

Mothers' Milk Bank of New England Has Pasteurized Its First Milk!!!

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The first donor Human Milk Bank (DHMB) in the United States was founded in Boston in 1911, 100 years ago. We have not had a DHMB in New England now for over 10 years, since the milk bank founded at the University of Massachusetts in Worcester in 1975 was closed in 2001. It therefore seems fitting that on June 3, 2011, the Mother's Milk Bank of New England (MMBNE), located in Newtonville, MA, successfully pasteurized our first donor milk! As the volunteer Medical Director of the MMBNE, I was privileged to be in the lab with our Clinical Lab Director Kelli Purchase and get my hands "clean" to actually process the first batch with her, while Outreach Director Andrea Jorgensen was screening more donors and dispensing milk we have been receiving from our sister bank in Ohio for over two years now.

Kelli and I took turns taking photos to document the event—and so we can use our own pictures now when we lecture instead of all the borrowed ones we have been using!!! I have posted many of them in an album on our Face Book page—please have a look!! <http://www.facebook.com/MMBNE>

Our photo album: <http://www.facebook.com/media/set/?set=a.213312365376412.52781.112642768776706>

This was the culmination of over 4 years of hard work by many people to develop and actualize a regional milk bank for New England. Previously, the closest milk banks have been in either Ohio or North Carolina. We operate under the guidelines and standards of the Human Milk Banking Association of North America (HMBANA) www.hmbana.org. We are now the 11th operating milk bank in North America. Donors are screened exactly like blood donors or organ donors, with intensive questionnaires on health and lifestyle, serologic blood screening, health reports from both the mother's and the baby's doctors, and one important difference. Accepted donors' milk is then pasteurized, which retains most of the immunological and nutritional value, while destroying all known pathogens. In the 40 years of "modern" milk banking as it is done in the US, there has never been a documented case of any adverse effects or transmission of any pathogens to recipient babies.

We are a non-profit milk bank, and funding comes from grants, donations, gifts, fund-raising, and a charge for the milk to help cover the cost of all the screening, supplies to donor mothers, storage, handling and pasteurization of the milk. The donors are not paid for their milk, but they do not incur any costs. All their costs are paid for by the milk bank. Most of the milk goes to sick and premature babies in Neonatal Intensive Care, although some does go to outpatients with gastrointestinal or immunological disorders. I am proud to report that at our First Annual Milk and

Harmony musical fundraiser held on June 5, 2011, Connecticut Children's Medical Center NICU was recognized, along with 4 other New England hospitals (Brigham and Woman's Hospital (MA), Children's Hospital Boston (MA), Concord Hospital (NH), and Massachusetts General Hospital for Children (MA)) with the Share the Health Award for establishing human milk (combination of mother's own milk and donor milk when needed) as the standard of care.

For information on our milk bank, how to donate or order milk, or how to make a monetary donation to help us keep supplying this "liquid gold", please visit our web site at www.milkbankne.org. Or, don't hesitate to contact me, the Medical Director, at k.marinelli@milkbankne.org.

Congratulations MMBNE!!! We are "a big girl now"!!!!

