



**NEWS RELEASE**  
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**For Immediate Release**

### **Extend breastfeeding to six months, paediatricians recommend**

OTTAWA –Healthy full-term babies should receive only breast milk for the first six months of life, according to the Canadian Paediatric Society (CPS). Breast milk provides infants with optimal nutritional, immunological and emotional benefits for healthy growth and development. The new recommendation extends the duration of exclusive breastfeeding from the former range of four to six months.

“Mothers who breastfeed offer their babies the best opportunity for a healthy start,” says Dr. Margaret Boland, chair of the CPS Nutrition Committee. “There is evidence that the benefits increase with longer breastfeeding, particularly when the infant is exclusively breastfed for the first six months.”

According to Statistics Canada, while 85 per cent of mothers start breastfeeding, only 19 do so exclusively for six months.

Breast milk contains antibodies that help babies prevent and fight off illness. Exclusive breastfeeding for six months offers increased protection against gastrointestinal infections in infants and prolonged lactational amenorrhea and increased post-partum weight loss in mothers.

Babies can be introduced to nutrient-rich solid foods at six months and breastfeeding can continue for up to two years and beyond. Breastfed babies should also receive a daily supplement of vitamin D until their diet provides a reliable source or until they are a year old.

The new CPS recommendations are consistent with those from the World Health Organization, Health Canada and the American Academy of Pediatrics Section on Breastfeeding.

The Canadian Paediatric Society is a national professional association, representing more than 2,200 paediatricians, that advocates for the health needs of children and youth.

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