

LOW FAT DAIRY

BUILDING HEALTHY COMMUNITIES



The Dairy Group includes milk, yogurt, cheese, and fortified soymilk. They provide calcium, vitamin D, potassium, protein, and other nutrients needed for good health throughout life. Choices should be low-fat or fat-free—to cut calories and saturated fat.

TIPS to EAT LOW FAT or FAT FREE DAIRY:

- Drink fat-free (skim) or low-fat (1%) milk. If you drink whole milk, switch to lower fat versions. This cuts saturated fat and calories but doesn't reduce calcium or other essential nutrients.
- Boost potassium and vitamin D, and cut sodium! Choose fat-free or low-fat milk or yogurt more often than cheese. Milk and yogurt have more potassium and less sodium than most cheeses. Also, almost all milk and many yogurts are fortified with vitamin D.
- Use fat-free or low-fat milk on cereal and oatmeal. Top fruit salads and baked potatoes with low-fat yogurt instead of higher fat toppings such as sour cream.
- Choose cheeses with less fat! Many cheeses are high in saturated fat. Look for "reduced-fat" or "low-fat" on the label.
- Regular cream cheese, cream, and butter are not part of the dairy food group. They are high in saturated fat and have little or no calcium.
- Switch ingredients! When recipes such as dips call for sour cream, substitute plain yogurt. Use fat-free evaporated milk instead of cream, and try low-fat or fat-free ricotta cheese as a substitute for cream cheese.
- Watch for added sugars! Flavored milk, fruit yogurts, frozen yogurt, and puddings can contain a lot of added sugars. Get your nutrients from plain dairy foods without added sugars.
- Make or order coffee with fat-free or low-fat milk instead of cream!
- If you are lactose intolerant, try lactose-free milk, drink smaller amounts of milk at a time, or try soymilk (soy beverage). Check the Nutrition Facts label to be sure your soymilk has about 300 mg of calcium. Calcium in some leafy greens is well absorbed.
- Dairy foods are especially important to build the growing bones of kids and teens. Eat or drink low-fat or fat-free dairy foods with meals and snacks—for everyone's benefit.



What counts as a cup in the Dairy Group? 1 cup of milk, yogurt, or soy beverage; 1 1/2 ounces of natural cheese; or 2 ounces of processed cheese. **How much is needed?** Older children, teens, and adults need 3 cups a day, while children 4 to 8 years old need 2 1/2 cups, and children 2 to 3 years old need 2 cups.