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## Breast Milk Collection and Storage in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit: Nurses? Knowledge, Practice, and Perceived Barriers

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**Abstract:** Background: Temporary storage of human milk under appropriate conditions encourages prolonged breastfeeding. Purpose: This study aimed to assess neonatal nurses? knowledge and practice, as well as barriers, related to breast milk collection and storage and to investigate the association between nurses? knowledge and practice and other variables. Method: A cross-sectional design was used. Consecutive samplings of 75 nurses were recruited. The questions were based on a literature review of guidelines for collecting and storing breast milk from various sources, such as the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Academy of Breastfeeding Medicine. Results: Nurses? knowledge and practice of breast milk collection and storage were adequate in general, but inadequate in relation to issues such as discarding breast milk, the thawing process, and storage temperatures. Poor practices related to absence of required equipment and unit policy. Barriers were increased workload, inappropriate milk room (i.e., a small room with uncomfortable chairs and no privacy), inactive policy, and inadequate time. Conclusion: Nurses should be orientated to the guidelines and a unit policy to enhance evidence-based practice.