

# 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, B-vitamins, and protein.



**MYTH** Chocolate milk is unhealthy and has too much sugar.



- FACTS**
- Chocolate and other flavored milks contain the same nutrients, such as 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. Flavored milks contribute only about 4% of the added sugar in kids' diets.

**MYTH** There is no need to drink milk since a variety of foods contain calcium.



- FACTS**
- Dairy foods are the major source of calcium in the American diet. Few other foods contain calcium naturally in amounts similar to milk.
  - 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, or 10 cups of spinach.
  - The calcium in milk and milk products is easily absorbed and used by the body. Some plant foods contain oxalate or phytate; substances which can inhibit the body's absorption of calcium.

**MYTH** Plant-based “milks” are a good substitute for cow’s milk.



- FACTS**
- Plant beverages are not good milk substitutes when it comes to nutrition. Many of the vitamins and minerals naturally found in cow's milk must be added to plant beverages, along with stabilizers and emulsifiers, to come close to the nutrition equivalent of milk.
  - Not only is cow's milk packed with calcium, it contains eight other essential nutrients, including vitamin D, vitamin A, and B-vitamins.
  - Milk is a source of high-quality protein, providing 8 grams of protein per cup, whereas alternative beverages, like 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 in children and teens, lower blood pressure, and reduced risk of cardiovascular disease and type 2 diabetes in adults.*



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

### FACTS

- All milk, whether conventionally produced or organic, is antibiotic-free. Milk is strictly tested for antibiotics, both on the farm before it is transported and again at the dairy processing plant. If, at any time, milk tests positive for antibiotics, it is disposed of immediately and does not get into the food supply.
- Dairy cows may require antibiotics to treat an occasional illness. Milk from a cow being treated with antibiotics is not sold for human consumption. The milk from this cow is tested to be sure the antibiotics have cleared the cow's system before resuming sales.



**MYTH** Organic milk is healthier than regular milk.

### FACTS

- Research shows that conventionally produced dairy foods have the same amounts of vitamins, minerals, and protein as organic dairy foods.
- Strict government standards ensure that all cow's milk, whether conventionally produced or organic, is safe and wholesome.



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

### FACTS

- Lactose intolerance affects 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 with live, active cultures, aged cheeses like Cheddar and Swiss, and lactose-free dairy foods are recommended options for individuals with lactose intolerance. Lactose-free milk is real cow's milk with the same essential nutrients as regular cow's milk.

