Suck It Up

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Got milk? The answer can now be a life-affirming yes for HIV positive mothers in developing countries who want to breast-feed their babies but avoid transmitting the virus. Thanks to a solar-powered Danish invention, breast milk can be made safe using an easy-to-learn pasteurizing process that deactivates not only HIV but disease-causing bacteria as well. At an estimated cost of only $100 annually, the gadget makes the possibility of nursing in HIV-plagued developing countries realistic, whereas the alternative for preventing mom-to-child transmission -- $6,000 to $12,000 worth of HAART for mothers annually -- is not. But there’s more! As an added bonus, the pasteurized breast milk retains the mother’s antibodies that are crucial for the infant’s growing immune defense. The solar device can also be used to purify water, helping eliminate the waterborne infections that kill many Third-World wees. Outside of adding solar-powered popcorn to the mix, you can’t beat it. Score three for the Danes.

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