

# Human milk and prevention of NEC in the NICU

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This lecture will review the literature on the benefits of human milk for sick babies in the NICU. Special attention will be given to preterm babies who are at risk of necrotizing enterocolitis, and we will discuss how and why human milk may help to prevent this condition. We will also examine the results of studies using human milk to prevent necrotising enterocolitis, as well as real life experience in centres that have adopted this strategy. Specifically, this strategy has reduced the incidence of NEC in Canada by more than 50 % during the past three years. In addition, the introduction of an evidence-based practice for improving quality (EPIQ) approach together with a family integrated care (FiCARE) programme has improved breastfeeding rates by more than 80 %, while decreasing mortality and morbidity.