



# Get YOUR calcium-rich FOODS

Got milk? You should. Your bones, teeth and muscles need calcium to stay strong.

The dairy group is an important part of the food icon at [www.ChooseMyPlate.gov](http://www.ChooseMyPlate.gov). MyPlate provides individual recommendations based on age, sex and activity level for each group. The online tool can help you with an eating plan personalized for you.

The dairy group includes calcium-rich milk, yogurt and cheese. You are encouraged to consume low-fat and fat-free dairy products. Foods made with small amounts of calcium, such as cream cheese, cream and butter, no longer are included with this group. Most people meet their daily recommendations with three 8-ounce glasses of milk.

## Try these questions

1. **True/false:** As part of a reduced-calorie diet, drinking milk may help burn body fat.
2. **True/false:** Drinking milk strengthens muscles, teeth and bones because of the calcium it contains.
3. **True/false:** Milk provides you with nine essential nutrients.

**All of the statements are “true.”** Researchers have found that drinking milk can help you burn more fat and calories when part of a reduced-calorie diet.

Children who consume the recommended amounts of dairy products every day have a lower body fat percentage than those who do not get enough.

Milk and other dairy products provide calcium, along with protein; potassium; phosphorus; vitamins D, A and B12; riboflavin; and niacin. Low-fat and fat-free milk are good choices because either option provides the calcium you need without extra amounts of fat or calories. Calcium is important for growing and maintaining strong, healthy bones, which can help prevent osteoporosis.

## Try these tips to Get enough Dairy Products

- ▲ Drink a glass of milk with every meal.
- ▲ Have your cappuccino made with skim milk.
- ▲ Use milk instead of water when making hot cereal or cream soups.
- ▲ Have yogurt for a snack or as dessert.
- ▲ Add low-fat cheese to casseroles, soups, stews or vegetables as a topping.
- ▲ Have snacks such as pudding made with milk, or a fruit-and-yogurt smoothie.

## Make smart Dairy Choices

- ▲ Drink fat-free milk to reduce your daily fat intake.
- ▲ If you usually drink whole milk, gradually switch to reduced-fat, low-fat and then to fat-free.
- ▲ Have fat-free or low-fat yogurt and other dairy products to reduce fat intake, but still have the same taste.

## Keep your Dairy Products safe

- ▲ Avoid raw (unpasteurized) milk or any products made from unpasteurized milk. It contains bacteria that could cause foodborne illness.
- ▲ Keep raw, cooked and ready-to-eat foods separate.
- ▲ Refrigerate perishable food quickly and defrost foods in the refrigerator.
- ▲ Throw out food that has been left at a temperature between 40 F and 140 F for more than two hours.

If you do not or cannot consume milk products because of lactose intolerance, you still need calcium in your diet. Consider these suggestions:

- ▲ Choose lactose-free alternatives such as cheese, yogurt or lactose-free milk.
- ▲ Consume the enzyme lactase before consuming milk products.
- ▲ Try calcium-fortified foods such as some juices, breads and soy or rice milk. Read the label to learn the calcium content.
- ▲ Try alternative calcium-containing foods such as cooked dry edible beans, collard or turnip greens, kale or bok choy. All contain some calcium, but the amount of calcium absorbed from these foods varies.
- ▲ Consider a calcium supplement. Discuss this with your health care provider.

For more information on dairy products and to make your own personal plan, visit

[www.▲ChooseMyPlate▲.gov](http://www.ChooseMyPlate.gov)

OR

[www.▲3aday▲.org](http://www.3aday.org)

For more information about nutrition, food safety and health, visit

[www.▲ag.ndsu▲.edu/food](http://www.ag.ndsu.edu/food)

## How much food from the Dairy Group do you need daily?

How much food from the dairy group do you need daily? The amount of food from the dairy group you need to eat depends on age. Recommended daily amounts are shown in the chart.

**Question:** What is the daily dairy recommendation for a 63-year-old man? .....\_\_\_\_\_

Daily recommendation		
<b>Children</b>	2 - 3 years old	2 cups
	4 - 8 years old	2 cups
<b>Girls</b>	9 - 13 years old	3 cups
	14 - 18 years old	3 cups
<b>Boys</b>	9 - 13 years old	3 cups
	14 - 18 years old	3 cups
<b>Women</b>	19 - 30 years old	3 cups
	31 - 50 years old	3 cups
	51+ years old	3 cups
<b>Men</b>	19 - 30 years old	3 cups
	31 - 50 years old	3 cups
	51+ years old	3 cups

*Answer: 3 cups*

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### For more information on this and other topics, see [www.ndsu.edu/extension](http://www.ndsu.edu/extension)

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