

Milk Matters on Every Menu!

Children today are guzzling more soft drinks, sweetened fruit-flavoured beverages, 'energy' drinks and sports drinks than ever before. These trendy beverages are low in nutrients and high in calories from added sugar. Some research suggests that consuming high amounts of soft drinks or other sugar-sweetened beverages is linked to overweight and obesity in children^{1,2}.

As well, these nutritionally poor beverages often take the place of healthier ones, such as milk. Half of children between the ages of six and 12 years do not consume any milk products at lunch³. Milk provides many of the nutrients, such as calcium, vitamins D and A, protein that growing children need to develop strong bones. Children who don't have milk at lunch are unlikely to meet their daily calcium needs⁴. To prevent osteoporosis later in life, it is important that children get enough calcium and vitamin D by consuming the number of Food Guide Servings of Milk and Alternatives recommended in *Canada's Food Guide*.

So... boost energy levels and power up bones! Milk products make great meal and snack choices at home or at school.

How much is enough?

For the Milk and Alternatives food group, *Canada's Food Guide* recommends:

Children 2 – 3 years	2 Food Guide Servings per day
Children 4 – 8 years	2 Food Guide Servings per day
Children 9 – 13 years	3 - 4 Food Guide Servings per day
Teens 14 – 18 years	3 - 4 Food Guide Servings per day

Best buys in milk products

- Milk made with skim milk powder is a great low-cost choice for cooking or baking
- Processed cheeses are a good source of calcium but they cost more and are high in sodium
- Save 20 to 30 per cent by buying 'no name' or store-wrapped cheese
- Buy large containers of yogurt rather than individual serving-sized containers
- 'No name' yogurt or store brands are cheaper

¹ Pediatric Overweight: a review of the literature. 2001. Center for Weight and Health, University of California, Berkeley.

² Malik, VS. Schulze, MB. Hu, FB. Intake of sugar-sweetened beverages and weight gain: a systematic review. *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition*. 2006;84:278-88.

³ Market Facts, 1998. 1997 Canadian Eating Habits.

⁴ Johnson, RK. Panely, C. Wang, MQ. 1998. The association between noon-time beverage consumption and the diet quality of school-aged children. *Journal of Children and Nutrition Management*, 2:95.

What is one Food Guide Serving?

One Food Guide Serving is:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 250 mL (1 cup) milk or reconstituted powdered milk • 250 mL (1 cup) fortified soy beverage • 125 mL (1/2 cup) canned (evaporated) milk • 175 mL (3/4 cup) yogurt or kefir • 50 g cheese (3" x 1" x 1" or 1½ oz) <p><i>Each full serving has about the same amount of calcium</i></p>
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Offer at least one serving from the Milk and Alternatives food group at breakfast, lunch and snack times!

Increase the calcium count on your menus!

- Offer milk or chocolate milk more often than juice as a beverage
- Mix milk-based 'smoothies' or fruit shakes for tasty snacks
- Top waffles or pancakes with yogurt and fruit
- Snack on low fat cheddar cheese cubes with apple slices or dried fruit
- Broil low fat sliced cheese and tomato on a toasted English muffin
- Start the day with fruit salad or crunchy cereal topped with yogurt
- Make hot chocolate with milk, not water

Did you know that cream cheese and cheese spreads are not part of the Milk and Alternatives food group? Because they contain little calcium and protein, cream cheese and cheese spreads should be used more like butter or margarine.

Dare to Compare	Calcium	Protein
2% Milk (250 mL / 1 cup)	300 mg	9 g
Cheese spread eg, Cheese Whiz (15 mL / 1 tbsp)	90 mg	2.7 g
Cream cheese (30 mL / 2 tbsp)	23.4 mg	2.4 g

Reminder:

Looking for a healthy fundraiser? For information on starting a milk program at your school, contact Dairy Farmers of Canada (Ontario) at 1-888-730-MILK or go to the website at www.dairygoodness.ca/en/Teachers/EducationalProgramsResources/Prov_Ontario/ElementarySchoolMilk/ESMP.htm.

Adapted from materials produced by the Northern Healthy Eating Project, 2004

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