

UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS

AMHERST

Recruiting Lactating Women with Breast Cancer

to Donate Breastmilk

Researchers at UMass Amherst are analyzing breastmilk from women with **postpartum breast cancer** OR who are **undergoing a breast-biopsy**. The IRB-approved study involves analysis of epithelial cells in the donated milk. A system is in place for shipment of milk samples from across the US to UMass. We are asking you to help by passing our contact information and/or brochures to applicable patients.

**BreastmilkResearch.org - Kathleen Arcaro - (413) 577-1823 - breastmilk@umass.edu**

This project was developed by Drs. Kathleen Arcaro and Brian Pentecost. It is funded by the Breast Cancer Research Program (BCRP). The formal project title is *Non-Invasive Assessment of Lactating Breasts Using Somatic Mutations and DNA Methylation as a Pre-Symptomatic Test for BRCA Breast Cancer*.

The main target population of the project is high-risk asymptomatic women who are nursing, specifically women who have tested positive for a pathogenic *BRCA* mutation. The sloughed epithelial cells present in the milk is examined for DNA methylation and somatic mutations to uncover profiles identifying breasts at increased risk of breast disease, as well as to shed light on breast cancer development. These women are being recruited through social media (though we welcome direct introductions).

We are also recruiting women who have a post-partum diagnosis of breast cancer, OR are undergoing a biopsy and are able to donate a breastmilk sample. This group will establish a reference cancer profile. This is necessary because the study participants who are asymptomatic *BRCA*-carriers are likely to seek mastectomies after completing their families to avoid cancer development.

We are asking for your help specifically in recruiting **women who have a post-partum diagnosis of breast cancer**, OR are **undergoing a biopsy** and are able to donate a breastmilk sample. **These women are not required to be *BRCA* mutation carriers or to be aware of their *BRCA* status.**

We hope to convert the findings into a screen for assessing current breast cancer during lactation, a period for which current screening methods are either not usable or are not fully effective, in addition to gaining further understanding of the development of *BRCA-*related breast cancers.

**Post-Partum Breast Cancer Breastmilk Study**

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