

Every feeding journey is
unique - just like YOU!

Nourish = Nurture

The NICU is a journey - feeding
your baby in the NICU is too.

- There is no right or wrong way to feed your baby. Your care team will help you find different methods that work best for you and your baby.
- Pumping in the NICU is hard. Your lactation nurse, speech therapist and nurses are here to help. Ask questions.
- Patience is key. This will be a learning journey for both you and your baby. Be gentle with yourself.
- Take a deep breath and celebrate every milestone, however small.

Know Your Rights!

Read more about
breastfeeding laws.
pregnantatwork.org



Growing Together

♥ Strengthen your connection while
supporting milk production and
nourishing your baby

BE PRESENT

- Look at your baby during feedings.
- Read aloud, talk or sing to your baby.

CONNECT

- Ask if you can hold your baby while they are being fed in other ways (e.g. NG tube).
- Skin-to-skin can increase milk supply and helps babies and parents recognize feeding cues.
- When you are away from the NICU, look at photos or videos of your baby while pumping.

SUPPORT

- Use scent cloths. These help milk let-down, especially when pumping at home.

Donor Breastmilk FAQ

What is Human Donor Milk?

Human Donor Milk is breastmilk that has been donated to a milk bank by a lactating mother who is willing to share it with other babies.

Who do I talk to about donor milk?

Ask your providers, nurses, and lactation consultants to explain the safety measures taken, and why it may be the best option for feeding your baby.

I have mixed feelings about donor milk?

Giving your baby donor milk can bring up conflicting emotions. You may feel glad that your baby can receive donor milk, but sad that it is not your milk. There are so many ways to feed your NICU baby. Donor milk may be part of their journey.

Ways To Support Your Mental Health

- Join the weekly Hand to Hold Support Groups hosted in your hospital.
- Boost endorphins - and take a break - by taking a walk.
- Journal about your feelings and experiences to help process difficult emotions and situations. Escape into a good book or watch a favorite show.
- Engage in positive self-talk or practice daily affirmations. You are doing your best.
- Remember: Everyone's journey is different. Try to not compare your journey with someone else's.
- Celebrate every milestone you and your baby reach in the NICU.
- Talk to a friend or loved one.
- It's OK to ask for help. You are not alone.

About Hand to Hold

Hand to Hold is a nonprofit 501(c)(3)
dedicated to providing early
intervention mental health support
before, during, and after a NICU stay,
ensuring that all NICU families thrive.

The NICU is hard.
We're here to help.



handtohold.org