*Ten Reasons to Eat Dairy*

By:   
[Sue Gilbert](http://yourtotalhealth.ivillage.com/sue-gilbert.html)

**TEN REASONS TO EAT DAIRY**

1. Dairy foods contain high-quality protein. Milk has all the essential amino acids, so it's as good as meat or fish as a source of protein. One 8-ounce glass of milk or an ounce of cheese provides 8 grams of protein. Fat-free milk is one of the leanest protein sources available.
2. A small amount of milk protein, when combined with vegetable protein, markedly boosts the nutritional quality of vegetable protein.
3. Milk is a superb source of riboflavin, a B vitamin necessary to convert food into energy. An eight ounce glass of milk or a cup of yogurt provides 25 percent of your daily needs for this nutrient.
4. Milk, yogurt and cheese are our body's best sources of calcium. One 8-ounce cup of milk provides 30 percent of your daily requirement, and it is more readily absorbed than calcium from other sources. Calcium helps build bone mass and maintain bone density. Because of this, it is an important food in preventing osteoporosis.
5. Milk provides vitamin D, a nutrient essential for optimal absorption of calcium and bone mineralization. An 8-ounce glass gives you 25 percent of the recommended daily intake.
6. Milk is a great fluid for after exercise. It has water for hydration, calcium and electrolytes like potassium and sodium to replace what's lost in sweat, carbohydrate to replace energy in muscle, and protein to speed recovery.

* Eating yogurt, cheese and especially lowfat milk helps reduce the risk of certain cancers, including colon, lung, stomach and cervical cancer.
* Lowfat milk and other dairy products may prevent high blood pressure.
* A cup of yogurt a day boosts immune function and helps reduce the incidence and severity of colds, hay fever and other infections.
* Milk is one of the most nutrient-dense foods available. It contains significant amounts of nine nutrients, including protein, calcium, phosphorous, potassium, vitamin D, vitamin A, riboflavin, vitamin B 12 and carbohydrates.

**20 EASY LOW-FAT WAYS TO INCORPORATE DAIRY INTO YOUR DIET**

**Breakfast**

1. Top plain or vanilla yogurt with dried or fresh fruit, or a spoon of fresh fruit spread.
2. When making oatmeal, substitute low-fat milk for water.
3. Make a cafe latte by adding espresso to a mug that is three-quarters filled with hot milk.
4. Add shredded low-fat cheese to your scrambled eggs or omelette.

**Lunch or Afternoon Snack**

1. Low-fat cottage cheese or ricotta with fresh berries.
2. A green leaf salad with shaved Parmesan, Asiago, crumbled blue or feta cheese.
3. Add slices of cheese to a veggie sandwich.
4. For a snack, try yogurt-covered raisins.
5. Make egg salad with low-fat mayonnaise and fresh chopped dill. Serve it in pita bread with lettuce or sprouts.
6. Make a banana shake with milk, fresh bananas and frozen low-fat vanilla yogurt.

**Dinner and Dessert**

* Make a white pizza by topping it with low-fat ricotta and shredded mozzarella cheese instead of the traditional red sauce.
* For a quick and different meal, make huevos rancheros by scrambling eggs with diced tomatoes, green peppers and mild chilies. Serve with low-fat sour cream in a flour tortilla wrap.
* Make a main course Greek salad by tossing sliced cucumbers, tomatoes, red onions, black olives and green peppers with oregano, grilled shrimp and lots of cubed feta cheese.
* Make rice pudding with low-fat milk, raisins and cinnamon.
* For a different spring appetizer, serve fresh strawberries with low-fat sour cream for dipping.
* Start your meal with a wedge of cheese, sliced French bread and fruit, such as apples, pears or grapes.
* Make a low-fat vegetable dip with yogurt, low-fat mayonnaise and fresh herbs.
* Make a cold summer soup with a buttermilk or yogurt base.
* Make a root beer float with diet or regular root beer and low-fat vanilla ice cream or frozen yogurt.
* Serve low-fat ice cream or frozen yogurt with berries.
* **Article Attack: “*Ten Reasons To Eat Dairy*”**
* *Hand out the article and ask the students to read the assigned article. After all of the students have read the article, hand out the following instructions:*
* Step 1: Reread the assigned article.
* As you read:
* Highlight in yellow all the foods you already eat.
* Highlight in pink all the foods you don’t eat.
* Highlight in blue all the nutrients that come from dairy products.
* Step 2: Create a menu for one day to include dairy at every meal.
* **Menu**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  |  |
| Breakfast |  | |
| Snack |  | |
| Lunch |  | |
| Snack |  | |
| Dinner |  | |

* Step 3: Draw your favorite meal on the back of this paper.