby human milk bank. For more information: www.HMBANA.org/find-a-milk-bank.

References:

Furlow, Bryant. US NICUs and donor milk banks brace for COVID-19. DOI link: [https://doi.org/10.1016/S2352-4642\(20\)30103-6](https://doi.org/10.1016/S2352-4642(20)30103-6). Published online: The Lancet; 04/01/2020.

Shenker, Natalie. Maintaining safety and service provision in human milk banking: a call to action in response to the COVID-19 epidemic. www.thelancet.com/child-adolescent Published online May 6, 2020 [https://doi.org/10.1016/S2352-4642\(20\)30134-6](https://doi.org/10.1016/S2352-4642(20)30134-6).

Spence, Erin Hamilton, Mother’s Milk Bank of North Texas, Neonatologist, Fort Worth, TX. Donor milk is still safe in the SARS-Co-V-2 pandemic NEC Society Newsletter Blog, <https://necsociety.org/2020/04/20/donor-milk-is-still-safe-in-the-sars-cov-2-pandemic/>.

TOOLS YOU CAN USE

Resources for Guidance on Breastfeeding and Milk Banking During the COVID-19 Pandemic

In this unprecedented time of the worldwide SARS Co-V 2 pandemic, there are still many unanswered questions as to how this virus affects the care of women during pregnancy, labor and birth, and the early postpartum period. So little is known about this novel virus that recommendations are at times contradictory and may change daily. It's important to stay up to date on the very latest information in order to provide evidence-based guidance for the mothers and babies we work with.

Here are a few more resources you may find useful as you navigate the sometimes-confusing recommendations:

Academy of Breastfeeding Medicine: www.bfmed.org/covid-19-resources

The ABM is a worldwide organization of medical doctors dedicated to the promotion, protection and support of breastfeeding. Their mission is to unite members of the various medical societies with this common purpose. In the *Resources* section of the website, they list some resources that may be helpful in caring for patients:

- The *ABM Statement on Coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19)* is available in 7 languages
- Webinar: *Breastfeeding and COVID-19*
- Article: “*Should Infants Be Separated from Mothers with COVID-19? First, Do No Harm*” by Melissa Bartick, MD, MS, published online 8 May 2020
- Free access to Coronavirus research from Mary Ann Liebert
- Podcast from the Institute for Advancement of Breastfeeding & Lactation Education with Anne Eglash, MD, IBCLC & Karen Bodnar, MD, IBCLC and panelists: *Adopting the Practice of Breastfeeding Medicine During the COVID-19 Pandemic*.
- And more

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC): “If You Are Pregnant, Breastfeeding, or Caring for Young Children” <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/need-extra-precautions/pregnancy-breastfeeding.html>

There is a new patient education sheet available on the CDC website which has excellent information for parents on protecting families from the virus, and it contains a positive message regarding breastfeeding and/or pumping.

Human Milk Banking Association of North America: www.Hmbana.org

HMBANA has a special section on their website with resources related to milk banking, donor milk and COVID-19.

- Detailed infographic on Milk Handling for COVID-19 Positive or Suspected Mothers in the Hospital Setting

- HMBANA Guidelines for Quality and Safety – ongoing monitoring of developments regarding: the COVID-19 outbreak and how it relates to milk banking.
- A section on Research – list of a few studies that are going on regarding human milk and the COVID-19 virus.

The Lancet <https://thelancet.com/coronavirus>

The world-renowned British journal, *The Lancet*, has created the **Covid-19 Resource Centre** to assist health workers and researchers working under challenging conditions to bring the novel coronavirus outbreak to a close. It offers free access to all the new COVID-19 content as it is published from across *The Lancet* journals.

National Perinatal Association – www.nationalperinatal.org/COVID-19#webinars

The NPA brings together people who are interested in perinatal care to share, to listen and learn from each other. The diverse membership is comprised of healthcare providers, parents and caregivers, educators and service providers – all driven by their desire to support and advocate for babies and families at risk across the country. NPA has compiled essential information and resources for the perinatal community.

The NPA has an excellent compilation of resources that will be helpful for both providers and patients. The website's section on COVID-19 is chock full of information, downloadable infographics and guidance from most all the professional organizations related to pregnancy, lactation, babies and young children.

NEC Society – Building a World Without NEC – www.necsociety.org.

The NEC Society is a non-profit organization comprised of a diverse group of healthcare providers, researchers, and patient-families whose vision is building a world without NEC (necrotizing enterocolitis). They have a webinar series of evidence-based practices for optimizing the use of human milk (both mother's own milk and pasteurized donor milk), educational resources, publications for clinicians and resources for families.

Because information regarding the SARS Co-V-2 virus is changing so rapidly, it's important for healthcare providers to check with resources such as the CDC www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov and WHO www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019 for the most recent guidance.

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 Caroline Steele, MS, RD, CSP, IBCLC, FAND
Orange, CA.*

Caroline Steele's contribution to the management of human milk and nutrition of newborns is well recognized. The author of many highly-regarded publications and an experienced speaker, she is the Director of Clinical Nutrition and Lactation at Children's Hospital of Orange County (CHOC), in Orange, CA.

A graduate of Washington State University, Caroline began her career as a clinical dietitian in the Spokane area close to where she grew up. After earning a master's degree in clinical nutrition and dietetics from Finch University of Health Sciences in Chicago, Illinois, she worked as a neonatal intensive care dietitian, enteral program consultant, and director of nutrition at various facilities both in Washington and Arizona. In 2009, she was appointed to her current position at CHOC.

In her role as Director of Clinical Nutrition and Lactation Services, Caroline oversees all clinical nutrition and lactation operations and a staff of 56 including seven IBCLCs, 35 registered dietitians, 12 dietetic technicians registered, and two support staff. Caroline's team supports all inpatient areas at CHOC (including a 105 bed Level IV NICU, pediatric and cardiovascular ICUs, and oncology, medical, and surgical units), the Nutrition Lab (centralized human milk and enteral nutrition preparation lab), as well as 27 different outpatient clinics. She has served as a mentor to clinicians involved in over 40 different nutrition and lactation research projects, poster presentations and podium presentations. Caroline says her staff are highly motivated and very self-directed. "They are truly an amazing and accomplished group of professionals."

Caroline has authored numerous peer-reviewed articles on human milk, enteral nutrition, parenteral nutrition, and handling of infant feedings in the healthcare setting. She is the editor and author of, 'Infant and Pediatric Feedings: Guidelines for Preparation of Human Milk & Formula in Health Care Facilities', 3rd edition, Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics in 2019. She is the recipient of multiple awards, most recently receiving the Excellence in Practice for Clinical Practice Award by the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics and the Golden Heart Award for exemplary leadership in building a groundbreaking culinary medicine program for the MaxLove Project in 2019.

Caroline enjoys sharing outdoor activities with her husband Jeff, who she met in high school. Reunited at a school reunion, they have been married for twenty years. They are avid travelers and have explored many cities in the US and abroad.

Caroline is passionate about her work and has established herself as an expert in identifying regulatory standards and recommendations for human milk handling. Her work has been instrumental in helping to standardize clinical practices within the neonatal world. We look forward to her continued contributions to neonatal nutrition.