

Nutrition

fact sheet



The National Medical Association, the largest African-American physician's group in the U.S., recommends that the American public and African-Americans in particular, consume 3 to 4 servings of milk, cheese, or yogurt daily to reduce the risk of high blood pressure, obesity, and osteoporosis.

African-American Health and Dairy Foods

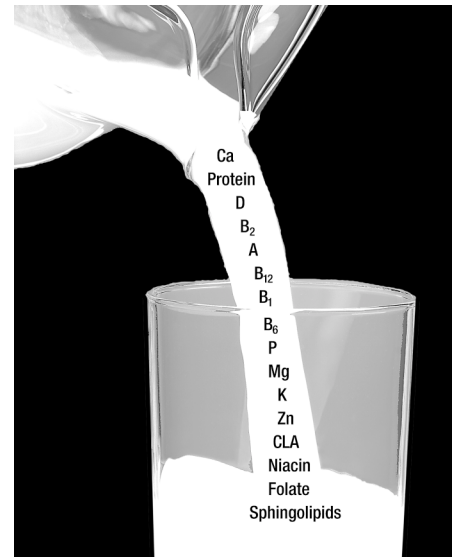
Eating at least 3 servings of milk, cheese, or yogurt a day has benefits beyond helping you meet your calcium needs. They may play an important role in reducing your risk for high blood pressure, obesity, and osteoporosis. This is of special concern for African-Americans who, as a group, have a higher risk for high blood pressure and obesity than the rest of the population.

Are you getting enough calcium?

Recent studies show that, on average, African-Americans consume less than one serving of dairy foods a day leading to a calcium shortage that is not made up by other calcium-containing foods. In fact, more than 80 percent of African-Americans fail to get their daily recommended amount of calcium. Check the chart below to see if you and your family are getting enough dairy.

Daily Dairy Needs

Age	Servings of dairy food to meet daily needs
4-8 years	3 servings
9-18 years	4 servings
19-50 years	3-4 servings
50+ years	4 servings



How much is a serving? Eight ounces or 1 cup of milk or yogurt, or 1 to 1½ ounces of cheese is one serving. Each serving provides about 300 mg of calcium.

Health Benefits of Milk, Cheese, or Yogurt

Dairy foods are nutrient rich and important for good health. In addition to calcium, milk, cheese and yogurt naturally provide a unique combination of essential nutrients including protein, phosphorus, potassium, riboflavin, vitamin A, vitamin B12, and magnesium.

This fact sheet is sponsored by the National Dairy Council. The contents have been reviewed by the American Dietetic Association's Fact Sheet Review Board. The appearance of this information does not constitute an endorsement by ADA of the sponsor's products or services. This fact sheet was prepared for the general public. Questions regarding its content and use should be directed to a dietetics professional.



Information

*The American
Dietetic
Association
Knowledge Center*

*For food and nutrition
information or for a
referral to a dietetics
professional in your
area call:*

800/366-1655

or visit:

www.eatright.org



NATIONAL DAIRY COUNCIL
www.nationaldairycouncil.org

Other resources

- **NHLBI DASH diet plan:**
www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/public/heart/hbp/dash/
- **Healthy Weight with Dairy:**
www.healthyweightwithdairy.com
- **National Medical Association:**
www.nmanet.org



American Dietetic Association
"Your link to nutrition and health"™
120 Riverside Plaza, Suite 2000
Chicago, Illinois 60606-6995

©2004 ADA. Reproduction of this fact sheet is permitted for educational purposes. Reproduction for sales purposes is not authorized. This fact sheet expires 1/1/2007.

Studies show that dairy foods can improve the overall quality of the diet and offer many health benefits.

Reduce high blood pressure—One in three African-Americans suffers from high blood pressure.

- High blood pressure increases the risk for cardiovascular disease, kidney disease, and stroke.
- The National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute recommends a diet to both prevent and treat high blood pressure that is low in fat, rich in fruits and vegetables and includes 3 servings per day of low-fat or fat-free milk, cheese or yogurt. This diet is called the DASH (Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension) diet.

Manage Weight—National health agencies estimate that more than 60 percent of African-Americans are overweight and that 21 percent of men and 38 percent of women are obese. A growing body of research suggests a positive link between the consumption of milk, cheese and yogurt with lower body weight when part of a balanced, reduced-calorie eating plan. Three servings a day of milk, cheese or yogurt provide the calcium your body needs in addition to helping you manage your weight. In an effort to reduce calories, be sure to enjoy low-fat or fat-free varieties often.

Recent studies also showed that children who routinely consumed adequate dairy foods and calcium are more likely to maintain a healthy body fat percentage.

Improve bone health—According to a recent analysis, 38 percent of African-American women have low bone density. Between 80 and 95 percent of fractures in African-American women over age 64 are due to

osteoporosis. In most cases, osteoporosis can be prevented with a calcium-rich diet adequate in vitamin D along with appropriate exercise.

Are You Lactose Intolerant?

You can still enjoy the benefits of dairy foods even if you have lactose intolerance by trying some of these proven tips:

- Enjoy yogurt. Yogurt with active cultures contains less lactose.
- Say "cheese please". Cheese is naturally low in lactose. Cheese makes a nutritious snack or addition to salads or main dishes.
- Drink small portions of milk with your favorite foods throughout the day to improve your ability to break down lactose, milk's natural sugar.
- Reduce it. Enjoy lactose-reduced or lactose-free milk and other dairy foods or look for the lactase enzyme tablet at your drug store.

Model healthy eating

Parents, don't underestimate your influence on your children's eating habits. They look to you for guidance on healthy eating. Studies show that mothers who drink milk have daughters who drink milk. Use these ideas to include more dairy foods in your family's meals and snacks:

- Make homemade Mac and Cheese with Cheddar and Colby, cheeses naturally low in lactose.
- Layer low-fat or fat-free yogurt, cereal and fruit for a delicious snack.
- Use low-fat or fat-free milk in place of water when preparing oatmeal, soups or hot cocoa.

Be Physically Active

To improve and maintain your health, include regular physical activity along with a balanced diet rich in dairy foods.