

The 2010 Dietary Guidelines for Americans notes that most Americans do not eat or drink enough milk and milk products or get enough calcium and vitamin D. Eating dairy can help individuals to meet the MyPlate recommendations and to get enough calcium and vitamin D. This insert provides information on the different types of milk products and how to choose cheese, yogurt, milk, and milk-based desserts.

CHEESE is a flavorful food that comes in a wide variety of forms. The main ingredient in natural cheese is milk, making it high in calcium, protein, and phosphorus. Milk is made into cheese using salt, bacterial cultures, and enzymes. Different textures and flavors can be produced by modifying the ingredients used in this process.

Written by Stephanie Kuo, Undergraduate Student in Dietetics and Nutrition, Fitness, and Health

Types of Cheeses

Soft

- High in moisture
- Mild flavor; aged types are a bit stronger in flavor and firmer in texture
- Fresh types include ricotta, cottage cheese, feta, mozzarella, and cream cheese
- Aged types include Brie and Camembert, which are great snacks or with fruit

Processed

- Made of a blend of different types of cheeses
- Examples are American cheese and cheese spreads

Hard

- Aged longer; easily grated; often used in cooking
- Examples are Parmesan, Romano, and Asiago

Semi-soft

- Made with whole milk and melt well when cooked; higher in fat
- Examples are Monterey Jack, Havarti, and Muenster

Semi-hard

- Mild to sharp in flavor; may also taste smoke, nutty, or sweet
- Examples are Colby and Swiss cheese

Blue-vein

- Generally the most pungent and flavorful
- Usually have a semi-soft, crumbly texture and appear white with blue-green veins
- Great on salads, sandwiches, and crackers
- Examples are Gorgonzola and Roquefort



1 cup of dairy is equal to: 2 slices of hard cheese, 1/3 cup shredded cheese, 3 slices of processed cheese, 1/2 cup ricotta cheese, or 2 cups of cottage cheese.

Nutrition Corner

Use the nutrition facts label to see what nutrients are provided in the specific cheese. These guidelines may be helpful when selecting cheese:

- Choose fat-free or low-fat varieties. If you do choose a high fat cheese, choose lower fat foods throughout the day. Lower fat varieties include Parmesan, Romano (grated), or part-skim mozzarella
- Choose low-sodium varieties when possible. In general, the softer and more fresh the cheese, the lower the sodium. Swiss, Monterey-Jack, ricotta, and Parmesan often have less sodium.
- For more calcium, try Swiss, Cheddar, ricotta, mozzarella, Monterey-Jack, Gouda, and Colby.
- For more protein, try Swiss, cottage, ricotta, mozzarella, Muenster, Monterey-Jack, Cheddar, Gouda, Colby, and provolone.

What if I'm Lactose Intolerant? Natural cheeses like Cheddar, Colby, Monterey Jack, mozzarella, and Swiss have very low amounts of lactose. The Institute of Medicine states that those with lactose intolerance can consume "virtually unrestricted amounts of reduced-fat hard cheeses."

YOGURT is an excellent way to consume dairy because it is a good source of calcium and protein, and is generally low in calories; however, not all yogurts are the same. Read below for more information.

Written by Jennifer Mansfield, Undergraduate Student in Dietetics and Nutrition

Types of Yogurt

Drinkable yogurt

Drinkable yogurts vary in amount of sugar and fat. In general, drinkable yogurts marketed for children may have a higher sugar content compared with those marketed for adults. Drinkable yogurts used as sports supplements may be higher in protein. Some varieties of drinkable yogurts may contain probiotics.



Fruit flavored and fruit on the bottom yogurt

Fruit flavored yogurts may be flavored with sugar and artificial flavoring rather than with real fruit. Fruit on the bottom yogurt has fruit at the bottom of the cup that can be mixed in as desired. Be careful to select fruit flavored and fruit on the bottom yogurts that are lower in added sugars.

Live active cultures and probiotics

Live active cultures are the bacteria that are added to ferment the milk, producing yogurt. Probiotics on the other hand, are added for health benefits. The exact species and strain of probiotic bacteria is usually listed on the food label. Different brands of probiotic yogurt may claim to help regulate the digestive system. When choosing yogurt, make sure the label says “live and active cultures.”

Lite (light) yogurts

These types of yogurt are lower in calories and fat. Low-calorie sweeteners are often used to reduce sugar and calories.

Greek yogurt

Greek yogurt has a creamy texture and has about twice the protein and half the carbohydrates that regular yogurt does. The difference is a result of the way regular yogurt is strained only two times, while Greek yogurt is strained three times.

What if I'm Lactose Intolerant? The live and active bacterial cultures present in yogurt digest some of the lactose in yogurt, making it easier to digest for those with lactose intolerance.

1 cup of dairy is equal to: 1 regular container of yogurt (8 fluid ounces) or 1 cup of yogurt.

Nutrition Corner

When choosing yogurt, consider:

- Greek yogurt has about twice the protein of other yogurts.
- Fat content of yogurt depends on the fat content of the milk used to make the yogurt. Look at the ingredient list to see what type of milk was used. For less fat, aim for yogurt made with fat-free or low-fat milk.
- Choose plain yogurt to avoid added sugars; you can sweeten the yogurt by yourself at home by adding fruit, jam, or honey.
- Try to choose yogurts with vitamin D and enough calcium to provide 25-30% of the Daily Value to help you meet your daily calcium needs.



MILK is an easy way to consume dairy because of the many ways it can be included in your diet. Many varieties are available, even those that do not need to be refrigerated such as nonfat dry milk.

Written by Hannah Boeh, MPH Graduate Student in Department of Health and Kinesiology

Types of Milk

Fluid Milk

Skim milk contains 0 grams of fat and has about 90 calories per cup. Whole milk can be transformed to skim milk by removing all of the cream. Adults and children older than 2 years of age should drink low-fat or fat-free milk.

2% milk has more fat content than skim milk and about 120 calories per cup.

Whole milk has the most fat compared to skim and 2% milk. It is recommended that all children 2 years and younger consume whole milk.

Flavored milk is sweetened by adding additional sugar. Reduced fat and low-fat varieties are available.

Other Common Milk Products

Buttermilk, or traditional buttermilk, is the liquid left after churning butter. Cultured buttermilk is made by adding bacteria that ferment the lactose in the milk, creating a tart, sour taste.

Half n' half is traditionally equal parts milk and cream. The most common uses of half n' half are as a creamer for coffee, but it can also be used to make ice cream.

Heavy whipping cream is an ingredient commonly used in baking because its high fat content creates a moist and tender product. Cream is the thick, fat-rich portion of the milk that rises to the top of fresh milk.

1 cup of dairy is equal to: 1 cup of milk or calcium-fortified soymilk, 1 half-pint container of milk or calcium fortified soymilk, or 1/2 cup of evaporated milk.

Nutrition Corner

When choosing milk:

- Choose fat-free or low-fat milk
- Enjoy flavored milk and other sweetened milks sparingly. They are a source of “empty calories” and added sugars.
- If selecting milk alternatives, choose those that are calcium and vitamin D-fortified, unsweetened, and the most similar in protein and other nutrients to cow’s milk.
- Use high-fat milk products, like heavy whipping cream, sparingly, or choose low-fat varieties.

Sources: <http://www.choosemyplate.gov/food-groups/dairy.html>; <http://www.choosemyplate.gov/food-groups/dairy-counts.html>; <http://www.healthyeating.org/Milk-Dairy/Health-Benefits-of-Milk/Article-Viewer/Article/49/Are-Alternative-Milks-Nutritionally-the-Same-as-Dairy-Milk.aspx>; <http://www.healthyeating.org/Milk-Dairy/Nutrients-in-Milk-Cheese-Yogurt/Nutrients-in-Milk.aspx>; <http://www.wisegeek.org/what-is-skim-milk.htm>; <http://extension.usu.edu/boxelder/files/uploads/fn142.pdf>; <http://www.wisegeek.com/what-is-evaporated-milk.htm>; <http://www.havemilk.com/article.asp?id=6798>; <http://www.californiadairy.pressroom.com/Products/Buttermilk>; <http://bakingbites.com/2011/11/11/what-is-half-and-half/>; <http://bakingbites.com/2010/04/what-is-heavy-cream/>. **Photo:** <http://pixabay.com/en/ohio-farm-rural-sky-clouds-fields-114092/>.

Shelf-stable Milk

Nonfat dry milk does not contain cream or water. It has the same nutrients as fluid milk, just in a dry state. Dry milk can be transformed to fluid milk by adding water. Dry milk may also be used in a variety of recipes such as mashed potatoes and casseroles.

Evaporated milk, also known as dehydrated milk, has roughly 60% of the water removed. Water can be added to create fluid milk, or it can be used “as is” in many dessert and baking recipes. Evaporated milk is known as sweetened condensed milk when sugar has been added.

Ultra high temperature milk is fluid milk that has been heated to extremely high temperatures for a short-time, effectively killing harmful bacteria to make it shelf-stable.

What if I’m Lactose-Intolerant?

Lactose-reduced and Lactose-free milk is designed for individuals who are sensitive to the lactose in cow’s milk. This milk is nutritionally similar to regular milk, just without lactose.

Calcium-fortified soymilk is lactose-free. This option is the most nutritionally similar to cow’s milk and can be used by individuals who have gluten and casein allergies as well that cannot drink cow’s milk.



MILK-BASED DESSERTS are desserts made from milk and/or milk products. MyPlate categorizes dairy products as those products that retain their calcium after processing, so milk-based desserts can be a source of calcium. Read below about different types of milk-based desserts.

Written by Briana Rapp, RD, CD

Types of Milk-based Desserts

Premium and Superpremium Ice Creams have the most fat of all ice creams and less air whipped into the product, making these types more dense and rich. Gelato also has less air whipped into the product. Gelato may also have less fat and more sugar.

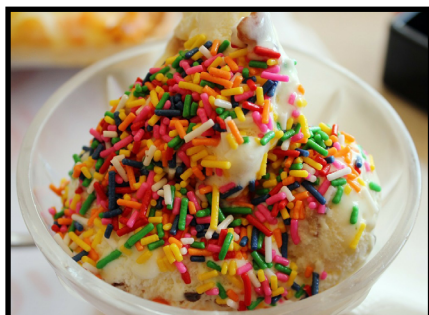
Regular Ice Creams have a minimum of 10% fat. Frozen custard also has at least 10% fat, but is made with egg yolks. This is also known as “French style” ice cream.

Reduced-fat, Light, Low-fat, Fat-free Ice Cream labeling terms have slightly different meanings, but in general, they offer a lower-fat product. Fat-free products contain 0 grams of fat. Light ice cream may have less fat or less calories than the regular or leading brand, or it may have both less fat and calories.

No-added-sugar and Sugar-free Ice Cream products are lower in sugar; sugar-free products generally have the least amount of sugar. No added sugar means that no additional sugar was added to make the ice cream. Sometimes low-calorie sweeteners are used to make the product sweet.

Frozen Dairy Dessert contains milk and/or cream, but does not meet FDA regulations to be called ice cream. These products offer a creamier texture and tend to be lower in fat than regular ice creams, but may have the same amount of calories.

What if I'm Lactose Intolerant? Frozen yogurt and ice cream may be tolerated nearly the same as a glass of milk. Lactose-free varieties are available.



1 cup of dairy is equivalent to: 1 cup pudding made with milk, 1 cup frozen yogurt, or 1.5 cups of ice cream.

Pudding, when made with milk, is considered a dairy product. Use low-fat or fat-free milk when making homemade pudding or instant pudding to reduce the amount of fat.

Frozen yogurt is similar to ice cream, but is made with live active cultures. However, the ingredients and nutrients can vary. Compare nutrition labels and look for “live and active cultures” when choosing frozen yogurt.

Sherbet is a fruit puree or fruit juice product combined with milk or milk products. It has no more than 2% fat, but is often higher in sugar and lower in calcium than ice cream.



Nutrition Corner

Milk-based desserts contribute to added sugars, cholesterol, and dietary fat intake and should be consumed in moderation:

- Ice creams that are lower in fat may help to reduce dietary fat intake, but could still have similar amounts of calories compared to the regular variety.
- Reduced or light ice creams are “reduced” or “light” compared against the regular type of the company’s own brand or the leading brand. Be sure to check labels because this could cause a large amount of variation between products that say reduced or light.
- Top your ice cream or frozen yogurt with fresh fruit or plain nuts rather than sugary syrup or other high-sugar, high-fat foods.
- Be careful about portion sizes. A serving of pudding, ice cream, or frozen yogurt is 1/2 cup.
- The amount of calcium and vitamin D in milk-based desserts varies between brands and types. Choose those with vitamin D when possible and consider the amount of calcium provided.

Sources: http://www.eatwisconsincheese.com/wisconsin/other_dairy/ice_cream.aspx; <http://aboutyogurt.com/index.asp?bid=27>; <http://www.choosemyplate.gov/food-groups/dairy.html>; <http://www.choosemyplate.gov/food-groups/dairy-counts.html>; <http://www.breyers.com/home/about>; <http://www.healthyeating.org/Milk-Dairy/Nutrients-in-Milk-Cheese-Yogurt/Dairy-Desserts.aspx>. **Photos:** (bottom left): <http://pixabay.com/en/ice-cream-ice-cream--candy-sprinkles-214986/>; (top right): <http://pixabay.com/en/ice-cream-oreo-frapuccino-waffles-246161/>