

Kids and Calcium

Encouraging kids to consume at least three servings a day of low-fat or fat-free milk, cheese or yogurt is an easy way to help them build and maintain strong, healthy bones and teeth. This is especially important during the ages of 9-18 when bones are growing their fastest. Calcium is the key nutrient responsible for building strong bones, and there is no better food source available than dairy foods.



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Review the Research

Research studies have shown that an increase in bone fractures in children may be the result of a decrease in bone mass resulting from lower consumption of calcium containing milk and dairy products. Adequate calcium intake will help strengthen bones and may help to protect from bone fractures.

A 2006 report by the American Academy of Pediatrics indicates that adequate calcium intake for children and adolescents is necessary to develop peak bone mass, an important factor in possibly reducing the risk of fractures as well as osteoporosis later in life. The study goes on to report that this is especially important during adolescence when most bone mineral accretion (or increase in bone size) occurs. (Pediatrics. 2006; 117(2): 578-585)

Another study reported in the *Journal of the American Dietetic Association*, shows how children ages 3 to 13 years who avoided drinking milk for prolonged periods of time had low dietary calcium intake, low bone mineral density and experienced more bone fractures than children who consumed milk. (Journal of the American Dietetic Association. 2004; 104:25-253)

Check it! Did you know that one piece of cheese about the size of an adult's thumb, has the same amount of calcium as an 8-ounce glass of milk?

Choosing Three Servings Every Day

Milk, cheese and yogurt are easy to include in your child's diet every day. Choose reduced-fat, low-fat or fat-free options to fit nutrition needs.

Milk-- 8 ounces (1 cup)

Natural Cheese-- 1 1/2 ounces

Yogurt-- 8 ounces (1 cup)

It's quick and easy for kids to get 3 Every Day! Serve milk and flavored milk with meals, offer fruit and yogurt for breakfast and snack time and add cheese to sandwiches or salads. For more great ideas and recipes featuring Wisconsin cheese, milk and yogurt, visit www.EatWisconsinCheese.com and www.NationalDairyCouncil.org/recipes.

It's easy! For parties at school, share Three Every Day with your child's classroom by bringing in a platter of cheese cubes or a delicious bowl of strawberries with a vanilla-flavored yogurt dip. At home, serve flavored milk as a delicious and nutritious after school snack.

Fast Facts

2010 DGA Daily Recommendations

The 2010 Dietary Guidelines for Americans (DGA) encourage daily servings of low-fat or fat-free milk and dairy products as follows:

Adults & Children	9 years and older	3 servings
Children	4-8 years	2.5 servings
Children	2-3 years	2 servings

The DGA also emphasize the importance of establishing good milk drinking habits at a young age because children will then be more likely to continue drinking milk as adults.

Growing Bones Need Calcium

Fast growing bones need calcium! Because 90% of children's adult bone mass is established by age 17, sufficient calcium is critical. Unfortunately, fewer than one in ten girls and only one in four boys ages 9-13 consume enough calcium in their diet. If kids do not supply their bodies with sufficient calcium now, it will be difficult to make up for this missing calcium later in life.

Dairy Foods Contain Calcium and Other Nutrients Missing From Children's Diets

Dairy foods are an excellent source of three of the five nutrients that are lacking in children's diets: calcium, potassium and Vitamin D. These nutrients in combination with magnesium, phosphorus and protein, also found in milk, work together to nourish and build strong bones and teeth in children.

Dairy Foods are the Best Natural Food Source

Milk is the number one natural dietary source of calcium, Vitamin D and potassium in the American diet. Dairy foods are an excellent and readily available source of essential nutrients, including calcium, magnesium, phosphorus, potassium and protein to help children build and maintain strong bones.

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