



Low-Fat Dairy

The 5-4-3-2-1 Go! message was developed by the Consortium to Lower Obesity in Chicago Children (CLOCC) at Children's Memorial Hospital. The message is focused on 5 healthy lifestyle behaviors to help children and their families be more healthy.

5-4-3-2-1 Go! promotes:

- *5 servings of fruits and vegetables a day*
- *4 servings of water a day*
- *3 servings of low-fat dairy a day*
- *2 hours or less of screen time (TV, video games) a day*
- *1 hour or more of physical activity a day*

This message was developed with the 3-5 year old child in mind, but is a healthy message for the entire family.

Why is Dairy Important?

The calcium in dairy plays an important role in our bodies' functions

- Strong bones and teeth
- Muscles, nerves, and other cell functions
- B12 absorption
- Helps reduce high blood pressure

Why Get Calcium From Dairy?

- Dairy provides not only calcium, but also other essential nutrients and protein
- Calcium comes in different forms - calcium in dairy is the type that our bodies absorb the best
- Our bodies do not absorb calcium from other sources as easily as it does from dairy products
- Dairy also includes vitamin D

Why Low-Fat Dairy?

- Compared to whole milk, skim milk:
- Same amount of protein
- Same minerals and vitamins
- **Less calories**
- **Less fat**
 - Whole Milk – 150 Calories – 8 g fat
 - 1% Milk – 100 Calories – 2.5 g fat
 - Skim Milk – 80 Calories – 0g fat



What is a Serving?

How much dairy equals one serving?

Each service provides 300 mg of calcium

- For milk: 8 fluid ounces (1 cup)
- Calcium fortified milk: only 6 ounces because this provides more calcium per ounce
- Yogurt: 6 ounce container without fruit, 8 ounce container with fruit
- Cheese
 - Natural: Cheddar, Colby, Swiss, Monterey, Jack, Mozzarella – 1.5 oz
 - Processed: American, Velveeta – 2 oz

Calcium Supplements vs Dairy

Many people who do not get enough calcium from food take calcium supplements. However, they are missing out on other important nutrients.

That is because not only does food contain additional vitamins, minerals, and protein, our bodies also absorb the nutrients from food better than from supplements

Lactose Intolerance

Some people have trouble digesting milk sugar, or lactose. Lactose is the sugar in milk and foods made with milk. People who cannot digest lactose often have stomach pain, bloating and diarrhea when they drink milk.

What do you do if you or your child has lactose intolerance?

There are a number of options, and chances are that you can still include dairy in your diet:

- Yogurt and hard cheeses, like Cheddar and Swiss, tend to have little or no lactose, so are easier to digest
- Serve calcium-rich vegetables like:
 - Broccoli, mustard greens, kale, collard greens, and brussels sprouts
- Include high-calcium beans in casseroles and salads like:
 - Great northern beans, black turtle beans, navy beans, and baked beans
- Try calcium-enriched soy- and rice-based drinks - serve chilled, use in place of cow's milk in your favorite recipes, or add to hot or cold cereals
- Serve lactose-reduced or lactose-free dairy products like:
 - Low-fat or fat-free milk, yogurt, and ice cream
- Try low-fat yogurt or cheese in small amounts—they may be easier to digest than milk



Dairy and Non-Dairy Calcium Sources

Besides dairy products, there are other food sources of calcium, including certain fruits and vegetables, some nuts (especially almonds), and fortified foods like certain juices, and calcium fortified tofu and soy milks.

However, dairy products have the largest amount of naturally occurring calcium, as shown here:

8oz glass milk = 6 oz yogurt = 1.5 oz cheese = 1 ½ cup cooked kale = 2 ¾ cup broccoli = 8 cups spinach

While calcium fortified foods, such as certain juices and soy products, may have a similar amount of calcium, there are still benefits to getting calcium from dairy.

For instance, calcium fortified fruit juices have a lot of calories, and only one 6 ounce glass per day is recommended. Juices also lack protein and the other vitamins and minerals in dairy products.

While calcium fortified soy products, like soy milk and tofu, have protein and other nutrients, the type of calcium used is not absorbed as well by the body. **Therefore, it would be necessary to have a larger serving size to get the same amount of calcium as from dairy.**

Ways to Add Milk to Your Diet

- Flavored low-fat or fat-free milks
 - Have same protein, vitamin and mineral content of regular milk
 - Often contain added sugar – look for sugar-free or limit to 1 cup per day
- Milk with added calcium or protein
 - This changes the texture and makes it more palatable
- Drink milk with foods that go well with milk
 - Cereal
 - Sandwiches
 - 100 calorie cookie packages

My Child/Spouse Doesn't Like Low-Fat Milk

- Some people need to make the switch slowly:
- Mix whole or 2% milk with skim and increase the portion of skim milk slowly
- Can move from whole milk to 2% to 1% to skim in this manner
- Try to serve low-fat milk in a whole milk or 2% container – if your family doesn't notice, then you know that taste is not the issue
- Be a role model – choose 1% or skim for yourself



Treats to Make with Dairy

These treats get you both fruit and dairy servings

- Smoothies made in the blender
 - Whole fruit (banana, strawberries – not juice), ice, 1% or skim milk
 - You can use frozen fruit to make this treat year-round and even more simple
- Parfait – easily made at home for breakfast or a snack using layers
 - Chopped fruit
 - Low-fat or fat-free “light” yogurt, can be flavored for variety
 - 1 tsp granola for crunch

Add Dairy to Your Meals

- Add low-fat cheese to a frozen thin-crust pizza
- Top salads, soups, vegetables and pasta with low-fat shredded cheese
- Use low-fat or fat-free yogurt instead of sour cream as a topping on baked potatoes and tacos

Dairy On-The-Go

There are a variety of ways to have dairy as a snack or add it to your box lunch

- Low-fat or fat-free string cheese – but not as much calcium as natural cheese
 - 2 sticks = 1 serving of dairy (therefore more calories)
- Bottle low-fat or skim milk
 - 8 or 16 oz “grab-and-go” bottles
 - Also come flavored
- Low-fat or fat-free yogurt

Low-Fat Dairy Take-Home Points:

- **Low-fat dairy is nutritious!**
- **Calcium from dairy is well absorbed by our bodies**
- **Even those who are lactose intolerant can usually tolerate some**
- **Add dairy to meals and eat as a snack to get 3 servings per day**
- **Be a role model!**

Adapted from the Consortium to Lower Obesity in Chicago Children (CLOCC) at Children’s Memorial Hospital, 5-4-3-2-1 Go!:

<http://www.clocc.net/partners/54321Go/3%20Servings%20a%20day%20Script.pdf>

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