

Moms give milk for premature babies

About 500 mothers have called the Shanghai Children's Hospital to offer breast milk after the hospital said its supplies could run out within a week, a hospital official told Shanghai Daily yesterday.

The city's first "breast milk bank" was established at the hospital eight months ago for premature babies, for whom breast milk is vital.

The hospital said it has collected more than 470 liters of milk over the past eight months and serves an average 13 premature babies a day at 2-3 liters a day.

But the hospital now only has about 20 liters as the cold discourages volunteers from going to hospital to donate.

"Thanks to positive reactions from the mothers, we believe that the bank will be filled up again very soon," said a doctor surnamed Pan who is responsible for taking calls from interested mothers.

Pan said first-time donors must undergo a blood test before donating. They can then express milk at home and freeze it. It is also possible to donate fresh at the hospital. Pan told Shanghai Daily that this bank also serves babies born at other hospitals, but so far there has only been one request.

"Parents of babies born in other hospitals have to come to us every day to get fresh milk, which could be a trouble for them," she said. Interested mothers can call 18017329172 and talk to Doctor Pan.