

Medela's 2025 Global Breastfeeding & Lactation Symposium Series Unites Experts Across Three Continents to Advance Maternal and Infant Health

The 17th edition of the renowned series convenes international researchers and healthcare providers, sharing new insights in lactation science, neonatal care, and human milk research

Baar, Switzerland – November 20, 2025 – [Medela](#), a global leader in breast milk and healthcare technology, continues its legacy of advancing lactation science and clinical education through its **2025 Global Breastfeeding & Lactation Symposium Series**, convening over 20 research institutions, 24 expert lecturers and more than 5,000 healthcare professionals across China, the United States, and Europe.

Since 2006, Medela's Global Symposiums have brought together the world's foremost researchers, clinicians, and policymakers to share academic insights and help translate science into practice, deepening understanding of breast milk composition and lactation physiology, improving hospital protocols, and advancing maternal and neonatal health outcomes.

"At Medela, our mission has always been to unite science, compassion, and innovation to improve lives, and these symposiums embody that purpose," said **Thomas Golücke, CEO of Medela**. "Across every continent, one truth unites the conversations from Shanghai to Chicago to Lisbon: when science and care come together, lives change. By bringing together leading minds from every corner of the world, we help turn evidence into action and create a network of facilitators to support mothers and new families and help their babies to benefit from the best possible start in life."

Professor Donna Geddes, Director of the Geddes Hartmann Human Lactation Research Group at the University of Western Australia adds, "Lactation science remains a niche and often overlooked field, and despite its profound impact on human health, we know surprisingly little about a process that is so fundamental to life. Human milk lays the foundation for a healthy start in life and may even hold answers to preventing or treating other illnesses. Advancing this science requires ongoing research, but just as importantly, collaboration to ensure discoveries truly reach mothers and babies. When researchers, clinicians, and industry leaders like Medela come together, we strive to accelerate progress from the lab bench to the bedside."

Professor Geddes is an internationally recognized lactation scientist who was a distinguished speaker at the global symposium series, connecting with healthcare professionals in-person and virtually, sharing important research that Medela has helped fund for decades in partnership with The University of Western Australia.

This year's symposium series kicked off in Shanghai, China in May, where more than 3,400 participants, both in-person and online, came together for a dynamic exchange of research and practice under the theme "Improving Lactation Support, Turning Science into Care".

Hosted by Professor Zhang Huayan, Director of Pediatrics at Guangzhou Women and Children's Medical Center, and Professor Zhang Ting, Director of Digestive Infection at Shanghai Children's Hospital, the event featured eight distinguished speakers from the region and beyond who explored topics spanning the physiology of lactation, identification and management of lactation risk factors, and clinical best practices. Key findings were later shared at national academic meetings including the China Nursing Association Annual

meeting, Beijing Nursing Annual Meeting, and Jiangsu Breastfeeding Annual meeting, continuing to guide and educate healthcare professionals beyond the symposium.

Continuing the series in Chicago, home to Medela U.S., more than 600 healthcare professionals gathered in-person and virtually in September for two days of collaboration focused on “Empowering Perinatal Teams.” The U.S. symposium highlighted cutting-edge data on human milk composition, maternal lactation physiology, and neonatal nutrition, along with practical frameworks to support equitable, evidence-based lactation care.

On the second day, participants joined interactive workshops where they sat down with experts and fellow lactation specialists to address current neonatal challenges and discuss ways to strengthen hospital protocols that support mothers and infants and facilitate parent-centered care. These sessions fostered open dialogue, practical problem-solving, and collaboration across disciplines.

The location provided not only a central meeting point for clinicians across America to gather, but also close proximity to the Mothers’ Milk Bank of the Western Great Lakes, the region’s only non-profit milk bank, providing pasteurized donor human milk to premature and critically ill babies, distributing donor milk to outpatients, and supporting donor families, including those who are donating after loss. Attendees were invited behind the scenes to see how the milk bank’s team delivers the lifesaving gift of donor human milk to the most vulnerable infants. Medela has been a proud partner and supporter of the Milk Bank since the beginning of this year, exemplifying Medela’s commitment to advancing research, supporting families, and strengthening the integrated care system around mothers, babies, and healthcare professionals.

“Human milk is not only nutrition, but also medicine, particularly for this fragile population,” said **Professor Sertaç Arslanoğlu, MD, Professor of Pediatrics and Neonatal Medicine at Istanbul Medeniyet University and former President of the European Milk Bank Association.** “To unlock its full potential, we must ensure an equitable access to human milk across NICUs. That begins with promoting and supporting lactation to help parents understand and achieve full mother’s own milk as a priority and then integrating donor human milk as a complement for mothers who have not yet established lactation. Achieving this goal requires not only clinical implementation, but supportive policies and regulations that make donor human milk accessible and safe. By strengthening the recognition of human milk and ensuring the integration of human milk banks into health care practices, we can ensure that even the most vulnerable newborns have an equitable access to the lifesaving and health promoting power of human milk.”

Medela’s final Symposium of the year was hosted in Lisbon, Portugal, in November, bringing together more than 1,000 maternal and infant health professionals in-person and virtually from across the globe, with a strong presence from Europe, for two days of scientific exchange and inspiration. The European edition’s theme expanded on the subject tackled in the U.S Symposium – “Empowering Perinatal Teams.” In Lisbon, Medela, global renowned experts, and healthcare providers shared new scientific evidence on novel advances in neonatal care and optimizing mother’s own milk volumes in at-risk populations. Participants exchanged best practices to bridge the gap toward 100% human milk and breastfeeding beyond discharge, and discussed approaches to strengthen lactation, breastfeeding, and parent-centered care within perinatal teams across Europe and beyond.

Additionally, during the two-day event, Medela announced the expert jury members **Elizabeth Franklin, International Confederation of Midwives (ICM), Dina Hediger, Frühchen Schweiz, Rose Horton, NotOnMyWatch and Association of Women's Health, Obstetric and Neonatal Nurses (AWHONN), Teresa Johnson, University of Wisconsin, Association of Perinatal Care, and AWHONN, and Sharon Perella, University of Western Australia**, who will review applications for a CHF 20,000 research contribution as part of Medela's '[With You, Every Step of the Way](#)' initiative. The research contribution will support a project delivering real-world, evidence-based interventions to strengthen breastfeeding ecosystems in diverse communities, reflecting Medela's mission to turn science into care and shared progress. The research contribution will be awarded in 2026.

Among featured sessions, **Prof. Paula Meier, from Rush University Medical Center**, shared new findings on lactation physiology and secretory activation, the transition from colostrum to mature milk, and the importance of prioritizing early milk production in all mothers, especially those with preterm or medically fragile infants. "Understanding the complex lactation physiology during this early postpartum window provides the opportunity to design, test and evaluate evidence-based interventions that optimize milk provision throughout the NICU hospitalization," said **Prof. Meier**. "Leveraging the biology of this critical time frame ushers in a new era of replacing the generic recommendation for 'extra maternal support' with specific diagnostics, toolkits and algorithms."

Over the course of 2025, Medela's Global Symposium Series engaged more than 5,000 clinicians and healthcare professionals worldwide, translating science into tangible improvements in care for mothers and infants. By convening experts across continents, Medela continues to bridge research and real-world care, strengthen the protocols for breastfeeding support and maternal-infant health, while reaffirming that human milk is one of the most powerful interventions in medicine.

Presentations from speakers will be available free of charge for virtual access through [Medela University](#), an online professional education platform for lactation science offering continuing education units (CEUs) and Continuing Professional Development (CPD) points.

In addition, Medela regularly hosts educational webinars to translate existing breastfeeding and lactation research findings into clinical practice and share important conclusions and expert recommendations: [Free Courses & Webinars on Breastfeeding | Medela](#)

Learn more about the Global Breastfeeding and Lactation Symposium at [Medela's Breastfeeding & Lactation Symposium Series 2025](#).

Additional downloadable visual assets are available via the [Symposium Medela media portal](#). For media inquiries, please contact the [Medela media office](#).

About Medela

Through advancing research, observing natural behavior and listening to our customers, Medela turns science into care while nurturing health for generations. Medela supports millions of moms, babies, patients and healthcare professionals in more than 100 countries all over the world. As the healthcare choice for more than 6 million hospitals and homes across the globe, Medela provides leading research-based breast milk feeding products, healthcare solutions for hospitals, and clinical education. Medela is dedicated to building better health outcomes, simplifying and improving life, and developing breakthroughs that help moms, babies and patients live their life to the fullest. For more information, visit [medela.com](https://www.medela.com).

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