

Project Breastmilk Santa encourages moms to donate breastmilk

The South African Breastmilk Reserve (SABR) has launched a Festive Season initiative: Project Breastmilk Santa, which encourages mothers to get into the spirit of giving by donating surplus breastmilk to premature babies in neonatal intensive care units at hospitals around the country.



© miraniska – [123RF.com](https://www.123RF.com)

"Each mother that breastfeeds can give a free and extremely valuable gift to other babies too - a gift of life," says Stasha Jordan, breastfeeding activist and executive director of SABR. "We encourage as many mothers as possible to get festive for a good reason by participating in the Project Breastmilk Santa competition on Facebook."

Launched on World Prematurity Day, 17 November 2015, the project calls breastfeeding mothers to donate their breastmilk and take a 'Santa selfie' with their own baby. These selfies will be posted onto the Facebook page using the hashtag #breastmilksanta and one lucky mother will win a prize to the value of R3000 for most creative post in celebration of this day.

One in ten babies around the world is born premature - about 15 million babies every year. "Eighty percent of pre-term births occur between 32 and 37 weeks of gestation. These low-weight babies don't have the strength to breastfeed from their mothers but still urgently require the perfect combination of nutrients contained in breastmilk to gain strength and fight any possible infections they are vulnerable to."

According to the World Health Organisation, pre-term babies who lack a breastmilk diet are at risk of contracting necrotising enterocolitis (a digestion and intestine related condition). "If premature babies are fed anything other than breastmilk, it can seriously damage the inner lining of their gut and cause intestinal complications. The good news is we can feed donated breastmilk to premature and low-weight babies through a tube or cup. Breastmilk plays a key role in promoting the overall health of neonates and helps with the development of the immune system. ICU Couriers proudly supports us in this initiative," concludes Jordan.

For more information, go to www.sabr.org.za.

For more, visit: <https://www.bizcommunity.com>