

Build a Healthy Plate With Milk



Nutrition and Wellness Tips for Young Children: Provider Handbook for the Child and Adult Care Food Program

Children who consume dairy products such as milk, milk substitutes, yogurt, and cheese get many important nutrients and have healthier diets than those who don't. However, many children ages 2 to 3 years, and most children 4 years and older, do not consume enough milk and dairy products. You can help by offering fat-free and low-fat milk during the day to:



- Provide children with nutrients such as protein, calcium, vitamin D, and potassium.
- Help build strong bones, teeth, and muscles in growing children.
- Increase the chance that children will drink milk when they are older.

NOTE: “Milk” refers to pasteurized fluid types such as unflavored or flavored whole milk, low-fat milk, fat-free (skim) milk, or cultured buttermilk that meet State and local standards for such milk. All milk should contain vitamins A and D at levels specified by the Food and Drug Administration and must be consistent with State and local standards for such milk.



CACFP Crediting Tip:
Yogurt and cheese credit as a meat alternate, and not as a part of the fluid milk requirement of the CACFP meal pattern. See the Meat and Meat Alternate tip sheet on page 19 for more information.



Fat-Free = Skim Milk
Low-Fat = 1% Fat Milk
Reduced-Fat = 2% Fat Milk
Full Fat = Whole Milk

CACFP Crediting Tip:
Remember, cream cheese, whipped cream, and butter are not part of the milk component and are not creditable in CACFP. They are high in solid fat and have little or no calcium.

What types of milk should I offer children over 2 years old?

Fat-free and low-fat (1%) milk options have the same amount of calcium and other important nutrients as whole and reduced-fat (2%) milks, but much less fat. Starting at age 2, children should drink only:

- ▶ **Fat-free or low-fat (1%) milk, or**
- ▶ **Fat-free, or low-fat, lactose-free or lactose-reduced milk.**

Whole and reduced-fat milks (2%) contain high amounts of saturated fat and *may not*, under USDA’s CACFP requirements, be served to children over 2 years of age. While dietary fats are needed for children’s growth and development, children 2 years and older generally consume enough fats in their diet without consuming fat from milk.



How can I serve a variety of fat-free and low-fat milk and dairy products?

- ▶ **Offer unflavored, fat-free, and low-fat milks most often.** They have less added sugar and fewer calories than flavored, whole, or reduced-fat milk. Extra calories may contribute to weight gain. Extra sugar increases the risk for cavities and allows kids to develop a taste for flavored milk. (See the Added Sugars tip sheet on page 47 for more information.)
- ▶ **Offer fat-free and low-fat yogurt and cheese during meals and snacks.** Keep in mind they **do not** count towards the milk requirement for the CACFP meal pattern. They may count as a meat alternate.
- ▶ **Offer lactose-reduced or lactose-free milk or other approved fluid milk substitutes for children who are lactose-intolerant and can't consume cow's milk.** Handle milk substitutions on a case-by-case basis and contact your State agency or sponsoring organization if additional guidance is needed.



- **Some children in your care may be allergic to milk, soy, nuts and seeds.**

Actively supervise children when serving milk and milk substitutes. Handle food allergies on a case-by-case basis, have a medical statement on file, and contact your State agency or sponsoring organization if additional guidance is needed.

- **See Appendix B on page 81 for more information on food allergies.**



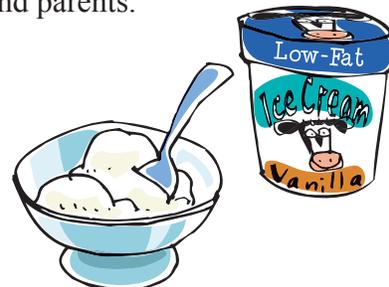
How can I encourage children to choose fat-free and low-fat milk?



Enjoy milk often. The children in your care are looking at the choices you make.

Choose fat-free or low-fat milk as your beverage of choice during meal and snack times. <http://www.choosemyplate.gov/food-groups/dairy-tips.html>

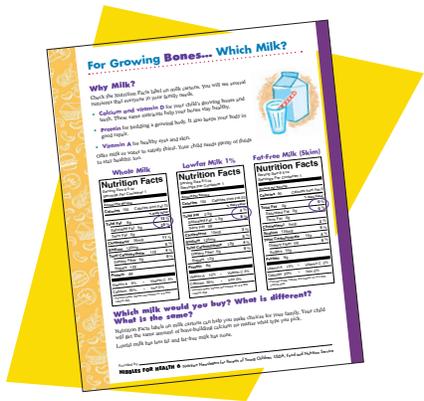
- ▶ **Make food fun.** Make up a song that is associated with drinking milk, and sing it when milk is being served.
- ▶ **Do a milk taste test.** Let kids sample low-fat (1%) milk and fat-free milk and pick their favorite. Low-fat milk and fat-free milk have less calories and saturated fat than reduced-fat (2%) milk and whole milk but do not reduce calcium or other important nutrients.
- ▶ **Create your own Milk Mustache Event!** Take pictures of children drinking low-fat milk and post them on a bulletin board. Blend together low-fat milk with frozen yogurt or low-fat ice cream for the Milk Mustache activity. For more fun, include adults and parents.



more 'encourage choosing fat-free and low-fat milk tips' on next page ...

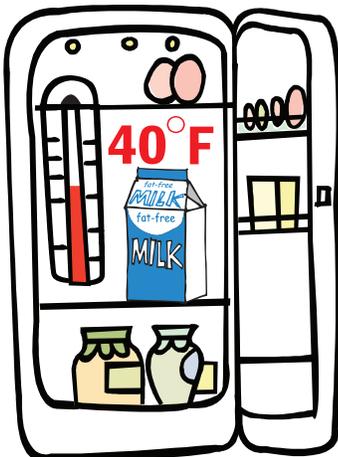
... more 'encourage choosing fat-free and low-fat milk tips'

Connect With Parents



- ▶ **Send the message home.** Share the *Nibbles for Health* take-home newsletter for parents on milk and growing children's bones. http://teamnutrition.usda.gov/Resources/Nibbles/Nibbles_Newsletter_6.pdf
- ▶ **Share information with parents whose children cannot consume cow's milk.** Even if children have lactose intolerance, they may still enjoy milk and other dairy products and get the nourishment that milk provides. http://teamnutrition.usda.gov/Resources/Nibbles/Nibbles_Newsletter_27.pdf

How can I keep milk and other dairy products safe?



- ▶ **Keep milk COLD!** It tastes better and is safer for kids to drink.
- ▶ **Store milk and other dairy products** in a refrigerator below 40 °F.



- **String cheese and large chunks of cheese pose choking hazards.**
- **See Appendix A on page 77 for more information on choking hazards.**

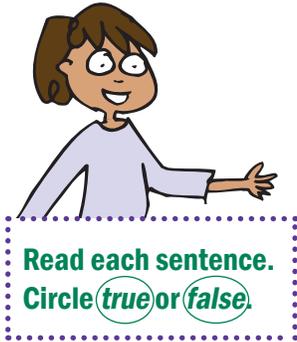
Activities

How can I put this information into practice?

Take a look at your current weekly or cycle menu. What fat-free or low-fat milk or milk substitutes are you using?

- ▶ **Make sure you are serving the appropriate types of milk for each child, based on his or her age.** Review the *What type of milk should I offer?* section on this tip sheet.

- What type(s) of milk should be served to **children under age 2**?
- What type(s) of milk should be served to **children 2 years and older**?



- Yogurt and cheese credit as a meat alternate in CACFP and not as part of the fluid milk requirement.

True **False**

- Cream cheese, whipped cream, and butter are not part of the milk component and are not creditable in the CACFP.

True **False**

- ▶ **Write down one or two creative ways you can highlight the importance of milk.** Do this at least one day during each week next month.