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Greetings, Chairman Beltz and members of the House Agriculture Committee. Thank you for taking this opportunity for me to address my support of HOUSE BILL 1132. Over the years, dairy has been put under the microscope of how healthy it is, but not just over-all health, but it is further scrutinized of WHICH milk is better for you. Now most dieticians and nutritionist will agree that milk is an essential part of a healthy diet, especially in children, due to providing 13 essential nutrients such as this study elaborates on from the Utah State University at (<https://extension.usu.edu/nutrition/research/dairy-in-your-childs-diet>) and I will place the full article after my testimony for easier reading and also a chart enclosed from: <https://www.americandairy.com/dairy-diary/13-essential-nutrients-in-milk/>

But recent research has come out to debate whether fat-free or low-fat milk is actually better for children and their development or not and the research is in FULL support of full-fat milk, or as we call it whole milk. I have enclosed an article in the back of my testimony and here is the link: https://www.healthline.com/nutrition/whole-vs-skim-milk#TOC_TITLE_HDR_6.

So needless to say I think it is long over-due that whole milk, 2%, and even flavored milk be available in school since research shows that both the fat from milk and the calories have no scientific link to childhood obesity or other detrimental health issues. We are Northern Lights Dairy which is a 5 generation dairy farm is proud that we are always striving to produce the highest-quality, nutritious milk that it is our mission statement. We are thrilled at the opportunity for children to be able to choose which milk they would like to drink with the lunches and are excited for children to get the best nutrition to help their mind and bodies grow which will allow them to thrive in school and in life.

UtahStateUniversity

NutritionExtension

For many people, a healthy and well-balanced diet includes foods from all the food groups. The dairy group is especially important for children and youth because of the high amounts of protein, calcium, and vitamin D that are used to build strong bones and reduce the risk of chronic diseases later in life (Thorning et al., 2016). This fact sheet will present the health benefits of dairy and bust some common myths to assist you in making informed decisions when purchasing dairy products for your children. This fact sheet also includes information on dairy alternatives for children who, for one reason or another, do not consume dairy products.

What Are the Health Benefits of Dairy Products?

- Children who are exposed to highly allergenic foods (milk, peanuts, eggs, wheat, etc.) earlier in life have a lower risk of developing a food allergy (Chin, Chan, & Goldman, 2014; American Academy of Pediatrics [AAP], 2013).
- Children build 40% of their bone mass between the ages of 9-14 and 90% of their bone mass by their late teens. Dairy products contain all of the crucial vitamins and minerals used for this process in one small package (Ryan, 2017). Specific nutrients and benefits are listed in Table 1.
- A variety of milk products, such as yogurt, often contain probiotics. These microorganisms may contribute to a variety of health benefits, although more research needs to be done in this area (Brown-Riggs, 2014; Fernández, Hudson, Korpela, de los Reyes-Gavilán, 2015).
- Dairy products have characteristics that protect the enamel of children’s teeth, creating stronger teeth and a healthier mouth (Abd-elmonsif, El-Zainy, Abd-elhamid, 2017).
- Milk provides higher amounts of protein, calcium, and potassium per calorie than any other commonly consumed food (Rozenberg et al., 2015). For example, for a child 4-8 years of age, an 8oz glass of milk provides 40% of their daily protein needs, 50-60% of their daily calcium needs, and 10% of their daily potassium needs (United States Department of Agriculture [USDA], n.d.; USDA, n.d.)

Table 1. Benefits of Key Nutrients Found in Milk

	Benefits
Protein	Protein aids in strong bone development, along with muscle and tissue repair.
Calcium	Calcium is a key mineral in developing healthy bones. It also likely protects against cancer, diabetes, and high blood pressure.
Potassium	Along with aiding in bone health, potassium is essential for a healthy heart.
Zinc	Zinc aids in immune function.
Phosphorus	Phosphorus aids in the upkeep of strong bones and boosts enamel and tooth health.
Vitamin D	Vitamin D promotes calcium absorption in the intestines and aids in bone growth.

Dairy Myth Busters

Myth: Dairy is harmful to my child’s health.

Fact: Dairy is power packed with essential vitamins and minerals that will help your child build strong bones and prevent some bone-related diseases. Consumption of dairy products does not appear to be associated with heart diseases (Yu & Hu, 2012). In fact, some studies have found that consuming dairy may protect against chronic diseases such as type II diabetes, certain cancers, and hypertension (Erikson et al., 2015; Thorning et al., 2016). However, children who are lactose intolerant or allergic to milk and other dairy products, should consume dairy alternatives for optimal health and safety. Table 2 includes a list of milk alternatives and how their nutrient amounts compare to cow’s milk.

Myth: Organic milk is healthier than regular milk.

Fact: In order to be labeled “organic” cow’s milk must come from dairy cow’s that: 1) are not treated with antibiotics, 2) are not treated with hormones, 3) have access to an organic-certified pasture for grazing, 4) are fed only 100% organic feed, and 5) live in conditions that support the health and natural behaviors of cows (USDA, n.d.). With that said, there is no difference in the nutritional content of the nine key nutrients (protein, calcium, vitamin D, vitamin A, potassium, phosphorus, vitamin B12, riboflavin, and niacin), found in both organic and regular cow’s milk (Magkos, Arvaniti, & Zampelas, 2003). As a result, regular and organic milk are

both nutritious and healthy beverage options for your children. Select the milk that fits in your food budget and supports your personal values.

Myth: Waiting to expose my child to dairy products will decrease their chance of a milk allergy.

Fact: Exposing children to highly allergenic foods earlier in life has actually been shown to help prevent food allergies (Chin, 2014). Introduction of dairy products is recommended around 6 months of age when a baby starts eating solid foods (Fleischer, 2013). If your infant has asthma, eczema or a family history of food allergies, consult your pediatrician before offering your infant highly allergenic foods such as dairy products (Chin, 2014). Also keep in mind, the American Academy of Pediatrics recommends waiting until the child is one year of age before serving them cow's milk to drink. Up until age one, breast milk and infant formula are the best fluids parents can offer (Martin, Ling, & Blackburn, 2016). From 1-2 years of age, most children should drink whole cow's milk instead of lower fat options unless they have a family health history that may suggest a need for a lower fat option (Fleischer Michaelson, Hoppe, Lauritzen, & Molgaard, 2007).

Myth: Raw milk that is unpasteurized is healthier.

Fact: Milk or milk products that have not been pasteurized are considered raw. The process of modern pasteurization includes increasing the temperature of milk to at least 161° F, followed by rapid cooling. This pasteurization process eliminates harmful bacteria and does not alter or eliminate any nutrient values within dairy products (AAP, 2014). The American Academy of Pediatrics strongly encourages the consumption of pasteurized milk since the risk of foodborne illness is much lower (AAP, 2014). This is an important consideration especially for pregnant women, infants, and children (Maldonado, Glode, & Bhatia, 2014).

Myth: Dark leafy greens will provide my child with just as much calcium as a glass of milk.

Fact: It is true that dark leafy vegetables contain high amounts of calcium, however the calcium is not absorbed as well in the body as calcium from dairy. As a result, it can be hard for children to consume enough dark leafy greens to meet their calcium needs. For example, a child would have to eat 16 cups of spinach in one day to match the amount of available calcium in one glass of milk (Rozenberg, 2015).

Factors to Consider When Selecting Common Milk Alternatives

Many children do not consume dairy products for medical, health, religious, or personal reasons. There are many alternative types of milk available on the market, see the table 2 below for some more commonly available types. However, it is likely you will find many more types on your supermarket shelves. When shopping for alternative milk products keep in mind they are all different in the amount of key nutrients they contain. Check the nutrition facts label and choose a type of milk product with as much calcium and vitamin D as cow's milk. If possible, choose one with just as much protein as cow's milk as well. As with cow's milk, be aware that flavored versions (chocolate, vanilla, etc.) can be high in sugar. The image to the right provides an example of where an individual can look on a nutrition facts label, to find information on the content of the protein, calcium, and vitamin D within the product of their choice. This is a quick and easy way to make sure your child is getting the desired nutrients!

Nutrition Facts	
Serving Size 1 Cup (240mL)	
Amount per Serving	
Calories 150	Fat Cal 70
%Daily Value	
Total Fat 8g	12%
Saturated Fat 5g	25%
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 30mg	10%
Sodium 120mg	5%
Potassium 350mg	10%
Total Carbohydrate 12g	4%
Dietary Fiber 0g	0%
Sugars 11g	
Protein 8g	16%
Vitamin A 4%	Vitamin C 0%
Calcium 30%	Iron 0%
Vitamin D 25%	

*This nutrition facts label is for 1 cup of whole milk and may slightly vary depending on the brand.

Milk	Taste	Substitutions	Nutrient Comparison
Nonfat milk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Generally a thicker consistency A little sweeter than regular cow's milk 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can substitute directly for milk in all baking and drinking 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lactase enzyme added Nutrients are the same as cow's milk
Lowfat Milk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Thinner consistency Nutty flavor 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can substitute directly for milk in all baking and drinking 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Low in saturated fat Poor source of protein Low calcium (unless fortified)
Whole Milk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Generally creamier Nutty or sweet flavor Pronounced flavor 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can substitute directly for milk in all baking and drinking 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Low in saturated fat High in protein Contains less calories than regular milk Naturally a good source of potassium Good source of calcium (when fortified)
Flavored Milk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> True milk flavor Light and sweet 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Avoid using for cooking savory dishes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Low in protein Low in fat High in carbohydrates Least likely to cause allergic reactions Some brands will add calcium, vitamin D, and B vitamins

Four Fun Ways to Incorporate Dairy

The USDA's Dietary Guidelines has different dairy recommendations for children of various age groups (USDA, 2017). For example, it is recommended that each day, 2-3 year olds consume 2 cups, 4-8 year olds consume 2 ½ cups, and 9-18 year olds consume 3 cups of dairy products. Here are some ways to help your child get enough dairy in their diet.

1. Add low-fat cheese sticks to your child's lunch is a quick and easy way to incorporate more dairy into their day.

2. Freeze small dollops of a yogurt and fruit mixture to make delicious yogurt bites for another easy way for your child to get more dairy! Yogurt bites are a healthier alternative to popsicles and will be great for the hot summer months.
3. Yogurt parfaits in the morning will keep your kiddos tummy full until snack time. These beautiful creations can be layered in a clear plastic cup and have an added bonus of yummy fruit and whole grain granola. Quick sample recipe: layer a cup or bowl in the following order from bottom to top; berries or fruit of choice, yogurt of choice, top with granola or cereal! Other toppings can include, but are not limited to: coconut, sliced nuts, chia seeds, and fresh fruit.
4. Try cottage cheese and crackers as a speedy snack. This protein-packed snack will be sure to keep them full until dinnertime. As an added bonus, try whole grain crackers to fuel their afternoon adventures!

Dairy products such as milk, yogurt, and cheese can be an important part of a wellbalanced diet for children. Dairy products are rich in important nutrients such as protein, calcium, and vitamin D. Admittedly, there are valid circumstances when children, for various reasons, do not consume dairy products. It is important to know what alternative products are available for these children to make sure they are still meeting their nutritional needs during each stage of rapid growth and development.

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https://www.healthline.com/nutrition/whole-vs-skim-milk#TOC_TITLE_HDR_6

Is Whole Milk Better Than Low Fat and Skim Milk?



Medically reviewed by Jared Meacham, PhD., RD, CSCS — Written by Becky Bell, MS, RD and Celia Shatzman — Updated on February 3, 2023

Recent studies suggest that skim milk might not always be the best health-promoting choice. Though many official guidelines have long recommended avoiding whole milk, it can actually be a great addition to a nutrient-focused diet.

Milk is one of the most naturally nutritious beverages on the planet, which explains why it's often a staple in school lunches and a popular drink for people of all ages.

For decades, nutrition guidelines have recommended low fat dairy products for everyone over 2 years old. However, in recent years, scientists have called this recommendation into question ([1Trusted Source](#)).

This article will review how the different types of milk stack up to determine which is the best option.

—Catherine Falls Commercial/Getty Images

Different types of dairy milk: Whole, low fat, and skim

There are several types of [milk](#) available in the dairy aisle of most grocery stores, which mainly differ in their fat content.

Whole milk is sometimes referred to as “regular milk” because the amount of fat in it has not been altered. Skim and 1% milk are produced by removing fat from whole milk.

Fat content is measured as a percentage of the total liquid by weight. Here's the fat content of popular milk varieties:

- **whole milk:** 3.25% milk fat
- **low fat milk:** 1% milk fat
- **skim:** less than 0.5% milk fat

This table summarizes the nutrients in 1 cup (237 mL) of several milk varieties ([2Trusted Source](#), [3Trusted Source](#), [4Trusted Source](#)):

	Skim milk	Low fat milk	Whole milk
Calories	84	106	152
Carbs	12 grams	13 grams	11.5 grams
Protein	8.5 grams	8.5 grams	8 grams
Fat	0.2 grams	2.5 grams	8 grams
Saturated fat	0.1 grams	1.5 grams	4.5 grams
Omega-3 fatty acids	0 grams	0.01 grams	0.04 grams
Calcium	25% of the DV	24% of the DV	24% of the DV
Vitamin D	14% of the DV	13% of the DV	12% of the DV
Phosphorus	21% of the DV	20% of the DV	20% of the DV

Since fat contains more calories per serving than any other nutrient, milk with a higher fat content is higher in calories ([5Trusted Source](#)).

Though each type of milk contains a similar amount of micronutrients, the amount of [vitamin D](#) can differ slightly. However, because most milk manufacturers add vitamin D to milk, each variety generally contains a similar amount ([6Trusted Source](#)).

Another significant nutritional difference between milk varieties is the amount of omega-3 fatty acids, a type of fat that has been linked to [many health benefits](#), including improved heart and brain health, as well as lowered inflammation. The more fat a cup of milk has in it, the higher its omega-3 content ([7Trusted Source](#)[Trusted Source](#)).

Additionally, studies have shown that organic whole milk contains an even higher amount of omega-3s than regular whole milk. However, this distinction is mostly seen in “grass-fed” milk, which is almost always organic anyway. So if you’re looking for higher omega-3s per serving, check to make sure you’re buying grass fed milk ([8Trusted Source](#), [9Trusted Source](#), [10Trusted Source](#)).

SUMMARY

The major difference between the types of dairy milk available is fat content. Whole milk contains more fat and calories than skim milk.

Whole milk: Is it unhealthy?

For years, nutrition guidelines have been instructing people to avoid whole milk, mainly due to its [saturated fat](#) content.

Mainstream nutrition recommendations advise limiting saturated fat because it can increase cholesterol levels, which is a risk factor for heart disease ([11Trusted Source](#)).

Based on this information, experts made the assumption that saturated fat must increase the risk of heart disease. However, there was no experimental evidence to prove that this was true ([12Trusted Source](#), [13Trusted Source](#)).

In the 1970s, public policy was adopted based on this assumed connection between saturated fat and heart disease. As a result, official guidelines instructed people to reduce their saturated fat intake ([12Trusted Source](#)).

A cup (237 mL) of whole milk contains 4.5 grams of saturated fat, which is about 20% of the daily amount recommended by the 2020-2025 Dietary Guidelines for Americans. For

this reason, the guidelines recommend consuming only low fat or skim milk ([4Trusted Source](#), [13Trusted Source](#)).

In recent years, this recommendation has been called into question. There is emerging experimental data to indicate that eating moderate amounts of saturated fat does not directly cause heart disease ([14Trusted Source](#), [15Trusted Source](#)).

SUMMARY

In the past, whole milk was considered unhealthy because of its saturated fat content, but recent research does not fully support this recommendation.

What to know about saturated fat

While those with high cholesterol levels or heart disease may need to defer to their doctor's recommendations and monitor their intake of saturated fat, it can still be enjoyed as part of a balanced diet for individuals without those two conditions.

In fact, multiple studies suggest that increased saturated fat intake is not directly associated with a higher risk of heart disease, stroke, heart attack, or heart disease-related death ([16Trusted Source](#), [17Trusted Source](#), [18Trusted Source](#)).

Originally, researchers believed that saturated fat increased cholesterol levels, which in turn increased the risk of heart disease. However, the relationship between saturated fat and cholesterol is much more complicated.

For starters, although saturated fat does increase levels of LDL (bad) cholesterol, it also increases levels of HDL (good) cholesterol, which can actually help protect against heart disease ([19Trusted Source](#), [20Trusted Source](#)).

Additionally, there are different types of LDL, and it's the very small, dense particles of LDL that have the most damaging effects on the heart and arteries. Though saturated fat can increase cholesterol levels, it actually changes LDL from the small, dense particles to the large, less harmful particles ([21Trusted Source](#), [22Trusted Source](#), [13Trusted Source](#)).

Furthermore, other research suggests that certain foods high in saturated fat may impact heart health differently. For example, one review showed that cheese and yogurt were actually linked to a lower risk of heart disease, while red meat and butter were tied to a higher risk ([23Trusted Source](#)).

For this reason, it's important to consider the overall nutritional composition of an ingredient rather than focusing solely on the individual nutrients it contains ([24Trusted Source](#)).

Even though a lot of new research is questioning the direct connection between saturated fat and heart health, it still can increase cholesterol levels in some individuals. Therefore, those with heart disease or high cholesterol levels may want to consider swapping out foods high in saturated fats for other ingredients instead.

In particular, studies show that replacing saturated-fat foods with whole grains or polyunsaturated fats — a type of fat found in foods like olive oil, nuts, and seeds — could be beneficial for long-term heart health ([25Trusted Source](#), [26Trusted Source](#)).

SUMMARY

Though it's still important to moderate your saturated fat intake if you're living with health conditions like high cholesterol or heart disease, studies are now showing that moderate saturated fat consumption does not directly increase the risk of heart disease in otherwise healthy individuals. Additionally, certain foods that contain saturated fat may affect heart health differently.

Always talk with your doctor about your specific health issues before incorporating new dietary patterns.

Whole milk and weight management

Many people avoid drinking whole milk because they assume the extra fat and calories will cause them to [gain weight](#). However, many studies have shown that consuming high fat dairy products may actually help support weight management instead.

According to one 2016 study of 18,438 women, increased intake of full fat dairy products was linked to a lower risk of weight gain over an 11-year period. On the other hand, there was no significant association between low fat dairy intake and weight gain ([27Trusted Source](#)).

Another study from 2017 found that dairy fat intake was not linked to a higher risk of weight gain, heart disease, or type 2 diabetes ([28Trusted Source](#)).

Similarly, one 2020 review of 29 studies concluded that full fat dairy consumption was not associated with weight gain or fat gain in children ([29Trusted Source](#)).

The relationship between milk and weight management has been a research topic for several years, and findings have been inconsistent. However, most of these studies either include all types of dairy products or focus on low fat dairy ([30Trusted Source](#), [31Trusted Source](#), [32Trusted Source](#)).

In studies that look at only high fat dairy products, like whole milk, there is a pretty consistent connection between full fat dairy and lower body weight, suggesting that whole milk can be a great addition to a well-rounded, nutrient-dense diet and may help you maintain a moderate weight.

SUMMARY

While more research needs to be done, there is not much evidence that drinking whole milk instead of skim causes weight gain.

Can whole milk lower your risk for chronic disease?

Studies have found that whole milk could be linked to a lower risk of several chronic conditions, including:

- **Metabolic syndrome.** Multiple studies show that drinking whole milk may be associated with a lower risk of metabolic syndrome, a group of risk factors that can

increase the risks of heart disease, stroke, and type 2 diabetes ([33Trusted Source](#), [34Trusted Source](#), [35Trusted Source](#)).

- **Type 2 diabetes.** In one large study, people with the highest amount of dairy-derived fatty acids in their bloodstreams had a 44% lower rate of diabetes. However, more research is needed, as some other studies have found that full fat and nonfermented dairy products may be associated with a higher risk ([36Trusted Source](#), [37Trusted Source](#), [38Trusted Source](#)).
- **Infertility.** Although more research is needed, some studies suggest that drinking milk may be associated with improved reproductive health and fertility in women ([39Trusted Source](#)).

It's important to note that many other factors, such as physical activity, daily diet, and personal health history all play a role in the development of chronic diseases. Therefore, drinking whole milk is one small part of a much larger equation.

SUMMARY

Drinking whole milk as part of a nutritious diet may actually have some health benefits, including a reduced risk of metabolic syndrome. It may also protect against type 2 diabetes and improve reproductive health for women, but more research is needed.

The advantage of choosing skim milk

There are some situations where skim milk may be the best choice for you.

For example, if you're following a very low calorie diet, choosing skim milk may be a better option as it's lower in calories but contains about the same amount of protein per cup (237 mL) ([2Trusted Source](#), [4Trusted Source](#)).

Skim milk is also considered a nutrient-dense ingredient, meaning it provides a large dose of vitamins and minerals with very few calories.

In fact, skim milk is one of the [richest food sources of calcium](#), providing around 325 mg per cup. This is even higher than the calcium content of whole milk, which is 306 mg per cup ([2Trusted Source](#), [4Trusted Source](#)).

It can also be a great way to increase your intake of several other important vitamins and minerals, including vitamin D, phosphorus, and potassium ([2Trusted Source](#)).

SUMMARY

Skim milk provides approximately the same amount of protein and calcium as whole milk but contains fewer calories.

The bottom line

One of the main reasons whole milk was called out was because of its saturated fat content, which was previously directly connected to issues like heart disease.

However, new research questions this direct connection. While individuals who are already living with high cholesterol and heart disease should defer to their doctor's advice and limit their intake of saturated fat, people without such conditions may be able to consume it in moderate amounts without it impacting their overall health.

Talk with your doctor about your specific health history and what's the best option for you when it comes to saturated fat intake.

How we reviewed this article:

Current Version

Feb 3, 2023

Written By

Becky Bell, Celia Shatzman

Edited By

Jessica DiGiacinto

Feb 17, 2022

Written By

Becky Bell, Celia Shatzman

Edited By

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Medically reviewed by Jared Meacham, PhD., RD, CSCS — Written by Becky Bell, MS, RD and Celia Shatzman — Updated on February 3, 2023