

MEDIA RELEASE

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CASE REVEALED COST SAVINGS UP TO \$710 FOR MOTHERS WHO BREASTFEED FOR 6 MONTHS AFTER CHILDBIRTH

The Consumers Association of Singapore (CASE) has found in a survey that mothers could save up to \$710 if they exclusively breastfeed their babies for the first six months after childbirth, even when they return to work. This price survey, conducted in July, aims to provide an overview on how much it will cost mothers to purchase infant formula powder vis-a-vis breastfeed their babies.

CASE focused mainly on infant formula powder (0-6 months) as the World Health Organisation (WHO) recommends that infants below 6 months should be exclusively breastfed. The costs of breastfeeding, especially for mothers returning to work, will include equipments such as breast pumps, cooler bags and ice packs. Hence, a comparison on the cost of using formula powder for infant (0-6 months) will be compared with the costs of breastfeeding for a working mother.

Please refer to Table 1 below for more details.

Table 1. Cost savings for mothers for the first 6 months after child birth

Types of breastfeeding kit	Cost of breast pumps	Cost of cooler bags + ice packs	Average estimated cost of formula powder (20kg)	Cost savings for first 6 months (estimated)
Dual, electric/ battery operated breast pump + Cooler bag + ice packs	\$259.76 to \$799.00	\$6.00 to \$55.50	\$734.63	Up to \$468.87

Single, electric / battery operated breast pump + Cooler bag + ice packs	\$54.75 to \$193.50			Up to \$673.88
Single, manual breast pump + Cooler bag + ice packs	\$19.50 to \$101.80			Up to \$709.13

The average price of formula powder is calculated and converted into unit price per 100g. The purpose of converting the price to its unit price is to determine the cost mothers will incur in buying a certain quantity of the formula powder from a particular brand. For this comparison, the amount of powder required for babies for the period of the first 6 months would be gauged at 20kg, from an estimation made by WHO. (Refer to ANNEX A for details) Although WHO had stated that breastfeeding should be continued till 2 years and above, it should be noted that infants above 6 months would be able to take in some semi-solid food and might not rely totally on formula powder or breast milk.

Table 2: List of prices for infant formula powder (0-6 months)

s/n	Product Type	Retail/ Quantity	Average Price	Unit Price per 100g	Price per 20 kg
1	Dumex Mamex Gold Infant Formula (Step 1) [0-12 mths]	400g	\$15.58	\$3.89	\$778.75
		700g	\$29.05	\$4.15	\$830.00
		800g	\$29.59	\$3.70	\$739.69
		1.5kg	\$54.59	\$3.64	\$727.83
2	Dumex Mamex Gold 1 Soy	800g	\$26.50	\$3.31	\$662.50
3	Enfalac A+ Infant Formula Cholin (Step 1) [below 12 mths]	400g	\$18.65	\$4.66	\$932.50
		900g	\$38.69	\$4.30	\$859.88
4	Enfalac LF (Lactose free with Iron) Infant Formula (Stage 1) [below 12 mths]	400g	\$13.96	\$3.49	\$698.13
5	Enfalac HA (with Iron & partially-hydrolysed protein) [below 12 mths]	400g	\$17.29	\$4.32	\$864.38

6	Enfalac A+ AR Special Infant formula	900g	\$36.15	\$4.02	\$803.33
7	Friso Gold 1: Infant Frisoshield [0-6 mths]	900g	\$30.23	\$3.36	\$671.67
8	Friso Soy (Stage 1)	400g	\$12.18	\$3.05	\$609.17
9	Friso Comfort (Stage 1)	400g	\$12.68	\$3.17	\$633.93
10	Isomil 1 Advance Soy Infant [0-6 mth]	400g	\$15.87	\$3.97	\$793.33
		900g	\$33.33	\$3.70	\$740.74
11	Karihome- Goat Milk Infant Formula (Step 1) [0-6 mths]	400g	\$24.39	\$6.10	\$1,219.38
		900g	\$48.20	\$5.36	\$1,071.11
12	Nestle Lactogen 1 infant formula[0 - 12mth]	900g	\$12.23	\$1.36	\$271.85
		1kg	\$12.20	\$1.22	\$244.00
13	Nestle Nan 1 with DHA/ARA	1.8kg	\$24.00	\$1.33	\$266.67
		400g	\$15.68	\$3.92	\$783.75
14	Nestle Nan 1 Ha	900g	\$29.95	\$3.33	\$665.56
		400g	\$16.55	\$4.14	\$827.50
15	Nestle Nan HA 1 BL	900g	\$33.50	\$3.72	\$744.44
16	Nestle Nan 1 Pro BL(Premium Infant Formula) [from Birth]	900g	\$36.73	\$4.08	\$816.11
		400g	\$16.35	\$4.09	\$817.50
17	Prosobee Special Formula [0 - 12 mth]	900g	\$31.90	\$3.54	\$708.89
18	Similac Infant Formula Stage 1 [0-6 mths]	400g	\$14.13	\$3.53	\$706.25
		900g	\$17.21	\$4.30	\$860.50
19	Similac Neosure [0 - 12mths]	900g	\$35.96	\$4.00	\$799.14
20	Wyeth- S-26 Gold Alpha Infant formula (Step 1) [0-6 mths]	400g	\$49.25	\$4.10	\$820.83
		900g	\$15.30	\$3.83	\$765.00
21	Wyeth- Nursoy Special Infant Formula(w Iron,soy protein,w/o lactose/milk)	900g	\$30.76	\$3.42	\$683.56
		400g	\$11.18	\$2.79	\$558.75

Using the above information, CASE analysed the following:

1. With the exception of 2 brands of infant formula milk powder, Karihome- Goat Milk Infant Formula (Step 1) and Nestle Lactogen 1 infant formula, the range of infant formula powder (0-6 months)

generally ranged from \$2.79 to \$4.66 per 100g. This would mean that after conversion to 20kg, they would cost \$558.75 to \$932.50 for mothers to feed their babies for the first 6 months alone.

2. The cost of breast-feeding equipments (consisting of breast pumps, cooler bag and ice packs as a package) ranges from \$25.50 to \$854.50. As breast pumps are reusable, this one-time cost can be further reduced should the mother use her pump for her second and subsequent babies. Though costs will be incurred for replacements parts (shown in ANNEX C), these do not add up significantly to the overall costs of breastfeeding.

As the results had shown, it is more cost efficient for mothers to breastfeed their children exclusively or as much as possible. CASE urges mothers to consider breastfeeding should they wish to be cost efficient. Though breastfeeding may be the ideal source of nourishment for infants but there are other factors which mothers wish to consider to breastfeed as much as possible.

It is understandable that some mothers may experience difficulties in breastfeeding or breastfeeding may not be possible in all circumstances. As such, mothers should consult help to enable them to breastfeed their babies or if necessary, to consult their doctors for the appropriate formula powder. Should mothers and mothers-to-be wish to find out more information regarding breastfeeding, they may wish to contact BMSG(S) directly at 6339 3558 or visit www.breastfeeding.org.sg.

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