

Human Milk Insights

August 2021

The Human Milk Insights newsletter presents the latest breastfeeding topics and clinical practice solutions, addresses coding issues challenging the lactation community, features a lactation service, and announces upcoming webinars and conferences.

CONTRIBUTORS

Katie McGee, RN, BSN, IBCLC
Education Consultant
Westchester, IL.

Maria Lennon, MSN, CNM, IBCLC
Nurse-Midwife, Perinatal Education
Consultant
Sedona, AZ.

Kim Colburn, BPC
Education & Program Coordinator
Medela LLC

FEATURED STORIES THIS MONTH

NEWS YOU CAN USE

- Human Milk and COVID-19
- Human Milk and Maternal Health
- Human Milk and Global Trends
- Human Milk and Disparities

HUMAN MILK EDUCATION

- Medela's 15th Global Breastfeeding and Lactation Symposium
- Human Milk Monthly Webinar Series
- Neonatal Perspectives Blog
- Professional Resources
- Medela's New Mobile App – Medela Family
- Meddela Cares
- Meddela Recycles
- Happy World Breastfeeding Week

CLINICAL PEARLS IN LACTATION

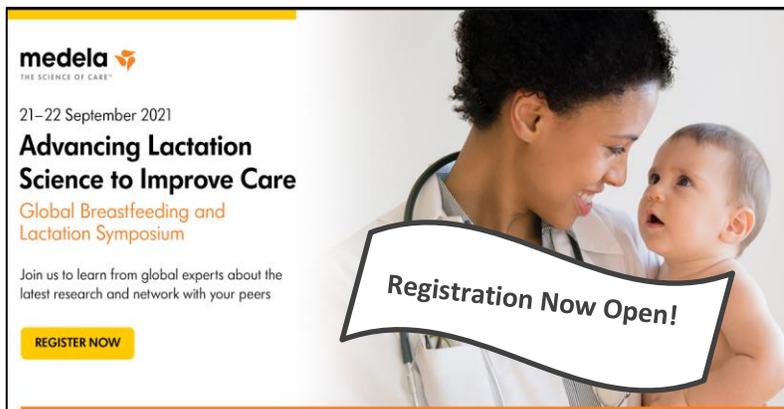
- Antibodies Found in Breast Milk After COVID-19 Vaccination

TOOLS YOU CAN USE

- What is “Mommy’s Thumb?”

SPOTLIGHT ON PRACTICE

Jeri L. Eichhammer, RN, BSN, IBCLC



Click [here](#) to watch our symposium teaser video!

NEWS YOU CAN USE

HUMAN MILK AND COVID-19

[Maternal and Child Symptoms Following COVID-19 Vaccination Among Breastfeeding Mothers](#)

Skyler McLaurin-Jiang.../June 2021
Examination of COVID-19 vaccine-related side effects and association with impact on breastfeeding outcomes as well as perceived symptoms.

[NIH Study: News Release Covid-19 vaccination during pregnancy and postpartum](#)

MOMI-VAX, an NIH funded study, has begun to evaluate immune response against SARS-CoV-2 in those vaccinated during pregnancy and the postpartum period, and their infants. Transfer of antibodies through the placenta and breast milk will also be studied for improved understanding of these areas.

[Immunogenicity of COVID-19 mRNA Vaccines in Pregnant and Lactating Women](#)

Ai-ris Y. Collier, MD.../May 2021
Study examining antibodies elicited in infant cord blood and in breast milk of vaccinated pregnant and lactating women.

HUMAN MILK AND MATERNAL HEALTH

[The Influence of Breastfeeding Educational Interventions on Breast Engorgement and Exclusive Breastfeeding: A Systematic Review](#)

Mega Hasanul Huda, MS.../July 2021
Exploration of commonly stated reasons for early breastfeeding cessation and impact on outcomes with educational interventions.

HUMAN MILK AND GLOBAL TRENDS

[Rates and time trends in the consumption of breastmilk, formula, and animal milk by children younger than 2 years from 2000-2019: Analysis of 113 countries](#)

The Lancet/ July 2021
This analysis reveals some increases in breastfeeding rates for both exclusive breastfeeding and any breastfeeding.

HUMAN MILK AND DISPARITIES

[Breastfeeding Disparities and Their Mediators in an Urban Birth Cohort of Black and White Mothers](#)

Ardythe L. Morrow.../June 2021
Investigation and analysis of racial disparity factors in breastfeeding outcomes (such as shorter duration and less exclusivity) and call for public health prioritization to areas of need.

[“Liquid Gold” Lactation Bundle and Breastfeeding Rates in Racially Diverse Mothers of Extremely Low-Birth-Weight Infants](#)

Maria Obaid.../June 2021
Implemented interventions including education, clinical practices, and analyzed outcomes for very low birth weight babies in a NICU setting. Exclusive mother’s own milk at discharge was the primary outcome measured.

[Understanding Black Matriarchal Role Models in the U.S. Attitudes and Beliefs About Breastfeeding](#)

Lyshsae Otarola.../June 2021
Exploration of social support and role models’ impact on initiation and duration of breastfeeding outcomes.

HUMAN MILK EDUCATION

Symposium



Join Medela on September 21st- 22nd for our 15th Annual (and first-ever fully virtual) [Global Breastfeeding and Lactation Symposium](#) titled [Advancing Lactation Science to Improve Care](#). We are excited to host some of the world's most influential human milk and lactation experts for a unique opportunity to understand new insights, research, and discoveries while exchanging ideas, experiences, and best practices with like-minded medical professionals and interacting with leaders in the field of human milk.

Our list of [speakers](#) includes Professor Christoph Fusch, Dr. Dani Dumitriu, Professor Diane Spatz, Professor Donna Geddes, Professor Shuping Han, Professor Hans van Goudoever, Kimberly Seals Allers, Professor Lars Bode, Professor Paula Meier, Dr. Rebecca Powell, Dr. Rosalina Barroso, and H.E. Toyin Saraki.

Click [here](#) to register and reserve your space today! Registration fee is 60€ (approx. \$70 US). You can help support breastfeeding families at registration. At registration, answer "yes" when asked, and Medela will use your registration fee to provide additional breastfeeding supplies to several [Ronald McDonald House Charities®](#) chosen by Medela.

This event will offer 6.25 Nursing Contact Hours for US attendees and 6.25 CL Hours for Canadian Attendees.

We are also thrilled to host our popular [poster exhibition session](#) – for the first time virtually. All participants are invited to present their unique experience and expert knowledge in a scientific poster during the event. If chosen to present your poster, you will be eligible for complimentary registration to our full Symposium. Last chance! Extended **deadline for poster submission is August 7.**

[September 21 Symposium Time:](#)

10:00 am – 12:50 pm Eastern
 9:00 am – 11:50 am Central
 8:00 am – 10:50 am Mountain (MDT)
 7:00 am - 9:50 am AZ (MST)
 7:00 am – 9:50 am Pacific
 6:00 am – 8:50 am Alaska
 4:00 am – 6:50 am Hawaii

[September 22 Symposium Time:](#)

10:00 am – 1:30 pm Eastern
 9:00 am – 12:30 pm Central
 8:00 am – 11:30 am Mountain (MDT)
 7:00 am - 10:30 am AZ (MST)
 7:00 am – 10:30 am Pacific
 6:00 am – 9:30 am Alaska
 4:00 am – 7:30 am Hawaii

Webinars

On Thursday, August 19th, [Diane Spatz, PhD, RN-BC, FAAN](#) will present her topic [Helping Families Identify and Build Prenatal and Post Birth Breastfeeding Support Teams](#). Complimentary registration is now open! For more information or to register, visit www.MedelaEducation.com.

On Wednesday, September 15th, [Angela Groshner, MSN, RN, CCRN, IBCLC](#) and [Jenny Murray, BSN, RN, IBCLC](#) will present their topic [Mother's Own Milk vs Donor Human Milk](#). Complimentary registration is now open! For more information or to register, visit www.MedelaEducation.com

Neonatal Perspectives Blog



[Celebrating the Inaugural Ōiwi Breastfeeding Week with J.E.D.I. - Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion - in Hawai'i](#)

This blog, written by Hawaiian native Amber Kapuamakamaeokalani, IBC, GPCE, you will learn about Ōiwi Breastfeeding Week and the importance of J.E.D.I. in breastfeeding education.



[UF Pharmacy Research: ENFit® Products and Medication Administration](#)

According to two research articles related to ENFit syringes in the pharmacy, accuracy and safety can be compromised in the smallest patient population. These two studies will be summarized in this blog.



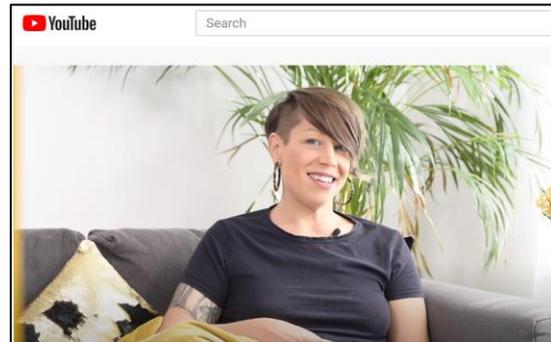
[Cleaning the ENFit® Hub: Recent Study Evaluates 17-Step Cleaning Process](#)

An area of concern has been identified and it is a significant concern to consider when transitioning to the ENFit design. This blog will discuss important considerations

around the ENFit hub and connector, and will review the recent ENFit cleaning study.

Professional Resources

Katie James, IBCLC Advice for Patients Videos



Katie James, IBCLC shares talking points you can use with patients or clients on topics such as healthy infant feeding volumes in the early postnatal stages, how to know when to feed baby, what to do if breast milk is not coming in and many more. Click [here](#) to view these videos on the Medela YouTube channel for professionals.

Updated Tear Sheet

We are happy to announce that we have updated another tear sheet and it's now available on our website. This tear sheet can be downloaded and handed out to your patients. Click on the link below to download your free copies today!

[Breast Milk Collection and Storage](#)

Medela's New Mobile App – Medela Family

Our new Medela Family app is mom's personal helper. With the app, moms can easily track important stats for pregnancy, baby, and breastfeeding while receiving tips and support to help her meet her unique goals. The app offers tracking via voice control, pump connectivity, virtual milk storage and a personal helper. Click [here](#) to learn more.

Medela Cares



Medela began with a simple vision: that by combining innovation, technology, and people dedicated to a mission, we could make a difference. As a leading medical device company for 60 years, that belief holds strong today and is guided by our destiny statement, anchored by our company's core behaviors, and reflected in the actions of our employees and partners.

In alignment with the United Nations Global Compact, Medela Cares, our corporate social responsibility program, is focused on where we can have the greatest impact and aligned with our business priorities. The global topics of Human Rights, Labor, Environment and Anti-Corruption are synthesized into three pillars of our commitment.

Click [here](#) to learn more about Medela Cares and the three pillars: People, Planet, and Society.

Medela Recycles



Did you know that Medela has a program to help moms recycle their pump once they are finished with it? [Medela Recycles](#) is a breast pump recycling program that supports Medela's commitment to the environment and participation in the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's innovative Waste Wise program. It's easy. It's environmentally friendly. Medela will send all eligible breast pumps to a third-party processing center where they will be broken down and all recyclable parts will be recycled appropriately. Medela does not reuse donated parts for recycling for any manufacturing purposes. To date,

we have recycled more than 47,700 pumps!
Click [here](#) to learn more.

Happy World Breastfeeding Week

It's #worldbreastfeedingweek! This year's theme is to protect, promote and support breastfeeding to achieve sustainable development. Last year, the COVID-19 pandemic had an unprecedented impact on the world, and particularly on the health and safety of women and people from marginalized communities around the world.

We are seeing deepening inequalities, and social, political, and economic vulnerabilities in every country are being exposed. However, all parents with young children should have access to quality breastfeeding counseling and support in health facilities, workplaces and communities in normal times and in crises.

We believe our company is uniquely positioned to: address infant and maternal mortality and malnutrition; protect the most vulnerable children; improve access to quality healthcare, education and resources; and promote gender equality and inclusion as an employer - during a crisis and beyond.

Learn more about what we are doing to support these initiatives at medelacares.com.

#medelacares
 #WBW2021
 #ProtecttBreastfeeding
 #healthcare
 #workingparents



CLINICAL PEARLS IN LACTATION

This column is for lactation practitioners to share clinical challenges and successes, observations and pearls with colleagues. To share a clinical pearl, [submit it here](#). If your submission is selected for publication in a future issue of Human Milk Insights, you will receive a \$25.00 VISA gift card.

Antibodies Found in Breast Milk After COVID-19 Vaccination

Since the COVID-19 pandemic reared its ugly head about 18 months ago, breastfeeding mothers have been forced to confront how this coronavirus can affect both their wellbeing and their babies' health. Many women have questioned the safety of being vaccinated while breastfeeding and whether there would be any benefit to the infant. Some good news from researchers has recently been reported.

According to a letter from Israeli researchers published in the Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA), "Robust secretion of SARS-CoV-2 specific IgA and IgG antibodies were found in breast milk of breastfeeding women for 6 weeks after the first of 2 vaccinations against COVID-19." The 84 participants with a mean age of 32 whose infants were 10.2 months old received 2 doses of the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine 21 days apart.

The anti-SARS-CoV-2 specific IgA antibodies in breast milk increased rapidly and 2 weeks after the first vaccine, they were elevated by 200%. One week after the second vaccine, 86.1% of the samples tested positive for the antibodies; mean levels remained elevated for the duration of follow-up.

On the other hand, anti-SARS-CoV-2-specific IgG antibodies remained low for the first 3 weeks, with a significant increase at week 4. This is when 91.7% of samples tested positive, then increased further to 97% at weeks 5 and 6. No mother or infant experienced any serious adverse event during the study period.

With other respiratory diseases such as influenza and pertussis, secretory IgA antibodies in breast milk have been shown to provide protection to babies from infection. It is hoped that, in addition to the protective effect the vaccine has on the mother, its potential protective effect on infants will help to increase vaccine acceptance by postpartum women who breastfeed their babies.

Admittedly, this study's sample size was small, and women were only followed for 6 weeks, so it is not known how far out the antibody secretion occurs. However, the study is continuing, and the researchers hope to have more information to report soon.

Here's some more good news: Another concern for some mothers is that the maternal vaccine mRNA would enter breast tissue or be transferred into the milk. There's new data from researchers at the University of California San Francisco that addresses this knowledge gap. Milk

samples were analyzed both before and after vaccination and none of the samples showed detectable levels of vaccine nanoparticles or mRNA in any component of the milk.

These results provide important early evidence to strengthen current recommendations that vaccine-related mRNA is not transferred to the infant and that lactating individuals who receive the COVID-19 mRNA-based vaccine should not stop breastfeeding.

The World Health Organization, the Academy of Breastfeeding Medicine, ACOG and the CDC all recommend that pregnant and breastfeeding women get the vaccine, especially due to the increased risk of a severe coronavirus infection occurring during pregnancy and the postpartum period. Clinical data from larger populations are needed; vaccine trials are currently underway to better understand the safety and efficacy of the vaccine during pregnancy and lactation.

For more information and assistance in making an informed decision, it's important for women to seek guidance from their healthcare providers.

References:

[Perl SH, Uzan-Yulzari A, Klainer H, Asiskovich L, Youngster M, Rinott E, Youngster I. SARS-CoV-2-Specific Antibodies in Breast Milk After COVID-19 Vaccination of Breastfeeding Women. JAMA. 2021 May 18;325\(19\):2013-2014. doi: 10.1001/jama.2021.5782. PMID: 33843975; PMCID: PMC8042567.](#)

[GOLAN Y, PRAHL M, & CASSIDY, A; ET AL. EVALUATION OF MESSENGER RNA FROM COVID-19 BTN162B2 AND MRNA-1273 VACCINES IN HUMAN MILK, JAMA PEDIATR. PUBLISHED ONLINE JULY 6, 2021. DOI:10.1001/JAMAPEDIATRICS.2021.1929](#)

TOOLS YOU CAN USE

What is “Mommy’s Thumb?”

Have you ever heard the term “Mommy’s Thumb” or “New Mother’s Thumb”? It’s a painful condition that is becoming increasingly common during the third trimester of pregnancy and the first few months after birth – especially in tech-savvy new moms. It’s estimated that 25-50% of new mothers experience this pain at the base of the thumb and wrist.

The formal name of this condition is deQuervain’s tenosynovitis - an irritation, swelling and thickening of the tendons and/or the tendon sheaths that surround the thumb and wrist. Repetitive movements and sustained splaying of the thumb away from the hand when picking up or holding a baby causes irritation or constriction of the tendons, resulting in swelling. This swelling can cause pain, tenderness, and limited movement around the thumb and wrist.

So why are new mothers, especially breastfeeding mothers, more at risk for this unique pain?

Mothers tend to pick up their babies with wide-open thumbs when lifting, and when breastfeeding, the wrist and thumb positions used to support the newborn’s head can abnormally stress the tendon sheath. Doing this repeatedly is what leads to New Mommy’s Thumb. There may also be a hormonal component (possibly related to prolactin) involved which explains why some women develop antepartum symptoms.

What are the symptoms?

- Pain and/or swelling at the base of the thumb
- Difficulty moving the thumb into a splayed position, or pain with grasping or pinching motions
- A stiffening or catching sensation with certain thumb or wrist movements
- Pain and/or swelling at the base of the thumb

Tips to relieve the pain:

- Use good body mechanics when picking up the baby/child. Instead of picking baby up from under the arms, place one palm underneath the head and the other underneath the baby’s bottom. Keep both palms up.
- Use a pillow to support the baby’s head when breastfeeding
- Hold the baby with the unaffected hand or try switching hands more frequently. However, Mommy’s Thumb can affect both hands.
- Ice, rest and anti-inflammatory medication
- Try to limit smartphone use. These repetitive movements can aggravate an existing condition and prevent healing
- If no improvement, seek medical or physiotherapy treatment

Medical or Complementary Therapies

- Immobilizing the thumb and/or wrist by taping or using a thumb spica splint (not a wrist splint) to ensure rest of the tendons.
- Acupuncture or other modalities may help decrease the inflammation and encourage faster tendon healing.
- Education on movements and positions to avoid or eliminate the repetitive strain
- Exercises to strengthen the wrist and thumb to speed return to function and to avoid repeat occurrences

If symptoms persist, corticosteroid injections may provide relief and, rarely, surgery may be recommended.

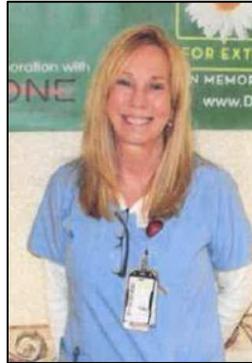
References:

[Issacs JE, \(2021\). New mother's thumb. *Contemporary OB/GYN Journal*, Vol 66 No 6, Volume 66, Issue 06, pp.48-50.](#)

SPOTLIGHT ON PRACTICE

This column is for lactation practitioners and facilities who wish to acknowledge the work of others. We invite you to submit suggested practitioners or facilities you would like to spotlight. If you have a suggestion, email education@medela.com.

*This month we are spotlighting Jeri Eichhammer, RN, BSN, IBCLC
Peachtree City, GA*



“If it sounds too good to be true, let me assure you that it isn’t. There is a super medicine that exists. It has been my life’s mission to help as many babies as I can to receive this life-altering substance. My name is Jeri Eichhammer, RN, BSN, IBCLC, and that super medicine is breast milk.”

Jeri Eichhammer’s introduction speaks for itself – and for her passion for what she does! As a graduate of the Medical College of Georgia and a NICU nurse for over 20 years, Jeri began her healthcare career by witnessing firsthand the life-altering, life-saving, and transformative effects of breast milk on the premature infants she worked with every day. She also witnessed how beneficial mother’s own milk was for healthy, term infants that she encountered, and became interested in the benefits of breastfeeding. Jeri began independently studying the latest science and research findings, all of which backed breast milk feeding for mothers and babies and shared the wide-reaching benefits of breastfeeding.

It was then that Jeri decided to take the next step in her healthcare career by becoming an IBCLC to further help educate the moms she works with, while sharing the advantages of breastfeeding for both mom and baby and helping them navigate any early nursing or pumping challenges they may encounter. Jeri began working as a lactation consultant at Atlanta Medical Center Hospital and then transitioned to Emory University Hospital, where she continues to proudly serve mothers, babies, families, and patients.

Additionally, Jeri is an instructor for the EPIC Program from the American Academy of Pediatrics, which offers peer-to-peer breastfeeding education to residency programs, nursing schools, hospitals, and physicians’ offices to help educate healthcare professionals, emphasize the advantages of breastfeeding, and share current standards for encouraging, promoting, and supporting breastfeeding among their patients. She has also participated in *Music in the NICU*, a

published research project, as well as key SIDS research with the American Academy of Pediatrics.

Jeri's passion for helping families learn about the benefits of breastfeeding so they can make informed and educated decisions around feeding their baby – and her expertise in caring for premature infants – has resulted in being nominated for March of Dimes' Nurse of the Year, receiving multiple Daisy Awards for nursing, and acting as Chairperson for her facility's CNAC (neonatal action) committee, which brings family-centered care to their unit. She has also helped organize several health fairs and conferences targeting healthcare peers and the local community to increase visibility of her hospital system.

Like all of us, Jeri believes that every baby deserves the best start in life, and she looks forward to continuing to help her littlest patients get a strong, healthy beginning. When she's not working, Jeri can be found on the tennis court, hiking or biking on a nearby trail, or spending quality time with her family. Thank you, Jeri, for all that you do!