



Jeb Bush
Governor

John O. Agwunobi, M.D., M.B.A., M.P.H.
Secretary

PINELLAS COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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World Breastfeeding Week is August 1 - 7
Babies Were Born to Be Breastfed

If you are a new mother or if you are expecting a baby, you need to know that **one of the best things that only you can do is to breastfeed your baby**. The U.S. Surgeon General recommends that babies be fed with breast milk only, no formula, for the first six months of life. It is even better for your baby to breastfeed for 12 months or longer – for as long as you and your baby wish.

Best for Baby

Breastfeeding is best for your baby because your breast milk has just the right amount of fat, sugar, water and protein that is needed for baby's growth and development.

Most babies find breast milk is easier to digest than formula. Breastfed babies tend to gain less unnecessary weight and to be leaner. This may result in being less overweight in later life. Did you know that breastfed babies also have higher IQ's? Breast milk has antibodies in it to help protect infants from bacteria and viruses and to help them fight off infection and disease.

Best for You

Breastfeeding is best for you because it saves time and it's free! You do not have to purchase, measure and mix formula, and there are no bottles to warm in the middle of the night. Breastfeeding also helps you bond with your baby by helping your baby feel more secure, warm and comforted.

Breastfeeding uses up extra calories, making it easier for you to lose the pounds gained from pregnancy. Breastfeeding also lowers your risk of breast cancer and possibly ovarian cancer.

Working women can continue to breastfeed even after going back to work. With careful planning, you can breastfeed while you're at work, attending school or any other outside commitment you may have.

It's Too Important Not To

Children who are not exclusively breastfed for six months are more likely to develop:

- ◆ Ear infections;
- ◆ Type 1 diabetes;
- ◆ Diarrhea; and
- ◆ Certain types of rare childhood cancers.

(MORE)

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Children who are not exclusively breastfed are also more likely to be hospitalized for respiratory diseases such as asthma and pneumonia.

WIC Can Help

If you are pregnant, have recently been pregnant, and/or have the legal responsibility for a child under age five, contact our WIC program for assistance with:

- ◆ Healthy foods;
- ◆ Nutrition education and counseling;
- ◆ Breastfeeding support; and
- ◆ Referrals to healthcare, immunizations and community services.

For information about WIC, call the Pinellas County Health Department at (727) 824-6914.

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The mission of the Pinellas County Health Department is to promote, protect and improve the health and safety of residents and visitors through public and private community efforts.
www.PinellasHealth.com