

How can I donate my milk?

You can self refer for milk donation on our website or you can speak to your health care team. They will be able to refer you to the Memory Milk Gift Initiative and will have more information about donation.

www.milkbankchester.org.uk/donationafterloss



If you choose to donate your milk there are many ways that this can be acknowledged either through the milk bank or privately.

Donation isn't the right choice for everyone, if you are considering donating your milk in memory of your baby, you or your family may find it helpful to hear how milk donation has helped some donors through their journey:

A video about donating milk after baby loss.



Listen to Holly and Bodhi's journey.



Information video on how to hand express.*



*The support organisations listed at the end of this video are American, however UK support organisations can be found opposite.

Where can I go to for support?

There is a whole community of organisations who are able to offer help and support and it is important to find support which works for you.

You may be offered bereavement support from your healthcare team. Some organisations you may find helpful are:

Our Sam Charity

@oursamcharity



Sands

@sandsUK



Children on Jannah

@jannahchildren



Child Bereavement UK

@cbukhelp



British Association of Perinatal Medicine



www.milkbankchester.org
memory.milkgift@nhs.net
 @milkbankchester



**Memory Milk Gift Initiative
 Breast Care after loss**

your choices

If you are reading this leaflet after a miscarriage, stillbirth or the death of your baby after they were born, we are so sorry for your loss. This leaflet contains information about your breast care choices:

- Stopping your body producing milk
- Continuing to express
- Deciding what to do with milk you have already expressed

Will my body make breastmilk after my baby has died?

Your body will naturally start making milk around the 16th week of pregnancy. After birth your body will undergo hormone changes that lead to breast milk production.

Some lactating parents find this experience very painful as it reminds them of their loss and may want to stop their milk production as quickly as possible. Others find making and expressing their milk comforting. There is no right or wrong way to feel, or decision to make.

This leaflet explains the options that you have, and your healthcare team can support you to make the best decision for you and answer any questions .

How do I stop my body producing milk?

It may take several weeks for your breasts to stop making milk. It's important that when your breasts fill with milk, you do not express except for comfort. If you don't empty your breasts, your body will stop

making milk over the coming days and weeks. If you have been breastfeeding or expressing milk for your baby, it may take longer to stop producing milk.

You will need to reduce your supply slowly to avoid discomfort and to reduce the risk of breast inflammation. You can do this by:

- Hand expressing some of your milk to make you feel more comfortable. Your healthcare team can help you work out a schedule to slowly reduce your supply over time. Information about hand expressing can be found overleaf.
- Wearing a well supporting bra for example a sports bra, day and night.
- Sleeping on your back
- Using a cold compress for 15-20 minutes (avoid using a hot compress)
- Contacting your healthcare team if you are experiencing any pain or have symptoms of a fever.
- You may be offered a medicine called Cabergoline which has been shown to help stop the body producing milk quickly, although it may not stop your milk supply completely. Please talk to your healthcare team for further information. Like all medicines, there may be side-effects and it may not be suitable for all lactating parents.

Continuing to express

I want to keep expressing, can I donate my milk?

Some parents find that expressing milk for donation can be comforting. Parental grief is very complex and personal and this may not be a choice for everyone. If you decide you want to keep on expressing, you may wish to consider milk donation.

Deciding what to do with milk you have already expressed

There are different options available if you have milk that you have already expressed, and you may wish to do one or a combination of these:

Donate your milk to a milk bank for recipient or research donation. Keep a container of milk for a keepsake.

Use some of your milk to be turned into a keepsake for example breastmilk jewellery (there are companies online who make these for a fee).

Ask the hospital to dispose of the milk safely on your behalf, if you do not wish to keep or donate it.