

Fat Flexibility:

Learning How a Variety of Dairy Foods Can Fit Into Healthy Eating Patterns

Funded by National Dairy Council



A study published in *Frontiers in Nutrition* found one of the three recommended servings of dairy foods can be a whole milk (3.25%) or reduced-fat (2%) option for Americans 9 years and older while staying within the current Dietary Guidelines for Americans (DGA) recommendations for saturated fat, calories and sodium intake, especially if the choices are reduced-fat or whole milk.^{1*}

While the DGA recommends low-fat or fat-free dairy foods,² a growing body of recent evidence indicates that consuming whole milk dairy foods does not lead to increased risk of adverse cardiometabolic outcomes, including type 2 diabetes (T2D), cardiovascular disease (CVD) and stroke.³ In some studies, consuming whole milk dairy foods was linked to a lower risk of adverse cardiometabolic health outcomes.³

**The researchers utilized the same food pattern modeling procedures as the 2015-2020 DGA to assess the nutrient composition of seven alternative models of the 2000-calorie Healthy U.S.-Style Eating Pattern.*

Did you know?

Americans ≥ 9 years of age can allow for some fat flexibility and make one of their three daily servings of dairy whole- or reduced-fat – like whole milk, yogurt or cheese – and still fall within recommendations for saturated fat.

Whole Milk 8 oz.	Reduced-Fat Milk 8 oz.	Low-Fat Milk 8 oz.	Fat-Free Milk 8 oz.
3.25% 8 g Fat	2% 5g Fat	1% 2.5g Fat	$\leq 0.5\%$ 0g Fat
150 calories	120 calories	100 calories	80 calories
<----- 8 grams of Protein ----->			
<----- 9 Essential Nutrients ----->			



National Dairy Council's (NDC) mission is to bring to life the dairy community's shared vision of a healthy, happy, sustainable world with science as our foundation. On behalf of America's dairy farmers and importers, NDC strives to help people thrive across the lifespan through science-based information on dairy's contributions to nutrition, health and sustainable food systems.

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SET Yourself Up for Fat Flexibility

Fat is more than just a calorie source, it provides flavor, creaminess and can regulate appetite after a meal.^{4,5} Science suggests that we can make room to enjoy whole and reduced-fat dairy foods.

Swap one of your three servings of low-fat or fat-free dairy foods for a whole milk or reduced-fat dairy option.

Ensure your snacks stack up and make every bite count.

Think about portions (1 serving of cheese is 1 ½ ounce - about the size of 4 dice).

Homemade Labneh



Ingredients

- 1 (32 ounce) container of plain yogurt (whole or reduced-fat)
- ½ teaspoon salt
- Garnish: 1 tablespoon olive oil and 1-2 teaspoons za'atar seasoning

Instructions

1. In a small bowl, add salt to yogurt and mix.
2. Line a fine-mesh strainer with cheesecloth and place over the top of a medium bowl.
3. Spoon the yogurt into the strainer with the cheesecloth and wrap the sides of the cheesecloth over the yogurt to protect it.
4. Store in the refrigerator for 24-48 hours (the liquid whey will drain into the bowl).
5. Discard the liquid and move cheese into a serving dish.
6. Drizzle with olive oil and sprinkle with za'atar seasoning. Enjoy alone, spread on crackers or with vegetables.

Fitting one serving of reduced-fat or whole milk dairy into a healthy eating pattern

Enjoy a glass of the same whole milk your toddler is drinking

Opt for reduced-fat or whole milk yogurt at breakfast

Try whole milk cottage cheese with crackers for a satisfying snack

Pair sliced apple with your favorite cheese

Enjoy ricotta & berries as a refreshing after dinner treat

References

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