

DAIRY FOODS FACTS & MYTHS

FOR YOU AND YOUR FAMILY

3 daily servings of dairy ensure you and your family get the important nutrients you need, including calcium, vitamin D, potassium, and protein.



MYTH *Chocolate milk has too much sugar and is not a healthy drink.*

FACTS

- Chocolate and other flavored milks have the same amounts of vitamins, minerals, and protein as white milk.
- More than half of the sugar in chocolate milk is natural milk sugar – lactose – which is found in all milk, white and flavored.
- About half of the added sugar in kids' diets comes from soda and fruit drinks, which are not healthy. Flavored milks contribute just 3% of the added sugar in kids' diets and provide many important vitamins and minerals.



MYTH *Many different foods contain calcium, so there is no need to drink milk.*

FACTS

- While many foods contain some calcium, milk and milk products are the best sources of it and contain it in the greatest amounts.
- To provide the same amount of calcium found in one 8-ounce cup of milk (300mg) you would need to eat 3 ½ cups of broccoli, 1 cup of almonds, 10 cups of spinach, or 3 ounces of sardines with bones.
- The calcium in milk and milk products is easily absorbed and used by the body. Other foods often contain substances called oxalates, which bind calcium and make it difficult for the body to use.



MYTH *Rice or almond milk is a good substitute for cow's milk.*

FACTS

- Rice, almond, and soy beverages are actually juices that come from plants. These drinks are often fortified with a few key nutrients, but lack many of the vitamins and minerals found naturally in cow's milk.
- Not only is cow's milk packed with calcium, it contains eight other essential nutrients, including vitamin D, vitamin A, and potassium.
- Milk is a source of high quality protein, providing 8 grams of protein per cup. Alternative beverages, such as almond, coconut, and rice, have only a small amount of protein.

MYTHS AND MISCONCEPTIONS CAN LEAD TO NEEDLESS ELIMINATION OF DAIRY FOODS FROM INDIVIDUALS' DIETS.

Empower yourself with the nutrition information to make healthful food and beverage choices for you and your family.

SCIENTIFIC EVIDENCE SHOWS THAT REGULAR CONSUMPTION OF DAIRY PRODUCTS IS LINKED TO:
improved bone health, lower blood pressure, and reduced risk of cardiovascular disease and type 2 diabetes.



MYTH *All milk contains antibiotics, except organic milk.*

FACTS

- Milk produced on conventional dairy farms does not contain antibiotics. It is strictly tested, both on the farm and at the processing plant. Any milk that tests positive for antibiotics at any point is disposed of immediately and does not get into the food supply.
- Sometimes dairy cows require antibiotics to treat an illness. Milk from a cow being treated with antibiotics is separated from other cows' milk on the farm. The milk from this cow is allowed to be sold only after the antibiotics have cleared the cow's system.



MYTH *Organic milk is healthier than regular milk.*

FACTS

- Science does not show that organic dairy foods are healthier than regular dairy foods.
- Regular milk, yogurt, and other dairy foods have the same amounts of vitamins, minerals, and protein as organic dairy foods.
- Strict government rules ensure that milk from conventional, non-organic farms is safe and wholesome.



MYTH *People who are sensitive to lactose should avoid all dairy foods.*

FACTS

- Lactose intolerance affects different people in different ways. Most people with lactose intolerance can tolerate some dairy foods and should include them because they are full of vitamins, minerals, and protein.
- Yogurt is very low in lactose and cheese has almost none. Some people are able to enjoy yogurt and cheese, even if they cannot drink milk. These dairy foods have all the same nutrients as milk, including bone-healthy calcium.

WITH THE VARIETY OF CHOICES NOW AVAILABLE, IT'S EASIER THAN EVER TO GET YOUR

3 SERVINGS OF DAIRY EVERY DAY.

At St. Louis District Dairy Council, we take our responsibility as The Nutrition Education People seriously. We're proud to spread science-based knowledge to local communities, bridging the gap between local dairy farmers and consumers everyday.

References for the facts on this sheet can be found at www.stldairyCouncil.org/references

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