

# Myth and Fact: Hormones

## Dairy Delivers the Real Facts on Hormones in Milk

Hormones have never been added to milk. Hormones are naturally present in many foods of either plant or animal origin, including all milk. Bovine somatotropin – also referred to as bST or bovine growth hormone – is a naturally-occurring protein hormone in cows. A trace amount of this hormone is present in all milk, including organic products. Many hormones are proteins and, like all proteins, are broken down into amino acids during digestion.

Some dairy farmers have treated cows with rbST, a synthetic version of bovine somatotropin hormone, to stimulate milk production. Studies show that milk from cows treated with the supplemental hormone rbST is compositionally similar as milk from non-treated cows<sup>1</sup>. However dairy farmers no longer use it due to consumer preference.



Certain countries don't allow the sale of rbST to farmers because of economics, social customs and general opposition to technological advances used to promote efficient food production – *not* human health considerations. Canada and these European countries allow imported milk and other dairy products from cows supplemented with rbST without any special labeling, and the U.S. exports dairy products to such countries.

Some people believe there is a connection between milk drinking and early puberty. There is no evidence that the trace amounts of hormones found in milk – whether organic or conventional – play a role in early puberty in girls.<sup>1</sup>

All pasteurized cow's milk is wholesome, safe and nutritious.

### TAKE AWAY MESSAGE

In response to consumer preference, dairy farmers do not use supplemental hormones (rbST). Naturally occurring bST is found in trace amounts in dairy milk but these hormones, like all hormones, are broken down during digestion. All cow's milk is safe, wholesome and nutritious. There has been no research identifying milk or dairy products as a causative factor in the increased incidence of early puberty.



Learn more about the great taste and health benefits of dairy foods at [www.Drink-Milk.com](http://www.Drink-Milk.com)

### References

<sup>1</sup> Recombinant Bovine Somatotropin (rbST): A Safety Assessment 2010. <http://www.naiaonline.org/pdfs/RecombinantSomatotropinASafetyAssessment2010.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2015-2020. <https://health.gov/dietaryguidelines/2015/guidelines/>

<sup>3</sup> Facts about Recombinant Bovine Somatotropin (rbST), By Dale E Bauman, Emeritus Cornell College of Agriculture and Life Science. [https://ansci.cals.cornell.edu/sites/ansci.cals.cornell.edu/files/shared/documents/Recombinant%20Bovine%20Somatotropin\\_v3updated.doc.pdf](https://ansci.cals.cornell.edu/sites/ansci.cals.cornell.edu/files/shared/documents/Recombinant%20Bovine%20Somatotropin_v3updated.doc.pdf)