

Breast milk study published by professor

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Ask an expert to list the substances in breast milk that make it the ideal food for newborns and you may hear about proteins that guard against infection, fats that aid in the development of the nervous system and carbohydrates that promote the growth of healthy bacteria.

But you may not hear too much about the nitrite and nitrate in breast milk and their contributions to developing gastrointestinal, immune and cardiovascular systems.

Michigan State University researcher Norm Hord is the lead author of a study that showed that the levels of nitrite and nitrate in breast milk change during the initial days after birth, which the scientists argue is to accommodate the changing physiologic requirements of developing [babies](#).

Although the nitrite and nitrate composition of [breast milk](#) has been previously reported, this is the first study to demonstrate the changing levels of nitrite and nitrate early on. Hord's results are published in the online version of Breastfeeding Medicine, the journal of the *Academy of Breastfeeding Medicine*.

“Contrary to the prevailing scientific opinion about the biological effects of nitrite and nitrate, our data support the view that humans may require these dietary components from birth - from nature's most perfect food,” said Hord, who is an MSU associate professor of food science and human nutrition.

The study, which was a collaboration between MSU and the University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston, received support from the American Heart Association and Michigan Agricultural Experiment Station.

Provided by Michigan State University

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