

# Marvellous Milk Products



“Drink your milk – it’ll make your bones strong.” For decades, parents have spoken these words at the dinner table day after day after day, and it still holds true.

## Milk and Alternatives are 1 of 4 important food groups in Eating Well with Canada’s Food Guide.

Together with Vegetables and Fruit, Grain Products, and Meat and Alternatives, they form a tried and true blueprint for healthy eating.

### Tasty and versatile!

Ice cold milk, smooth and creamy yogurt and cheese from around the world can be enjoyed on their own or combined with other foods to make everything from appealing appetizers and dips, salads and dinner dishes to delicious desserts.

### Provide a variety of nutrients.

Milk, yogurt and cheese provide protein, vitamins including vitamin A and D and minerals including calcium,

phosphorous and magnesium. It’s important to have 500 mL (2 cups) of milk every day for adequate vitamin D for healthy bones. If you don’t drink milk choose a fortified soy beverage.

### Milk isn’t just for kids!

Milk contains all the building blocks for healthy bones and teeth. Canada’s Food Guide recommends 2-4 servings of Milk and Alternatives per day, depending on your age.

For children and teens, Milk and Alternatives are great sources of the important building blocks for strong bones and teeth. And even though adult and senior bones don’t appear to be growing, milk products provide essential nutrients that work to keep bones strong. Healthy eating along with regular weight-bearing exercise such as walking or dancing can help to prevent osteoporosis, a condition which leaves bones weak, thin and more likely to break.

Age	# of Food Guide Servings of Milk and Alternatives
Toddlers 2-3 years	2
Children 4-8 years	2
Youth 9-13 years	3-4
Teens 14-18 years	3-4
Adults 19-50 years	2
Adults 51 years and older	3

Trusted advice from dietitians. [www.dietitians.ca](http://www.dietitians.ca)

## Tips for choosing and enjoying Milk and Alternatives

### Compare your choices to Food Guide

#### Servings!

One serving of Milk and Alternatives equals one 250 mL (8-ounce) glass of milk or fortified soy beverage, 2 slices of processed cheese, 50 g (1 1/2 ounces) of cheese (the size of 3 one-inch cubes) or 175 gm (3/4 cup) yogurt.

**Chocolate and other flavoured milks** contain all the nutrients of white milk, but with more sugar.

#### Make lower fat choices more often.

You will find %MF or %BF on food labels for milk, cheese and yogurt. The percentage of milk fat (%MF) or butterfat (%BF) is the amount of fat by weight in the milk product. For example, 3.25% (homogenized milk) has more fat than 2% or 1% milk. Skim milk has the least amount of fat with less than 0.5% fat. Regardless of the MF or BF content, all fluid milk contains the same calcium, vitamins and minerals.

**Shake up a wonderful breakfast** by whirling 1 cup (250 mL) yogurt, 1/2 cup (125 mL) orange juice, and 1 medium banana in the blender. Top it with some fresh berries for added crunch and color.

**Use fluid milk** instead of water when preparing canned cream soups. Or try adding skim milk powder to meat loaf, sauces or casseroles.

#### Use evaporated 2% or whole milk instead of whipping or cereal cream in cream sauces.

You'll get the velvety smooth texture, more calcium and save on added fat.

#### Cream cheese, ice cream and sour cream are calcium poor choices.

While made from milk, these foods contain less calcium than milk, yogurt or cheese.

**If you don't drink milk** enjoy fortified soy beverages. They are available in different flavours and can be used as a beverage, on cereals and for cooking and baking. If you drink less than 2 cups (500 mL) of milk or fortified soy beverage daily, you will probably need a vitamin D supplement.

**If you are lactose intolerant**, you can buy special milk in which the lactose has already been broken down. You can also use chewable lactase tablets. Try hard cheeses and yogurt, as they are often easier to digest for people who are lactose intolerant.

#### Other foods contain calcium, but don't provide all of the important nutrients found in milk products.

Vegetables such as bok choy, broccoli and kale and nuts such as almonds and sesame seeds contain calcium. However, you need to eat a large amount to equal the calcium from one glass of milk. For example, you would need to eat 750 mL (2 1/2 cups) of broccoli OR 250 mL (1 cup) of almonds OR 45 mL (3 tablespoons) of sesame seeds to obtain the calcium that is found in 250mL (1 cup) of milk. These foods also don't provide the vitamin D that is added to milk.