

Children's Wisconsin provides donor milk to help our tiniest babies thrive

Children's Wisconsin proudly cares for nearly 1,000 babies each year in our Level IV Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) in Milwaukee, including those who are born early and those who are critically ill. Many highly trained clinicians, including neonatologists, neonatal nurse practitioners and nurses with specialty certifications provide the highest level of care to support infants grow and develop.

Small, vulnerable babies often have high nutritional needs, which Children's helps meet by offering pasteurized human donor milk (PHDM) and human milk fortifier. The American Academy of Pediatrics and the World Health Organization recommend PHDM when mother's own milk is unavailable or insufficient. Multiple studies show it protects against necrotizing enterocolitis, a serious intestinal disease that causes tissue inflammation that can lead to additional complications, including death.

In partnership with the Mother's Milk Bank of the Western Great Lakes, a nonprofit accredited milk bank, Children's provides infants with safe and secure milk. In addition, Children's provides infants in need with a commercial milk fortifier that is derived from human donor milk, which adds essential calories, protein and minerals to PHDM or maternal milk.

A mother went into pre-term labor delivering her son 11 weeks early. Her son was stabilized and transported to the Children's NICU while mom remained at the birth hospital. The separation was very stressful on them both, but mom was committed to his health and began diligently pumping. During the first two weeks of life, her son's nutritional needs were met with PHDM and breastmilk. As mom's volumes increased, the need for donor milk decreased. Her son grew bigger, stronger and smarter every day, thanks in part to PHDM.

This care is not reimbursed, and Children's is proud to invest in caring for our most vulnerable babies and helping set them up for a healthy start in life.

-Children's Wisconsin-Milwaukee