

Human Milk Insights

May 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.

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Happy Spring!

FEATURED STORIES THIS MONTH

NEWS YOU CAN USE

- Human Milk and Breast Health
- Human Milk and Research
- Human Milk and Maternal Health
- Human Milk and Breastfeeding Support
- Human Milk and COVID-19
- Organizational Statements and Resources Regarding COVID-19

HUMAN MILK EDUCATION

- Human Milk Monthly Webinar Series
- COVID-19 Information Website
- Professional Resources
- New Medela YouTube Channel
- Dr. Paula Meier Video Series

CLINICAL PEARLS IN LACTATION

- Pregnant and Nursing: Should Breastfeeding Continue?

TOOLS YOU CAN USE

- What's New with WIC Online Breastfeeding Support?

SPOTLIGHT ON PRACTICE

Irene M. Zoppi, RN, MSN, IBCLC

NEWS YOU CAN USE

HUMAN MILK AND BREAST HEALTH

Exploring the Efficacy of Comprehensive Management of Breast Abscesses in Restoring Milk Volume

Gao Haifeng, MM.../April 2021

Examination of the variation in milk volume collected in an abscessed breast compared with a healthy breast and impact on milk volume given interventions and management

<https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/08903344211005400>

HUMAN MILK AND RESEARCH

In Vitro Stimulation of Whole Milk Specimens: A Field-Friendly Method to Assess Milk Immune Activity

Katherine Wander, MPH, PhD.../March 2021

Understanding of milk immunity activity is critical for research in this area. This study characterizes protocols, such as inflammatory pattern identification, for milk immunity research.

<https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/0890334421999628>

HUMAN MILK AND MATERNAL HEALTH

Antiemetics and Breastfeeding

Philip O. Anderson/ April 2021

Review of widely used antiemetics, commonly used for various reasons and use while breastfeeding

https://www.liebertpub.com/doi/10.1089/bfm.2021.0072?utm_source=Adestra&utm_medium=email&utm_term=&utm_content=read1&utm_campaign=BFM%20FP%20APR%205%202021

HUMAN MILK AND BREASTFEEDING SUPPORT

Prenatal Provider Breastfeeding Toolkit: Results of a Pilot to Increase Women's Prenatal Breastfeeding Support, Intentions, and Outcomes

Casey Rosen-Carole, MDMPH.../April 2021

Investigation into changes in referrals of education and support resources and impact on outcomes

<https://doi.org/10.1177/08903344211008797>

HUMAN MILK AND COVID-19

SARS-CoV-2-Specific Antibodies in Breast Milk After COVID-19 Vaccination of Breastfeeding Women

Sivan Haia Perl, MD.../April, 2021

Examination of breast milk from COVID-19 vaccinated women and antibodies present weeks after vaccination

https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jama/fullarticle/2778766?questAccessKey=4b0b3233-98c9-4991-aa80-76ae299a49bf&utm_source=silverchair&utm_campaign=jama_network&utm_content=covid_weekly_highlights&utm_medium=email&

ORGANIZATIONAL STATEMENTS AND RESOURCES REGARDING COVID-19

NPA: The National Perinatal Association

Released a training course providing education to those supporting pregnant and birthing women through the pandemic.

<https://www.myperinatalnetwork.org/new-covid-19.html?eType=EmailBlastContent&eld=23715b63-126f-4e0d-8516-5e85bcb92b39>

CDC: The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Launched an updated tool for participants who are pregnant at the time of vaccination (or shortly after vaccination) to collect information and guide future CDC and FDA recommendations regarding pregnancy and COVID-19 vaccination.

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/safety/vsafepregnancyregistry.html?eType=EmailBlastContent&eld=23715b63-126f-4e0d-8516-5e85bcb92b39>

BREASTFEEDING SUPPORT

Original Research

Breastfeeding During a Pandemic: The Influence of COVID-19 on Lactation Services in the Northeastern United States

Jennifer Schindler-Ruwisch DrPH.../March 2021 Prospective survey to investigate pandemic influence on breastfeeding support services and telehealth services

<https://doi.org/10.1177%2F08903344211003898>

HUMAN MILK EDUCATION

Webinars

Breast milk initiation and breastfeeding has changed drastically over the last year due to the effects of COVID-19 on our hospital systems, our healthcare professionals and breastfeeding families. Join us for a series of thought leadership-based webinars designed to raise awareness of COVID-19 and breastfeeding and the impact of the coronavirus on breast milk initiation. Each month, we'll learn about areas of breastfeeding research from leading human milk researchers and clinicians to better understand these dynamic changes, current research and findings, and where we go from here. The next webinar in this five part series will be presented on Thursday, May 13th. [Nastassia Davis, DNP,](#)

[MSN, RN, IBCLC](#) will present her topic [What Now? The Impact of COVID on Human Lactation in the Black Community.](#)

Complimentary registration is now open! For more information or to register, visit www.MedelaEducation.com.

On Wednesday, May 19th, [Rebecca Hoban, MD, MPH](#) will present her topic [Mother's Milk Markers: How do we Measure, Predict \(and Modify\) Lactation Success?](#)

Complimentary registration is now open! For more information or to register, visit www.MedelaEducation.com.

On Thursday, June 3rd, [Sharon Unger, MD](#) will present her topic [Is COVID-19 Transmitted Through Human Milk? Implications for Breastfeeding and Human Milk Banking Study.](#) This webinar is the 5th

and final webinar in the webinar series titled Breastfeeding Initiation in Crisis: The Aftereffects of COVID-19. Complimentary registration is now open! For more information or to register, visit www.MedelaEducation.com.

COVID-19 Information Website

Medela invites you to see a brand-new dedicated webpage for healthcare professionals on the global impact of COVID-19 on breastfeeding. It contains a lot of resources, important facts and figures from research, and educational materials for professionals.

www.medela.com/breastfeedingduringcovid

Professional Resources

We are happy to announce several of our resources for professionals have been updated and are now available on our website. Our [Providing Mothers' Own Milk to Infants at Risk](#) and the [Understanding Donor Human Milk](#) flashcards have been updated and moved from a printed piece to a convenient pdf version. These flashcards

were developed in partnership with Dr. Paula Meier. They provide standardized messaging, supporting evidence and original research citations.

Our [Sore Nipple Management](#) Tear Sheets as well as our [Breast Engorgement](#) Tear Sheets have been updated and moved from a printed piece to a convenient pdf version. Both tear sheets are available in English and Spanish.

The [Right Technology Wheel](#) is now available in an electronic format. You can click on the image to move the wheel to the timeframe of lactation that your patient is in. This wheel is also still available in hardcopy. To get your sample of the wheel, email education@medela.com.

Medela YouTube Channel

Medela is happy to announce our new YouTube channel for [Lactation Professionals!](#) Professionals can now access Medela in-servicing and instructional videos on YouTube in a format tailored specifically for the healthcare professional. Select patient education, including the newly released breastfeeding series with lactation consultant and midwife, Katie James, IBCLC, has also been included. Each video includes a short description and relevant links to the product page on medela.us.
<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCONXFpEp4zbKNZEQHroMHTQ/featured>

Let's Talk about Breastfeeding, The Early Days: A Video Series with Paula Meier, PhD, RN

Medela is excited to introduce a six video series chat with Paula Meier, PhD, RN that focuses on breastfeeding during the first two weeks after birth. A practitioner and researcher in the field of human milk, lactation and breastfeeding for nearly 50 years, Dr. Meier draws on her extensive

experience to emphasize that reaching the end of the first two weeks after birth with a good milk supply is the best prediction that mothers will be able to breastfeed for the weeks and months to come. Directed to the mother in easy to understand language, the video series provides information to support mothers in achieving their personal breastfeeding goals. Dr. Meier discusses why the first two weeks are important, key tips for getting breastfeeding off to a good start and helpful solutions to overcome mother/baby conditions that can cause breastfeeding problems. The videos are available on the Medela YouTube Channels: [Medela for Lactation Professionals](#) and [Medela USA](#).

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.

Pregnant and Nursing: Should Breastfeeding Continue?

When a mother who has been comfortably nursing her baby for several months suddenly complains of extremely sore nipples, several things could be the culprit. It's usually not positioning at the breast, as that was worked out weeks ago. It could be thrush, the return of menses, or sometimes the reason for suddenly sore nipples is because the mother is pregnant.

It's not unusual to hear a nursing mother say now that she's pregnant, she has been told that she should wean her baby as soon as possible. They give numerous reasons – it will cause a miscarriage, it will take important nutrients away from the fetus, that the mother's health will suffer, etc. The problem is that for a normal, healthy pregnancy, none of these reasons is based on evidence. There are very few studies that have looked at breastfeeding through a pregnancy, and most of those that have studied it have not shown an increase in adverse outcomes .

One of the biggest concerns about nursing while pregnant is the fear that breastfeeding will cause a miscarriage. It's known that breastfeeding causes the release of oxytocin, oxytocin causes uterine contractions, and the fear is that those contractions may cause a miscarriage or preterm labor. However, there are very few oxytocin receptors in the muscle of the uterus in early pregnancy; their numbers increase dramatically in late gestation and especially immediately before labor. In a healthy, low-risk pregnancy, there is no need to wean a nursing. Each mother should talk with her physician or midwife and make the decision through shared decision-making.

Many nursing infants wean themselves during pregnancy because the milk changes taste and the volume decreases as the pregnancy progresses. Interestingly, the milk converts back to colostrum before the new baby is born. Therefore, it's important that the new baby take his turn at nursing first in order to get the most benefit from the colostrum.

Counseling the mother who desires to continue breastfeeding through a pregnancy should include info on diet, rest, and her feelings about nursing while pregnant and possibly breastfeeding two babies after the birth. It can certainly be done and some mothers love tandem nursing, whereas others may find it overwhelming. In any case, she'll need the support of her healthcare provider through whatever decision she makes. If she decides to continue, it is important that she pay attention to her diet as her nutritional status is key to adequate growth of her fetus.

Every mother needs to make an informed decision regarding nursing through a pregnancy and healthcare providers need to counsel their patients based on current clinical evidence. For most nursing mothers who are pregnant, they can continue to enjoy the breastfeeding relationship with their little ones for as long as they desire to do so.

Reference:

Cetin I, et.al. Breastfeeding during pregnancy: position paper of the Italian Society of Perinatal Medicine and the Task Force on Breastfeeding, Ministry of Health, Italy. *J Hum Lact.* 2014 Feb;30(1):20-7. doi: 10.1177/0890334413514294. Epub 2013 Dec 4. PMID: 24305595.

TOOLS YOU CAN USE

What's New with WIC Online Breastfeeding Support?

Have you been searching for an educational platform to supplement breastfeeding teaching for your perinatal patients, especially while we are still separated due to the pandemic? If so, WIC has an updated website that may very well fit your needs.

On the homepage of the website, there is a short video with women and babies from various ethnic groups introducing the format and talking about the breastfeeding journey, the ups and downs, the accomplishments and frustrations, and how WIC is there to help. They discuss Four Stages of Breastfeeding: *Learn, Start, Overcome, and Thrive*, and the tagline, “Learn together, grow together”, empowers women who may be lacking confidence that they’ll meet their breastfeeding goals.

The website is easy to navigate and mothers can find helpful topics according to which of the four stages they are currently in:

- The *Learn* section has numerous topics that will support your prenatal teaching. From benefits of breastfeeding for mothers and babies to setting goals, from planning the birth and hospital experience to getting help from WIC during pregnancy and breastfeeding, there’s a lot of information that will help new mothers prepare for life with a new baby.
- The first few days with a new baby are covered in *Start* and may help supplement your in-hospital teaching and discharge planning.
- *Overcome* addresses the fact that sometimes breastfeeding can be overwhelming and challenges may arise. Lots of topics and several videos give support and offer solutions.
- The *Thrive* section acknowledges the fact that mothers who continue to breastfeed and have experienced both the challenges and rewards of breastfeeding are often the best source of support for other mothers. There’s information on how to become a WIC Peer Counselor and topics covering the end of the breastfeeding journey.

Additional sections on the website cover fundamental breastfeeding topics in the section Breastfeeding 101; other topics are covered in the sections Common Questions and Challenges, Expressing and Pumping Milk and Going Back to Work.

Dads and grandparents are not left out – there are separate sections with topics to help them be more supportive and encouraging of breastfeeding. Each section includes a short video for each with real fathers and grandmothers answering common questions.

Partnering with WIC is an excellent choice when it comes to supporting women, infants and children. The program offers a wealth of support, information, and nutritional packages to improve health outcomes. Check out the website: <https://wicbreastfeeding.fns.usda.gov/> and see what they have to offer!

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 Irene M. Zoppi, RN, MSN, IBCLC
Boston, MA*

The interview was conducted and written by Irene's children, Gerald and Christina.

After nearly twenty-two years, Irene Zoppi will be retiring from Medela, LLC as the Senior Manager for Clinical Education. A perinatal nurse, lactation consultant, and former officer in the US Army Nurse Corps, Irene leaves behind a legacy of educating Medela employees, bedside clinicians, and lactating parents about the value of human milk.

Compassionate, ambitious and intelligent describe our mother. We knew her to wear many hats; mother, wife, daughter, sister, aunt, Girl Scout Troup leader, personal chef to her family, teller of bedtime stories, editor of many college papers, nurse, and educator. We knew she was a real-life superhero. For the last several years at Medela, Irene interviewed and chronicled the professional stories of several lactation consultants. As our mother finally prepares to hang up a few hats with her retirement, we wanted to honor her by letting her share her own story; a career fulfilled.

Here is our interview and our mother's story.

How did you know that you wanted to work in healthcare?

My older sister was a nurse; I saw her love of caring for people and wanted to emulate her.

Did you have any heroes/role models?

My mother has always been my personal role model. She was an accomplished pianist, who never met a piano she didn't like and the last person to leave a party. As a young military wife, she accompanied her husband and small children to many parts of the globe. The greatest gifts she gave me were how to parent, love my children, how to support my husband, and enjoy life.

You have always instilled in us a strong work ethic. Where does this principle come from?

My parents lived through the Great Depression. I saw how hard they worked to pave a better life for their four children.

You chose to focus your nursing career on new family health. How did that evolve?

I absolutely fell in love with my first nursing assistant job on a maternity unit. I saw how I could assist new families by combining physical care and teaching.

Can you tell us about your decision to go into the military and how that experience has shaped you?

My family consisted of many military veterans. I shared their love of country and wanted to do something meaningful to 'give back'. I was able to obtain a scholarship in the Army Student Nurse program and my father, a retired Naval officer, was able to deliver my commission into the Army.

What led to your decision to pursue higher education?

Neither of my parents were formally educated. It was never a question *if* my siblings and I would go to college, but *where* would we go. Living in the Boston area, we were able to live at home and commute to local colleges/universities. All of us have earned advanced degrees in our fields.

Tell us what led you to work for Medela?

I wanted to blend my passion for assisting breastfeeding families and education. Medela's mission and destiny to support breastfeeding families resonated with my beliefs. .

You have worked for Medela for over twenty years, what has been your favorite part of your position?

Developing learning modules for bedside clinicians that would enhance their knowledge of human milk and would change practice.

What do you anticipate will be the hardest part of retiring?

Leaving my Medela friends; we have become a family!

What has been the most rewarding experience so far in your life?

Honestly, my role as a wife and mother!!!

What do you value most and why?

This is a simple question to answer: I value spending time with my family.

What are your plans for your future?

I want to stay active, physically and mentally. I'll continue a daily workout routine, take up rowing, eliminate weeds from my garden, read more novels, improve my knitting skills, spend more time with my family and relax by the Atlantic Ocean.

Who at Medela would you want to recognize for helping in your success?

There are so many people to acknowledge but I'll start with the senior management team who had the foresight to carve out an Education department, my former manager, and Kim Colburn, the present Education and Program Manager - who really is the 'person behind the curtain.'

We would like to thank the wonderful and generous people at Medela for allowing us to conduct this interview to honor our mother and her legacy.

Gerald and Christina Zoppi