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PINELLAS COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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*World Breastfeeding Week: August 1 – 7*  
**Breastfeeding is Best for Mom and Baby**

If you are a new mom or are expecting a baby, you need to know that one of the best things that only you can do is to breastfeed your baby. Babies should be fed with breast milk only for at least the first six months of life. It is even better for your baby to breastfeed for 12 months or longer.

**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 your baby needs. 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.

Children who are not exclusively breastfed (children who got formula instead of breast milk) for at least six months are more likely to develop:

- Ear infections
- Diabetes
- Diarrhea
- Certain types of rare childhood cancers

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

**Best for Mom:** Breastfeeding is best for you because it saves time and it's free! You do not have to buy, measure and mix formula – and there are no bottles to heat up in the middle of the night. Breastfeeding also helps you connect with your baby by helping your baby feel more secure, warm and comforted. Breastfeeding uses up extra calories – that makes it easier for you to lose the pounds you gained when you were pregnant. Breastfeeding also lowers your risk of breast cancer and possibly ovarian cancer.

**WIC can Help:** If you are pregnant, have recently been pregnant or if you have legal responsibility for a child under age five, contact our WIC program for assistance with:

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

For information about WIC or for information about breastfeeding,  
call the Pinellas County Health Department at (727) 824-6900.

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