

Dairy Foods:

MYTHS & FACTS

For You and Your Family

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



Myth: Almond, coconut, or soy beverages are good substitutes for cow's milk.

- Facts:**
- Almond, coconut, 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 additional 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 oat, have only a small amount of protein.

Myth: All milk contains antibiotics and hormones except organic milk.

- Facts:**
- All milk, even organic, naturally contains a small amount of hormones, which are broken down during pasteurization and the normal digestive process.
 - 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: People who are sensitive to lactose should avoid all dairy foods.

- Facts:**
- Lactose intolerance affects individuals differently, and some people may be able to work small amounts of dairy into their diets. Additionally, some dairy foods, such as yogurt and certain types of cheese, are naturally low in lactose.
 - Those with lactose intolerance can also choose lactose-free milk and yogurt. Lactose-free dairy foods contain all the same vitamins and minerals, just without the lactose.



With the variety of choices now available, it's easier than ever to get your **3 servings of dairy every day.**

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.

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 nutritious.

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 4% of the added sugar in kids' diets and provide many important vitamins and minerals.
 - Children who drink flavored milk do not consume more added sugar, fat, or calories than non-milk drinkers.

Myth: Genetically modified organisms (GMOs) used in animal feed make milk unsafe to drink.

- Facts:**
- GMO crops may be used to produce animal feed.
 - Scientific research has proven that GMO crops are safe to consume and that the nutrition is the same as non-GMO crops.
 - There is no difference in milk produced by animals fed GMO crops compared to those fed non-GMO crops.
 - Neither fluid milk nor the cows that produce it are genetically modified.

Myth: Raw milk is healthier than pasteurized milk.

- Facts:**
- Pasteurization is a process that destroys harmful bacteria by heating raw milk to a specific temperature for a set period of time.
 - Pasteurization does not reduce milk's nutritional value or cause lactose intolerance or allergic reactions.
 - Drinking raw milk is not safe and can put you at risk for several foodborne illnesses. These illnesses are especially dangerous to people with weakened immune systems, older adults, pregnant women, and children.



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 every day.

Looking for more information? Visit us at:
WWW.STLDAIRYCOUNCIL.ORG/RESOURCES



The **Nutrition Education People**