

DAIRY FOODS: HOW MUCH IS ENOUGH?



Dairy foods including milk, cheese and yoghurt are one of the five food groups the Australian Dietary Guidelines recommend we eat every day. The other four food groups are:

- Vegetables and legumes/beans
- Fruit
- Grain (cereal) foods
- Lean meats and poultry, fish, eggs, tofu, nuts and seeds and legumes/beans.

TIP



Dairy foods have long been known for their role in bone health, but research over the last decade has demonstrated that consumption of milk, cheese and yoghurt can protect us against heart disease and stroke, can reduce our risk of high blood pressure and some cancers and may reduce our risk of type 2 diabetes.

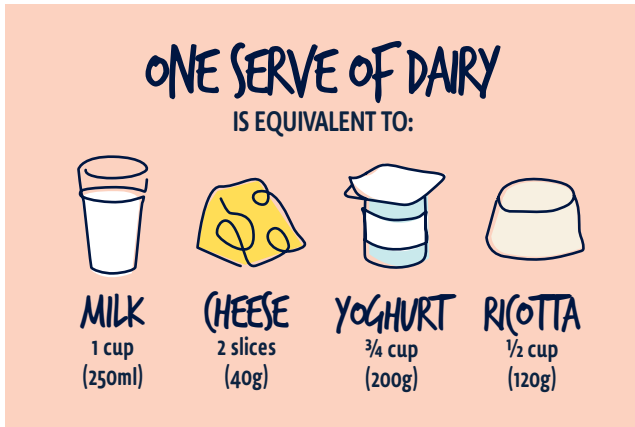
Recommendations

As a result of the updated scientific evidence, the 2013 Australian Dietary Guidelines recommend higher intakes of the dairy food group, for most age groups than previous dietary guidelines. Current dairy food group recommendations for adults and children are shown in the following tables.

Minimum recommended number of serves from the dairy food group

	Age (years)	No. of serves per day
Men	19–70	2 ½
	70+	3 ½
Women	19–50	2 ½
	50+	4
	Pregnant or breast feeding	2 ½
Boys	2–3	1 ½
	4–8	2
	9–11	2 ½
	12–18	3 ½
Girls	2–3	1 ½
	4–8	1 ½
	9–11	3
	12–18	3 ½

*Adapted from: 2013 Australian Dietary Guidelines. The dairy food group includes milk, cheese, yoghurt and/or alternatives.**



*Alternatives include: 250ml soy, rice or other cereal drink with at least 100mg of added calcium per 100ml.

Other ways to include enough serves from the dairy food group include:

1 cup of fresh, flavoured, UHT long life or reconstituted powdered milk

1/2 cup (120mL) evaporated unsweetened milk

Australians are not having enough

Unfortunately, most Australians are missing out on the health benefits of consuming milk, cheese and yoghurt as they don't include enough in their diet. It is estimated that 8 out of 10 Australian adults need to increase their intake of dairy foods to achieve the levels recommended by the Australian Dietary Guidelines. Most Australian children also need to increase their intake of the dairy food group in order to meet recommendations.

CONTRARY TO POPULAR BELIEF, CONSUMPTION OF THREE TO FOUR DAILY SERVES OF DAIRY FOODS, SUCH AS MILK, (HEESE AND YOGHURT, AS PART OF A BALANCED DIET IS NOT LINKED TO WEIGHT GAIN.

Furthermore, including three to four daily serves of these dairy foods within a kilojoule-controlled diet can help accelerate loss of weight and body fat, improve muscle retention and reduce waistlines.

Most people need to cut down on foods that are not found within the five food groups. These foods are called discretionary choices (or junk foods). Examples of these foods include: fried potatoes, cakes and muffins, soft drinks, alcoholic drinks, meat pies, biscuits, cakes, ice cream, high fat take-away items and confectionery. Swapping these foods for milk, cheese and yoghurt is one way to increase your intake of the dairy food group.

More tips to increase your dairy intake

Dairy foods are convenient and versatile, making them easy to include in a healthy, balanced diet. With a wide variety of dairy foods available, enjoying your recommended amount every day is easy.

- Grab a caffè latte on the way to work.
- Have a bowl of fruit and yoghurt for breakfast or after a workout.
- Include cheese in a salad or sandwich.
- Dollop natural yoghurt on a jacket potato.
- For an energising fruit smoothie, blend together some fruit, yoghurt and milk.
- Grate or shave parmesan or mozzarella cheese on pasta dishes.
- Have a warm glass of milk in the evening.

For recipes and ideas on how to include adequate serves of dairy foods in healthy meals, visit dairy.com.au/health

Dairy foods' package of nutrients

Dairy foods are a natural source of 10 essential nutrients including calcium, potassium, phosphorous, magnesium, carbohydrate, protein, vitamin A, riboflavin, vitamin B12 and zinc.

These nutrients are important for healthy blood and immune systems, eyesight, muscle and nerve function, healthy skin, energy and growth and repair in all parts of your body.

Dairy foods – a good source of calcium

Milk, cheese and yoghurt provide a convenient and readily absorbable source of calcium, contributing around 60 per cent of the calcium we eat.

Few foods provide as much absorbable calcium per serve as dairy foods. Foods such as canned fish eaten with the bones, green leafy vegetables, nuts such as almonds, cereals and legumes also contribute calcium to the diet, but in much smaller amounts than dairy foods.

The following foods contain about the same amount of calcium as a serve of milk, cheese or yoghurt:

100g almonds with skin

1/2 cup canned pink salmon with bones

100g firm tofu (check the label as calcium levels vary)

1/2 cup (120mL) evaporated unsweetened milk

For individuals who can't have, or are intolerant to, dairy foods, alternatives such as soy, rice or other drinks with at least 100mg of added calcium per 100ml may be suitable.

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