Did you know?

Milk makes it easy to eat healthfully.

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Dietary Guidelines for Americans recommends thinking in terms of healthy diet patterns. Focus on adding the right combination of foods to your family’s diet instead of restrictive diets or individual foods.

The USDA recommends three eating patterns: U.S.-Style, Mediterranean-Style & Vegetarian. Daily consumption of dairy is recommended for all three patterns.2,3

Dairy foods, including milk, provide key nutrients of concern and have a role in a balanced diet, along with fruits and vegetables, grains and other protein foods.

Nutrient powerhouse: Milk provides a unique package of nutrients, and it’s difficult to get enough of the nutrients kids need without milk in the diet.4 Recent research suggests a dairy-free diet during critical growing years could mean not reaching full height potential, an increase in stress fractures during adolescence, and a greater chance of osteoporosis as an adult.5,6,7,8,9,10

Milk’s nine essential nutrients can help kids and teens grow healthy and strong.

Calcium 300 mg, 30% DV - Helps build and maintain strong bones and teeth. It helps reduce the risk of stress fractures and osteoporosis later in life. Plays a role in promoting normal blood pressure.

Vitamin D 120 IU, 30% DV - Helps absorb calcium for healthy bones.

Phosphorus 250 mg, 25% DV - Works with calcium and vitamin D to help keep bones strong.

Riboflavin 0.4 mg, 25% DV - Helps convert food into energy. Plays a vital role in the development of the central nervous system.

Protein 8 g, 16% DV - Helps build and maintain lean muscle. Contains all the essential amino acids (the building blocks for protein).

Vitamin B-12 1.2 mcg, 20% DV - Helps build red blood cells and helps maintain the central nervous system.

Potassium 380 mg, 10% DV - Helps regulate the balance of fluids in the body and plays a role in maintaining a normal blood pressure.

Vitamin A 500 IU, 10% DV - Important for good vision, healthy skin, and a healthy immune system.

Niacin 2 mg, 10% DV** - Helps the body’s enzymes function normally by converting nutrients into energy.

You can feel good about recommending dairy milk.
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DAIRY IS THE ORIGINAL FARM-TO-TABLE FOOD. Milk is fresh and local with a short ingredient list: milk, vitamins A and D with no added color. The nutrients in milk such as calcium, vitamin D and phosphorus work together for better absorption into the body.11

MILK’S 9 NUTRIENTS ARE ESSENTIAL FOR GOOD HEALTH! Studies repeatedly show the benefits of drinking two to three glasses of milk a day. Milk helps build and maintain bone strength, and has been found to boost muscle growth and support healthy weight. An extensive body of research suggests far-reaching health benefits of milk - ranging from “reduced risk of cardiovascular disease and type 2 diabetes, and with lower blood pressure in adults,” according to ChooseMyPlate.gov.12

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Yes, you can feel good about recommending dairy milk to your parents.

**As niacin equivalents.

MILK’S NINE ESSENTIAL NUTRIENTS CAN HELP KIDS AND TEENS GROW HEALTHY AND STRONG.

AN 8-OUNCE SERVING OF MILK, FLAVORED OR NOT, GIVES KIDS AS MUCH...

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Parents’ most common questions about milk

Q: All milks are equal, right? After all milk is milk, whether it comes from a cow or a plant or a grain?
A: Non-dairy milk alternatives vary in their nutritional profiles and are often fortified, and their nutritional impact has not been thoroughly studied. It’s important to understand there are key differences between the beverages. Substituting these products for real dairy milk may negatively affect diet quality and potentially increase the risk of nutritional deficiencies of key essential nutrients.11

Q: Plant-based milks tout their nutritional value, including the fact they provide added calcium and vitamin D. So that’s good, right?
A: Research shows that when dairy is removed from the diet and calcium-equivalent foods are consumed, the diet falls short in providing adequate amounts of protein, potassium, magnesium, phosphorus, riboflavin, vitamins A, D and B12.12,13

Q: My child complains about her tummy hurting after drinking milk. She must have lactose intolerance, right? And I should serve her an alternative milk?
A: Children can be tested for lactose intolerance, and here’s what the National Dairy Council suggests you...

- Try it: Opt for lactose-free products
- Sip it: Introduce dairy in small amounts – 4 oz. at a time with food
- Mix it: Add it to make oatmeal, soup and smoothies

Q: Why should I be concerned about my child’s height?
A: Achieving average height height is an indicator of overall health and development. Childhood nutrition is essential for healthy growth and development – especially during kids’ important bone-building years. Decades of research support the role of milk for bone health.14

Q: I prefer to serve my child yogurt rather than milk. Is that okay?
A: Yogurt is an alternative to milk, but it’s not nutritionally identical. While the probiotics, protein and other four nutrients in yogurt are part of a healthy diet, milk is a single source of nine essential nutrients.

Q: I’m concerned about the antibiotics present in dairy milk.
A: Stringent and mandatory testing ensures that the milk that arrives at your grocery store does not contain antibiotics, and that milk is one of the safest foods you can buy. If a cow is sick, it may be treated with antibiotics. During this time the cow is removed from the rest of the dairy herd and the milk is disposed.

Q: My child will only drink chocolate milk. Is that okay?
A: Yes. Chocolate milk provides the same nine essential nutrients as white milk. And studies show that flavored milk drinkers have better quality diets (richer in essential nutrients) and do not have higher intakes of sugar, fat or calories than non-milk drinkers. They also drink fewer sugary sodas and fruit drinks and do not have higher BMIs 15. Chocolate Milk does contain a little added sugar. In AE Fat Free Chocolate Milk there are 11 grams (about 2 teaspoons) of added sugar in a 1 cup serving.

REFERENCES

2 2015-2020 Dietary Guidelines for Americans
3 Cnpp.usda.gov/USDAFoodPatterns
14 http://ajcn.nutrition.org/content/early/2017/06/07/ajcn.117.156877.abstract