

DAIRY: CONSUME CALCIUM RICH FOODS

What is included?

- ▶ Milk, cheese, and yogurt
- ▶ Some foods made with milk can also be part of this group depending on their calcium content, such as ice cream and pudding.
- ▶ Foods made from milk that have little or no calcium, such as cream cheese, cream, and butter, are not part of this group.



What counts as a 1-cup serving?

- ▶ 1 cup milk, yogurt, or soymilk
- ▶ 1 1/2 ounces of natural cheese or 2 ounces of processed cheese

Why is it important to eat DAIRY foods?

- ▶ Dairy products include important nutrients, such as calcium, vitamin D, potassium, and protein.
- ▶ Intake of dairy products is important to bone health during childhood and adolescence when bone mass is being built. Calcium-rich foods may reduce the risk of osteoporosis later in life.
- ▶ Intake of dairy products is associated with a reduced risk of cardiovascular disease and type 2 diabetes and could lower blood pressure in adults.
- ▶ The smallest portion of your plate should be dairy because it is high in saturated fats (sometimes called “bad” fat). However, dairy can provide essential nutrients and is, therefore, good in small amounts.

Tips:

- ▶ Kids like to dip! Try giving your child low-fat vanilla yogurt or plain yogurt sweetened with a bit of honey, so they can dip their fruit in it!
- ▶ Try combining your child’s favorite dairy with new fruits, vegetables, whole grains, or proteins to help encourage variety!
- ▶ Melt low-fat cheese on broccoli or add vegetables to a cheese quesadilla.
- ▶ Add a bit of shredded cheese to your child’s whole grain pasta or veggies.
- ▶ Switch to skim or 1% milk. They have the same amount of calcium and other essential nutrients as whole milk but less fat and calories.
- ▶ Choose low-fat, low-sugar foods from the dairy group. For example, instead of buying flavored yogurt, purchase low-fat plain yogurt and sweeten it yourself with fruit, honey, or jam.

WHAT IF SOMEONE IN MY FAMILY HAS DAIRY ALLERGIES?

For individuals with dairy allergies, there are several **non-dairy substitutes with the same nutrients. Various cheeses and milks (soy and almond)** are lactose-free. You can also get similar nutrients through **soybeans and dark leafy greens**, like kale and bok choy. Try **calcium-fortified soy products** as an alternative to dairy foods.