



# THE BRITISH DIETETIC ASSOCIATION

*The Professional Association for Registered Dietitians*  
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# M e d i a R e l e a s e

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Embargoed until Thursday 16 June 2005

## THE BRITISH DIETETIC ASSOCIATION AWARD

Southampton-based senior dietitian Anita Emm will be awarded the prestigious Research Award at The British Dietetic Association Awards Ceremony on 15 June 2005 in Cardiff. This award will enable Anita to explore the possibility of giving modified mother's milk as the basis of the feed for a group of infants who have undergone corrective heart surgery and would otherwise need a special formula.

Anita is a senior dietitian working in paediatric intensive care and the Regional Paediatric Cardiology Unit at Southampton General Hospitals (Southampton University Hospitals NHS Trust). She has been working in paediatric dietetics for over 10 years.

It is well recognised that breast milk is the ideal feed for infants. Wherever possible dietitians encourage mothers to continue to provide breast milk for sick infants too. For one group of post-surgical babies, traditional management means that they are unable to continue to have their mother's milk. During corrective cardiac surgery, some small patients experience damage to the tiny vessels of the lymphatic system, which may result in accumulation of fat and protein-rich fluid (called "chyle") in the chest cavity. This condition is known as chylothorax. Since management of chylothorax relies on reducing the rate of flow through the lymphatic vessels, a very strict, six-week reduction of fat intake is usually the main approach to treatment. In babies, this fat restriction prevents them from receiving breast milk.

Says Anita: "*I have been frustrated at the need to suspend feeding with the mother's milk in infants who experience chylothorax post-surgery. This award will enable me to carry out vital research to examine whether it*

*is feasible and safe to use the mother's milk to feed these infants. This could have many benefits, such as the immunological benefits from breast milk"*

She added: *"This is a fantastic opportunity to get started on some research that I have been interested in for some time. Winning this award will really facilitate this and could lead on to something bigger and better."*

- Ends -

### **Notes to Editors**

1. The British Dietetic Association Awards ceremony will be held on Wednesday 15 June 2005 at The Thistle Hotel, Cardiff.
2. Further information on the conference and the awards ceremony is available from:  
  
Dr Frankie Phillips National PR Officer, The British Dietetic Association.  
Tel: 01626 362473, Mobile: 07958 715222, Email: [pr@bda.uk.com](mailto:pr@bda.uk.com)
3. The British Dietetic Association, founded in 1936, is the professional association for registered dietitians in Great Britain and Northern Ireland. It is the nation's largest organisation of food and nutrition professionals with over 5,000 members. About two-thirds of members are employed in the National Health Service. The remaining members work in education, industry, research, sport settings or freelance.

Registered dietitians hold the only legally-recognisable graduate qualification in nutrition and dietetics. They are experts in interpreting and translating the science of nutrition into practical ways of promoting nutritional well-being, disease treatment and the prevention of nutrition-related problems. Their advice is sound and based on current scientific evidence.

Registration, awarded by the Health Professionals Council, is an indication that a dietitian is fit to practise and is working within an agreed statement of conduct.

For further details about the British Dietetic Association, please visit our website: [www.bda.uk.com](http://www.bda.uk.com)

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