

The many health benefits of dairy

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the slogan "Milk, it does a body good." But as different health fads have emerged since that slogan was first uttered, including an increased availability of dairy alternatives, dairy has been somewhat pushed aside, leaving many people to question if it is a friend or foe.

According to Vasanti Malik, a nutrition research scientist with the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health, dairy isn't necessary for maintaining optimal health for humans. However, it is one of the best and easiest ways to get ample amounts of vitamin D, protein and calcium, each of which keeps vital organs, muscles and bones functioning properly. Here's a deeper look at dairy in the average diet.

What is dairy?

Dairy products consist of a variety of

cows, goats and sheep. ministration. These include milk, yo-Many people recall gurt, cheese, kefir, ice cream, butter, ghee, cream, cream cheese, calcium may play critisour cream, whey products, and casein. Dairy and density, helping to products are often categorized as "regular," "whole," "reduced fat," "low-fat," or "skim." These characterizations indicate the fat content in a given item.

Nutritional benefits of dairy

Dairyproducts are nutrient-dense and great sources of protein, calcium and vitamins. Protein builds and repairs tions that it is bad for muscle tissue; carbohydrates in milk provide energy; and calcium and phosphorous can help strengthen bones and that looked at 20 studteeth. Vitamin D helps ies involving around promote the absorption 25,000 people found no of calcium. Dairy also association between the contains riboflavin, vi- consumption of most tamin A, pantothenic dairy products (includacid, potassium and ing whole fat varieties) niacin. One eight-ounce and cardiovascular disserving of milk contains ease. The only exception the recommended daily was milk, but the results values of these nutrients showed one would have products that are from based on guidelines from to drink almost a liter of

Bone health

Dairy protein and cal roles in bone health reduce the risk for osteoporosis, states the Dairy Alliance. Eating and drinking foods rich in calcium may offset a possible protein-calcium loss that occurs with aging, thus protecting bone health.

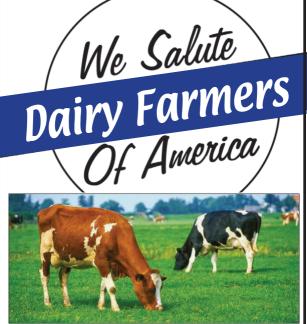
Heart health benefits

Some people avoid dairy because of percepcardiac health. A report presented at the 2018 Congress of the European Society of Cardiology

mammals, including the U.S. Food & Drug Ad- milk a day for a higher risk of cardiovascular disease. Still, the American Heart Association recommends adults choose fat-free or low-fat dairy products whenever possible. Also, a 2018 study published in the British Journal of Nutrition found men who ate plenty of fermented dairy products like yogurt and cheese had a smaller risk of coronary artery disease than men who ate less.

Additional benefits of dairy include a reduced risk of childhood obesity and an improvement in body composition and weight loss during energy restriction in adults, according to a 2016 report in the Journal of Food and Nutrition Research.

Dairy provides many health benefits. People concerned about their overall health should work recommended dairy servings into their daily diets.



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Dairy dietary guidelines

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balanced diet is unde- cups of dairy per day, more calcium, potasniable. An eating plan with that number in- sium, vitamin A, and vithat includes foods from creasing to three cups tamin D per calorie. the various food groups ensures individuals get an assortment of healthy vitamins, minerals and nutrients. Certain foods may need to be avoided by individuals with preexisting conditions, but those without such restrictions can follow dietary guidelines from the United States Departments of Agriculture and Health and Human Services. Those guidelines include various recommendations regarding dairy consumption. • The USDA notes that the amount of dairy an individual needs depends on the person's age, sex, height, weight, and level of physical activity. In addition, women who are pregnant or breastfeeding will have different dairy consumption needs than women who are not expecting or breastfeeding. Individuals can speak with their physicians to determine how much dairy they should consume, and they also can utilize the MyPlate Plan at myplate.gov. The MyPlate Plan allows users to enter information specific to them (i.e., weight, height, age, etc.) so they can learn how much dairy they should be consuming. • USDA guidelines encourage most individuals to consume three servings of dairy per day. The organization's "Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2020-2025" recommend that adults consume the equivalent

of three cups of dairy organization American

per day. The guidelines Bone HealthTM reports indicate that children that low-fat or fat-free The value of a well- should consume 21/2 dairy products provide



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around the time children reach age 9.

dairy options are recom- Individuals with more mended. Low-fat or fat- questions about dairy free products can quell can consult with their common concerns about physicians and/or visit dairy products, including www.dietaryguidethat they're high in fat, lines.gov to learn calories and sodium. The more.

Dairy is a vital component of a well-bal-• Low-fat or fat-free anced, nutritious diet.

Photos of the Green County Fair **Beef Cattle Show** will be in the June 29 issue of the

Record-Herald.

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