

MILK MATTERS

FOR YOUR CHILD'S HEALTHY MOUTH



NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH
National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research
National Institute of Child Health and Human Development



Dear Parent,

You've probably heard a lot about the importance of calcium for children's growing bones. But calcium is also important for your child's healthy mouth. Calcium helps keep the teeth, gums, and jawbones healthy. Milk and other dairy foods are excellent sources of calcium. We hope this booklet will help you learn more about calcium and about how to include milk and other calcium-rich foods in your child's diet.

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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES
Public Health Service
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That's because milk and other dairy foods
(foods made with milk)
are very good sources of calcium.



- **Calcium** is a mineral that helps make **teeth** strong and healthy. Even before baby teeth and adult teeth come in, they need calcium. And after teeth come in, they continue to take in calcium so they can develop fully.
- **Calcium** makes **gums** healthy. Getting enough calcium as a young adult may help prevent gum disease later in life.
- **Calcium** makes **jawbones** strong and healthy too. Jawbones need to be strong — they hold the teeth in place!



Calcium makes bones strong, too.

Bones grow most during the childhood and teenage years.

By eating and drinking foods with calcium, children and teens can build up calcium-rich bones for now and for when they are adults. This calcium helps keep bones strong and may prevent them from getting fragile and breaking later in life.

Studies show that most kids don't get the calcium they need. In fact, more than half of teenage boys and girls don't get enough calcium.





HOW MUCH CALCIUM DOES MY CHILD NEED?*

Age	Calcium needed each day
1-3 years	500 milligrams (mg)
4-8 years	800 milligrams
9-18 years	1,300 milligrams



*According to the Dietary Reference Intakes for Calcium, National Academy of Sciences, 1997

Where can kids get calcium?

- **Milk and other dairy foods**, like cheese and yogurt, are very good sources of calcium. One 8-ounce glass of milk has about 300 milligrams of calcium. Just a few glasses can go a long way toward giving kids the calcium they need each day. Milk also has other vitamins and minerals that are good for teeth and bones. The vitamin D in milk helps the body absorb calcium.



- **Other healthy foods with calcium**

are dark green, leafy vegetables; orange juice with calcium added; and soy milk with calcium added. Be sure to see the food list on page 7 for some other foods with calcium.



Can everyone drink milk?

Some people get an upset stomach if they drink milk or eat dairy products. This may be (but is not always) a sign of lactose intolerance. Lactose is the sugar found in milk and dairy foods. When lactose is not digested it may cause an upset stomach, bloating, diarrhea, and gas. Lactose intolerance is not common in young children. It is much less of a problem if milk or dairy foods are taken with meals. Talk to your pediatrician if you think your child might have trouble digesting milk and dairy foods.

Each 8-ounce glass of
Whole, Low-Fat, AND Fat-Free Milk...



...has about 300 mg of calcium.

What kind of milk is best?*

- **Babies under one year old** should have breast milk or formula with iron added.
- **Children ages one to two** should drink whole milk.
- **Children ages two to five** should be gradually switched to fat-free (skim) or low-fat (1%) milk.

**American Academy of Pediatrics*

Food Nutrition Labels

Food labels can tell you how much calcium is in one serving of a food. Look at the **% Daily Value** next to the calcium number on the food label.

- Try to eat and drink foods with 20% or more Daily Value of calcium (like milk). These foods are good sources of calcium.
- A food with 5% Daily Value or less has just a little calcium.
- For most adults, 100% Daily Value = 1,000 milligrams of calcium — but children ages 9-18 need *extra* calcium, or 130% of the Daily Value. This age group needs 1,300 milligrams, an additional 300 milligrams of calcium each day. That means one extra 8-ounce glass of milk or extra servings of another calcium-rich food.

Low-Fat Milk

Nutrition Facts

Serving Size 8 fl. oz. (236g)
Servings Per Container 8

Amount Per Serving

Calories 100 **Calories from Fat** 20

% Daily Value

Total Fat 2.5g 4%

Saturated Fat 1.5g 8%

Cholesterol 10g 3%

Sodium 130mg 5%

Total Carbohydrate 12g 4%

Dietary Fiber 0g 0%

Sugars 11g

Protein 8g

Vitamin A 10% * Vitamin C 4%

Calcium 30% * Vitamin D 25%

* Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet.

Some healthy foods and their calcium content*

Food	Serving Size	Amount of calcium (in milligrams)	% Daily Value of calcium on food label
Plain yogurt, fat-free	1 cup	450	45%
American cheese	2 ounces	350	35%
Ricotta cheese	1/2 cup	337	30%
Yogurt with fruit	1 cup	315	30%
Cheddar cheese	1 1/2 ounces	306	30%
Milk (fat-free, low-fat, or whole)	1 cup	300	30%
Orange juice with added calcium	1 cup	300	30%
Soy milk with calcium added	1 cup	250-300	25-30%
Cheese pizza	1 slice	220	20%
Macaroni and cheese	1/2 cup	180	18%
Collards frozen, boiled	1/2 cup, chopped	179	17%
Chocolate pudding	1/2 cup	153	15%
Frozen yogurt	1/2 cup	118	10%
Tortilla, corn	3 tortillas	132	10%
Broccoli, cooked	1 cup	90	9%

*Calcium content varies depending on ingredients for many foods. Check the food labels when you select items to see exactly how much calcium they have. % Daily Values have been rounded.

Sources for Calcium Food Table: American Dietetic Association's Complete Food and Nutrition Guide, 1996; Bowes and Church's Food Values of Portions Commonly Used, 1998

How can I help my children get enough calcium for healthy teeth and bones?

- Serve calcium-rich foods with meals and snacks (see ideas on next page).
- Make sure **you** drink milk and eat dairy foods. Children learn by watching their parents.



How else can I help my child have a healthy mouth?

Besides teaching your children to drink milk and eat other calcium-rich foods, you can:

- Teach your children to brush with fluoride toothpaste. Fluoride is another mineral that makes teeth healthy. It protects teeth from decay and helps heal early decay. (Young children should use only a tiny drop of fluoride toothpaste.)
- Ask your own dentist or physician if there is fluoride in the drinking water of your town or city. If there is not fluoride in your water, talk to your dentist or physician about fluoride tablets or drops for your child.



CALCIUM FOR A HEALTHY MOUTH!

Meal and Snack Ideas

BREAKFAST

Pour low-fat or fat-free milk over your breakfast cereal

Have a cup of low-fat or fat-free yogurt

Drink a glass of calcium-fortified orange juice

Add low-fat or fat-free milk instead of water to oatmeal and hot cereal

LUNCH

Add low-fat or fat-free milk instead of water to tomato soup

Add cheese to a sandwich

Have a glass of low-fat, fat-free, or soy milk with calcium added, instead of soda

Make mini-pizzas or macaroni and cheese

SNACK

Try flavored milk like chocolate or strawberry

Have a frozen yogurt

Try some pudding made with low-fat or fat-free milk

Make a "smoothie" with fruit, ice and low-fat or fat-free milk

Dip fruits and vegetables into low-fat or fat-free yogurt.

DINNER

Make a salad with dark green, leafy vegetables

Serve broccoli with dinner

Top salads, soups, and stews with low-fat shredded cheese

Have a glass of low-fat, fat-free, or soy milk with calcium added



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