

▶ **Workshop: Beginner Nutrition** Chapter 4, Lesson 1: Dairy Foods



Milk It for All It's Worth! This week, we will focus on the dairy food group, which includes milk, cheese, yogurt, and more. Because many dairy products tend to have a lot of fat, we will give you tips to help you choose lower-fat dairy products when possible.

Why Are Dairy Foods Important?

Eating dairy products promotes good bone health, which may reduce the risk of osteoporosis. Dairy foods provide you with essential nutrients like calcium, potassium, vitamin D, and protein. Consuming lower-fat dairy is important because full-fat versions are higher in saturated fat and cholesterol, which can raise “bad” (LDL) cholesterol levels and negatively impact your health.

How Many Cups Should You Eat Daily?

Adult men and women should eat 3 cups of dairy every day. To avoid added fat and calories, eat and drink low-fat, reduced fat or fat-free dairy products when possible.

What Counts as a Cup of Dairy?

The following are examples of what counts as a one cup equivalent of dairy:

- 1 cup or half-pint carton of milk
- 1 8-ounce serving of yogurt
- 1.5 ounces hard cheese (cheddar), 1/3 cup shredded cheese, 2 ounces processed cheese (American slices)
- 1 cup frozen yogurt or 1.5 cups ice cream

Choosing Low-Fat Dairy Options

Try these tips to help you choose healthy dairy products:

- If you usually drink whole milk, gradually switch to reduced fat milk (2%), then low-fat milk (1%), and then fat-free milk (skim).
- Eat fat-free or low-fat yogurt as a snack.
- Use fat-free (skim) milk in your coffee.
- Top chili or soup with shredded, reduced fat cheese.
- Make low-fat or fat-free yogurt smoothies in the blender.

Next Steps

1. Read “How Much Food from the Dairy Group Is Needed Daily?”
2. Read “What Counts as a Cup in the Dairy Group?”
3. Track this week’s dairy intake online in the Health Trackers section of the Wellness website (Optional)

▶ **Remember** Eat 3 cups of dairy food each day to promote good bone health.