Nutrition Bits and Bites!

Rethink Your Drink

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Cow's Milk vs. Plant-Based Milk

Milk, whether from a cow or a plant-based source, can be a part of a healthy diet. Choosing the best option, especially for children, can be confusing. Other than fortified soy milk, plant-based milks have very little protein, fat, and calories. Drinking too much of any type of beverage can fill children up and cause them to eat less whole foods at meals. The following is a break down of how some milks compare nutritionally.

Milk (1 cup)	Protein (g)	Fat (g)	Carbohydrates (g)	Calcium (%)
Cow (whole)	8	8	11	28
Soy	7	4	8	30
Almond	1	2.5	1	45
Oat	4	2.5	24	35
Coconut	0	4.5	1	45
Rice	1	2.5	23	30

What Should my Child Drink?

- Water is best to satisfy thirst, children should drink water between meals and more on hot and humid days
- Milk is a source of protein, fat, calcium and vitamin D. Offer your child cow's milk or fortified soy milk with meals.
- Juice is a source of concentrated sugar and should be limited to ½ a cup of unsweetened juice or less per day
- Sugary drinks like pop, iced tea, fruit beverages and slushy drinks provide little nutrition and should be served less often.

Disclaimer: Some recipes or food suggestions may not be suitable for people with allergies. Please check with your local school to identify foods that are acceptable or unacceptable in the classroom.

Lactose Intolerance

A common reason why parents avoid serving milk products to children is lactose intolerance. For some, drinking large amounts of milk can cause unwanted symptoms such as gas and irregular bowel functions. Lactose intolerance is different than an allergy to milk. Only a very small percentage of people have a milk allergy and therefore should not consume any dairy products. Some infants may even grow out of a milk allergy. For many with lactose intolerance, increasing their exposure to milk and dairy in small amounts may help improve negative effects of lactose intolerance. The following are some tips for children and parents with lactose intolerance to enjoy dairy products:

- Drink smaller portions of milk (1/2 cup) with meals
- Try having full fat milk, as it may be tolerated better than skim milk
- Purchase lactose free milk
- Try taking a lactase enzyme pill to help with milk digestion
- If milk continues to cause unwanted symptoms, try a fortified soy milk beverage

Mexican Hot Chocolate

Ingredients

- ½ cup granulated sugar
- ½ cup water
- 1/3 cup unsweetened cocoa powder
- ½ tsp ground cinnamon
- 5 cups milk
- ½ tsp vanilla
- ½ tsp almond extract

Instructions

1. In a large sauce pan, over medium heat, heat sugar, water, cocoa powder and cinnamon until sugar dissolves.
2. Add milk; heat until steaming (do not boil).
3. Remove from heat and stir in vanilla and almond extract.

Enjoy this beverage in moderation as a special treat!

Simply Great Food - Dietitians of Canada. 2007. Published by Robert Rose Inc.

** Refer to the Allergy Newsletter (September issue) for substitution

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