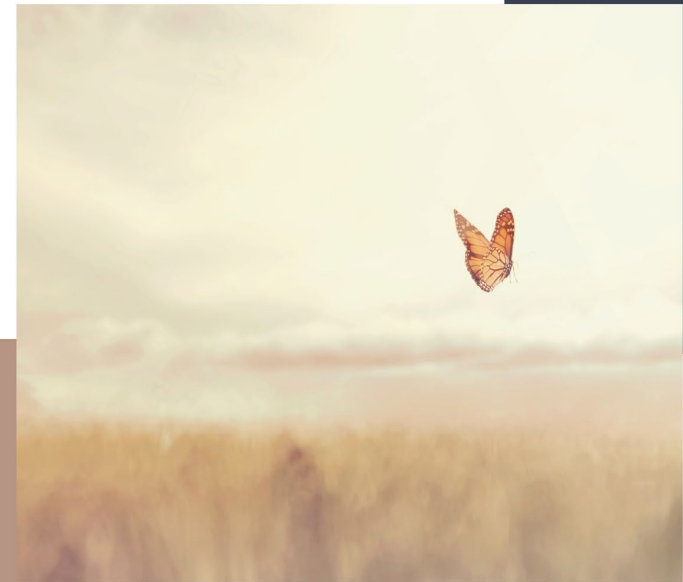


If you are considering milk donation, you will need to:

1. Assess your eligibility to donate by visiting the milk bank website, milkbankontario.ca which will provide you with pumping strategies and milk storage information. Submit your contact information online.
2. If eligible, pumping should begin as soon as possible, following your loss.
3. You will need to pump every 3-4 hours for 15-20 minutes from 6 a.m. to midnight to establish your milk supply.
4. If you are just starting to pump, it may take you 2 to 3 weeks to pump the requested 5L (165oz).
5. Milk donation requires a screening process with the Milk Bank Ontario's Lactation Consultants and blood tests

Find out more at www.milkbankontario.ca



Lactation After Loss
for
Bereaved Parents

WWW.WCHN.CA

LACTATION FOLLOWING PREGNANCY LOSS

Support and information after pregnancy or infant loss may be a vital part of coping with the emotions you may experience. The grief you may be experiencing after a loss might also encompass the loss of the chance to breastfeed your child.

Pregnancy stimulates hormones that tell your body to produce milk. Lactation may occur after 16 weeks of pregnancy and you will be more likely to produce milk early if you have had previous pregnancies or breastfed in the past. Following a loss, your body will not know that milk is not needed.

Lactation is a normal response following a pregnancy and there are options for you during this time.

Lactation Suppression

With lactation suppression, the goal is to allow the breast to remain full while avoiding engorgement to gradually reduce milk production until it stops. A full breast will tell the body that too much milk is being produced which results in decreasing supply over time. Pumping or hand expressing just enough milk to feel comfortable will promote gradual reduction in supply. It's normal to feel emotional, tender, sore, achy, sometimes increase in body temperature.

Strategies for comfort during milk suppression include:

- Wearing a firm bra with good support, but without underwire, both day and night
- Wearing nursing pads to absorb milk leakage and changing them when they become wet
- Pump only enough to make your breasts feel comfortable
- Applying a cool compress to the breasts for 15 minutes, each hour
- Gently massaging your breasts in the shower
- Medications like ibuprofen can reduce soreness
- Binding your breasts is not recommended
- Some women find that placing a washed, chilled cabbage leaf in their bra with stems removed for 20 minutes at a time can help relieve the discomfort of engorgement

Watch for hard, reddened areas on the breast, fever or flu like symptoms which can indicate a breast infection or mastitis that requires further assessment.

The length of time that it takes for your breasts to stop milk production varies individually. On average, it takes about 10-14 days. If you are concerned that it is not slowing down, please contact your primary care provider.

Breastmilk Donation

If you have experienced a pregnancy loss after 20 weeks, and if you are interested, you may be able to establish a milk supply for donation.

Some parents may find that donating their breast milk to hospitalized babies in need can be very healing, it honours their baby and promotes healing following their loss. Others feel uncomfortable giving away the milk meant for their baby. It is your choice.

Breast milk is the gold standard for a baby, however many parents are unable to provide the volume that their baby needs. For these babies, pasteurized donor milk is recommended by many organizations such as the Canadian Paediatric Society.

Removing milk from the breast can be done by hand or with a pump. Milk donations can be stored in a freezer between 3-6 months and can be expressed up until 18 months after a loss.

Frequent milk removal may delay ovulation, however once spaced out to 6 hours or more, then ovulation may return to those wishing to try to conceive again.