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## Safe Handling of Breast Milk for your Baby in the Neonatal Unit

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# Why is breast milk best for my baby?

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Breast milk is nutritionally complete for your baby and a rich source of antibodies and immune factors that protect your baby against infections. It is extremely beneficial for babies, particularly for premature babies who are vulnerable to digestion difficulties, necrotising enterocolitis and infection. Breastfed babies are less likely to become obese children and adults. They are also less likely to develop chronic illnesses such as asthma, allergies, childhood leukaemia and diabetes.

## How and when do I start expressing my breast milk?

You can start by hand expressing colostrum once you return to the postnatal ward after birth. Continue expressing your breast milk every 3 hours (6 to 8 times a day). Generally, use of an electric breast pump combined with hand expression is the most effective method. Should you require guidance, please approach your nurse or contact our lactation consultant.

Please read “Expression of breast milk” and “Cleaning and sterilising feeding accessories” sections in the “Happy Mom Healthy Baby” booklet to ensure you are expressing your breast milk correctly and hygienically.

## Labelling



Label your expressed breast milk properly to ensure that your baby receives the correct breast milk.

**On each of your breast milk bag/ container, use a permanent black marker to write the following information clearly and legibly:**



1. Mother's Name
2. Mother's FIN/ NRIC Number  
(First AND last 4 characters)
3. Child's Name
4. Child's Identification Number  
(First AND last 4 characters)
5. Date of Expression (DD/MM/YY)
6. Time of Expression

**Please refer to the following examples:**



- a. Baby whose birth has not yet been registered

 Tan Shu Ling S123A  
 D/O Tan Shu Ling X456B  
10/06/20 1230PM

- b. Baby with registered name and birth certificate

 Nurul Jannah S123C  
 Mohd. Arif T456D  
12/08/20 0230AM

- c. Babies who are twins or triplets

 Annie Smith G246M  
 TW1/TW2 Annie Smith  
X789A/X790A  
11/12/20 1100AM

## Storage of breast milk transportation to the hospital

Store and transport your expressed breast milk correctly to ensure that it is safe for your baby's consumption.

### Storage guideline for breast milk:

Storage	Temperature	Expiry
Fresh milk in fridge	< 4°C	48 hours
Freezer/Deep frozen section	< -18°C/ < -20°C	3 months/ 6 months
Thawed milk in fridge	< 4°C	24 hours
Thawed milk at room temperature	19°C - 26°C	2 hours

*Note: This guideline is applicable only if breast milk was placed into the respective storage areas immediately after expression.*

It is important to prevent your frozen breast milk from thawing during transport to the hospital. If breast milk has already thawed, the milk must be consumed within 24 hours. Once expired, any unused milk will be discarded.

Please therefore:

- Check with your baby's nurse the amount of milk that your baby is consuming
- Store breast milk in your home freezer
- Use a cooler box with sufficient ice packs during transport
- Travel directly from your home to the hospital to minimise transport duration
- Pass the breast milk to the nurse immediately upon arrival to the ward

## Special Instructions

Please approach your baby's nurse for more information on:

- Your baby's feeding time
- Balance of breast milk stored in the ward freezer

*Note: You will be asked to bring your breast milk home if it exceeds the ward storage capacity reserved for each baby.*

When your baby is discharged from the unit, please bring a cooler box/ bag to collect your breast milk from the ward staff.

### For further enquiries

For more information or breastfeeding support, please approach any staff in the Neonatal Unit.

You may also call the hospital breastfeeding helpline at +65 9722 0376 to speak to our lactation consultant or lactation trained nurse (Daily, 8am – 5pm).

The information provided in this publication is meant purely for educational purposes and may not be used as a substitute for medical diagnosis or treatment. You should seek the advice of your doctor or a qualified healthcare provider before starting any treatment or if you have any questions related to your health, physical fitness or medical condition.

# About the Khoo Teck Puat – National University Children’s Medical Institute (KTP-NUCMI)

The KTP-NUCMI is the paediatric arm of the National University Hospital and comprises the Departments of Paediatrics, Paediatric Surgery and Neonatology. We provide comprehensive and specialised medical and surgical services for newborns, children and adolescents, and are the only public hospital in Singapore that offers paediatric kidney and liver transplant programmes. Through a generous gift from the Estate of Khoo Teck Puat, we have set up an integrated outpatient facility with medical, diagnostic and rehabilitation services.

For more information about us, visit [www.nuh.com.sg/nuhkids](http://www.nuh.com.sg/nuhkids).

## Contact Us

### 24-hour Children’s Emergency

Location: NUH Main Building, Zone F, Level 1  
General Enquiry: +65 6772 2555

### KTP-NUCMI

Location: NUH Main Building, Zone E, Level 2 (Accessible via Kent Ridge Wing, Zone C, Level 2, Lift Lobby C)  
Operating Hours: 8.30am – 5.30pm (Mon to Fri), 8.30am – 12.30pm (Sat)  
General Enquiry: +65 6772 5736 Appointment Line: +65 6772 2002  
Fax: +65 6776 2102 Email: [ktpnucmi\\_appt@nuhs.edu.sg](mailto:ktpnucmi_appt@nuhs.edu.sg)

### 9a Viva-University Children’s Cancer Centre

Location: NUH Medical Centre, Zone B, Level 9  
Operating Hours: 8.30am – 5.30pm (Mon to Fri) Appointment Line: +65 6772 5030  
Fax: +65 6872 4314 Email: [cbccappt@nuhs.edu.sg](mailto:cbccappt@nuhs.edu.sg)

### NUH Children’s Urgent Care Clinic @ Bukit Panjang

Location: Junction 10, 1 Woodlands Road, #01-22, Singapore 677899  
Operating Hours: 9am – 11pm daily (including public holidays)  
General Enquiry: +65 6219 1538 Email: [childreucc@nuhs.edu.sg](mailto:childreucc@nuhs.edu.sg)  
Website: [www.nuh.com.sg/ucc](http://www.nuh.com.sg/ucc)

### NUH Child Development Unit @ JMC

Location: Jurong Medical Centre, 60 Jurong West Central 3, Level 2, Singapore 648346  
Operating Hours: 8.30am – 5.30pm (Mon to Fri) Appointment Line: +65 6665 2530/2531  
Fax: +65 6665 0158 Email: [cdu@nuhs.edu.sg](mailto:cdu@nuhs.edu.sg)  
Website: [www.nuh.com.sg/cdu](http://www.nuh.com.sg/cdu)

### NUH Child Development Unit @ Keat Hong

Location: Keat Hong Community Club, 2 Choa Chu Kang Loop, #03-01, Singapore 689687  
Operating Hours: 8.30am – 5.30pm (Mon to Fri) Appointment Line: +65 6769 4537/4637  
Fax: +65 6665 0158 Email: [cdu@nuhs.edu.sg](mailto:cdu@nuhs.edu.sg)  
Website: [www.nuh.com.sg/cdu](http://www.nuh.com.sg/cdu)

### National University Hospital

Location: 5 Lower Kent Ridge Road, Singapore 119074  
Tel: +65 6779 5555 Email: [NUH\\_enquiries@nuhs.edu.sg](mailto:NUH_enquiries@nuhs.edu.sg)  
Website: [www.nuh.com.sg](http://www.nuh.com.sg)



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