

# Promoting The Safe Use Of Donor Breastmilk

A work aid developed by the South African Breastmilk Reserve



## Decision to Feed Donor Breastmilk

- Base the decision on whether the infant falls within the SABR Recipient Guidelines and Eligibility Criteria<sup>4</sup>
- Document indications for the use of donor breastmilk (DBM) and the mother's lactation status
- Obtain informed consent from the infant's parent or guardian
- Ensure that the mother's lactation status remains a priority - provide her with appropriate support and education to encourage and promote lactation

## Eligibility Criteria

### Infant Factors:

- Born at  $\leq 37$  weeks gestation
  - $< 14$  days of age
  - At risk of developing NEC
- \* Full term, RVD exposed infants may qualify, particularly in the case of a mother's desire to exclusively breastfeed her infant.
- \*\* All orders are treated on a case by case basis. In cases where an infant falls outside of the abovementioned criteria, and there is a belief that DBM may be necessary while maternal lactation is being established, the medical officer is requested to contact our office

### Maternal Factors:

- Medical contraindications to breastfeeding, verified by Medical Practitioner and Lactation Consultant
- Maternal illness or death

## Ordering Protocol

- Contact the SABR Head Office before 09:00, Monday to Friday, to place an order
- Only one batch of DBM per patient will be issued at a time, due to the limited supply

### Please note:

- All orders are subject to availability
- The SABR makes use of a courier company for the transport of DBM and as a result, abides by their rates and delivery times:
  - Some orders (e.g. outside of working hours) may attract a delivery surcharge
  - Some orders may have a turnaround time of 2 - 3 days due to courier delivery areas and times

## Storage of Breastmilk

### Frozen, pasteurised DBM

Chest Freezer ( $-20^{\circ}\text{C}$ ):

- Six (6) months for preterm infants
- Twelve (12) months for term infants

### Thawed, pasteurised DBM

Fridge ( $4^{\circ}\text{C}$ ):

- Up to 24 hours from being **completely thawed**
- **Do not refreeze**

### Please note:

- Ideal room temperature for the storage of breastmilk is not achievable and as such, all breastmilk should be kept in the fridge
- Fresh, raw breastmilk for donation must be frozen within 24 hours of being expressed
- Frozen DBM must be thawed in the fridge

## Feeding Guidelines

- Handle all feeds under aseptic conditions
- Ensure that the DBM is completely thawed
- Ensure that the bottle of DBM is marked with the date & the time that it is fully thawed and use within 24 hours of this time – discard any remaining DBM 24 hours after this time
- Decant the correct feed volume (taking care to limit wastage) and put the remainder back into the fridge
- Discard any milk left over from the feed
- **ALWAYS record the donor & batch number of the DBM in the patient's hospital file**



## Points To Consider: Safe & Appropriate Use

- DBM is considered to be an emergency medical intervention for short term use (14 - 28 days), and prolonged use is not advised or encouraged
- DBM is a human tissue in limited supply, and as with organ donation, the SABR has an ethical responsibility to ensure equitable access and allocation to vulnerable, low birth-weight infants (as per SABR Recipient Guidelines and Eligibility Criteria<sup>4</sup>)
- DBM has never been refused to an NICU under reasonable circumstances
- **Mother's own milk** remains the nutritional and immunological ideal for your patient and takes preference over DBM, thus maternal lactation should therefore be seen as a **priority**

### References:

1. Heiman H & Schanler RJ. *Benefits of maternal and donor human milk for premature infants*. Early Human Development. 2006, 82.
2. Kim JH. *Human milk banking*. Paediatr Child Health. 2010, 15(9).
3. Organ Procurement and Transplant Network: Ethical Principles in the Allocation of Human Organs. <https://optn.transplant.hrsa.gov/resources/ethics/ethical-principles-in-the-allocation-of-human-organs/>, accessed 23/8/16.
4. South African Breastmilk Reserve. *SABR Ordering Protocol*. SABR, 2018.