

Get the  
**Facts**  
on **Dairy**



**T**he beverages and foods in today's dairy aisle have changed a lot from the days of clear glass bottles on doorsteps. Now you'll find low-fat, non-fat, organic, natural, traditional and dozens of flavors and packaging choices. Labels shout health or nutrition claims that can be confusing. It's enough to drive any discerning shopper to distraction.



Regardless of the label all dairy options sold in the store are wholesome and safe to enjoy. Every dairy food sold in the store is tested, re-tested and regulated to make sure it's the highest possible quality. However, some confusion remains about dairy products and it is important to get the facts:

**Myth: Organic milk is healthier than regular milk.**

**Fact:** There is no scientific evidence that organic milk is superior with regard to food safety or nutrition. All milk is required to be tested to the same standards. Organic and regular milk contain the same nine essential vitamins and minerals that make dairy foods an important part of your diet.

**Myth: People who are lactose intolerant have to avoid all dairy foods.**

**Fact:** Most people who are lactose intolerant can eat some dairy foods, such as lactose-reduced or lactose-free milk, hard cheeses and yogurt. New research shows most lactose intolerant individuals can drink up to two glasses of regular milk a day with no symptoms. The key is to build slowly. Milk and dairy foods provide many important nutrients for good health.



**Myth: Pesticides are overused and end up in milk.**

**Fact:** Pesticides are not a health concern in dairy foods. Milk goes through stringent testing to make sure it is safe to drink. If tests show pesticides, the milk is disposed of immediately, preventing it from entering the food supply. Dairy farmers consistently meet or exceed regulations on pesticide use.

**Myth: All milk – except organic milk – contains antibiotics.**

**Fact:** All milk is carefully tested for antibiotics. The U.S. dairy industry conducts more than 3.5 million tests each year on milk to keep it safe and wholesome for the public. In rare cases where milk tests positive for antibiotics, it is disposed of immediately. Dairy farmers must pay for the rejected milk, giving them a strong financial incentive to keep their milk free of antibiotics.



**Myth: Only whole milk contains vitamin D.**

**Fact:** All milk regardless of the fat content is fortified with vitamin D. Three eight-ounce glasses of low-fat or fat-free milk provide 75 percent of the recommended daily value of vitamin D, which is critical for bone development. All milk also provides calcium, potassium, phosphorus, protein and riboflavin.

**Myth: Whole milk has more nutrients than lower fat milk.**

**Fact:** Low-fat and fat-free milk are just as nutrient-rich as whole milk. All milk has calcium and vitamin D for strong bones and teeth; calcium, protein and magnesium for healthy blood pressure and protein for muscle growth.



**Myth: Flavored milk isn't good for children because of its sugar content.**

**Fact:** Flavored milk is an excellent choice for children. A new study published in the *Journal of the American Dietetic Association* found that children and teens who drank flavored milk had better overall nutrition and lower body weights than those who didn't drink milk.

**Myth: Unpasteurized milk offers more health benefits than pasteurized milk.**

**Fact:** The opposite is the case. Unpasteurized or raw milk, and foods made from it, can pose serious health risks to you and your family. Outbreaks of tuberculosis, listeria and salmonella have been traced back to the consumption of unpasteurized milk and other foods made from raw milk such as unpasteurized soft cheeses. It is illegal to sell raw milk in most states.

**Myth: Soy beverages are a healthful substitute for cow's milk.**

**Fact:** No, a recent study from Creighton University in Omaha found the calcium put into soy beverages is 25 percent less absorbable by the body than the naturally occurring calcium in regular milk. Your best source for bone-building calcium continues to be cow's milk. You only need three servings of dairy every day to meet your calcium needs. And it's much less expensive than soy beverages.

