What is the Pasteurized Donor Human Milk program?
When mothers of premature infants are working on developing their own milk supply, pasteurized donor human milk offers many of the same health benefits. At MedStar Franklin Square Medical Center, we make it possible for babies to receive human milk through our Pasteurized Donor Human Milk (PDHM) program. Our PDHM is obtained from a milk bank that is licensed by the state of Maryland and accredited by the Human Milk Association of North America (HMANA).

Is PDHM safe?
All donors must take a blood test and are screened for HIV, Hepatitis C antibody, Hepatitis B surface antigen, HTLV-1 & 2, Tuberculosis, Syphilis and CMV.

Once the mother has been screened and the donated milk has been accepted, it is tested to ensure that it does not contain any viruses or bacteria. After the donated milk is tested, it is then pasteurized. Pasteurization is an important safety process which heats the milk to kill any bacteria and viruses while maintaining the majority of its beneficial health components.

In over 30 years, there have been no documented cases of disease transmission from a HMANA accredited milk bank. PDHM, however, can be associated with the risk of slow infant growth due to the pasteurization process. Your baby’s doctor will follow his/her growth very closely to monitor this.

We encourage you to discuss any concerns you may have regarding the use of PDHM with your infant’s healthcare team.

How long will my baby receive donor human milk?
Once your milk supply is established and you are producing enough breast milk to cover your baby’s feeds, your baby will no longer require PDHM. Your milk is uniquely made by your body for your infant and is an important part of your baby’s care.
Why is my milk important for my baby’s care?
PDHM is used as a temporary bridge until you establish your own milk supply. Your milk is made specifically for your baby and has many health benefits, including:

- Contains more energy, fat, protein, nitrogen, fatty acids, vitamins, minerals and immune factors than a mom who delivered full term.

- Helps to protect your infant against infections and respiratory viruses.

- Protects your infant's gut from infections such as Necrotizing Enterocolitis. It's also easier to digest.

- Helps visual acuity and decreases the incidence and severity of retinopathy of prematurity.

- Helps with neurological development.

- Protects your infant into adulthood by decreasing cholesterol levels and lowering blood pressure.

Where can I learn more about human milk banking?

- MedStar Franklin Square Medical Center Lactation Resource Center: 443-777-7101

- Human Milk Banking Association of North America: hmbana.org

- AAP, Breastfeeding and the Use of Human Milk Policy Statement: pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/129/3/e827.full

- CDC Breastfeeding Resources: cdc.gov/breastfeeding

- U.S. Breastfeeding Committee: usbreastfeeding.org

What support and resources are available?
Our nurses and physicians are excellent resources during your breastfeeding journey. You will be seen by a lactation consultant within 24 hours of delivery.

The lactation consultant will continue to be in contact with you as your baby remains in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU).

Please be sure to ask about our loaner pump program. You have the option of loaning a breast pump or we will work with your insurance company to ensure you receive a pump of your own.