

## **New Website Offers Lifesaving SPIN for Tiny Infants**

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UC San Diego Medical Center recently launched a website dedicated to offering families and the medical community valuable information about the best way to provide human milk to premature and underweight infants. The website was developed with a \$10,000 grant from The March of Dimes-San Diego chapter.

"One of the goals of this website is to help fellow hospitals adapt our model of human milk nutrition in their own neonatal intensive care units," said Jae Kim, MD, PhD, medical director of the Supporting Premature Infant Nutrition Program (SPIN) at UC San Diego Medical Center. "Since the implementation of our feeding protocols, we have seen rates of human milk feeding go up by 15 percent. We'd love to see this become a nationwide trend."

Infants born prematurely sometimes develop an infection called necrotizing enterocolitis (NEC), the most common life-threatening gastrointestinal emergency in the newborn period. NEC causes intense inflammation and acute intestinal necrosis or death, compromising one to five percent of all NICU admissions and affecting 10 percent of infants born at less than three pounds. Before the SPIN program started, the rate of NEC at UCSD Medical Center was 5.8 percent; last year it was less than 1 percent.

The SPIN program at UCSD Medical Center is focused on the provision, analysis, and research of human milk to improve nutritional and neurodevelopmental outcomes in preterm babies. The program is believed to be the first of its kind in the United States.

Resources and tools available on the website include feeding tables, milk calculators, human milk donor consent forms, and nutrition discharge plans. Resources specific to moms include bilingual handouts on the importance of human milk for premature infants, feeding plans, nipple shield information, and logs to track milk production and feedings.

"We thank the March of Dimes for their support in helping to create this website," said Lisa Stellwagen, MD, lactation medical director of SPIN. "We are especially grateful to the March of Dimes supporters whose donations make this grant possible."

The SPIN website may be accessed at: <http://health.ucsd.edu/women/spin/>

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