

Nutrition

fact sheet



At least six out of ten preteens and at least seven out of ten teens fall short in calcium consumption.

Your kids' childhood and adolescent years are a "window of opportunity" to build strong bones to last a lifetime and protect against the risk of osteoporosis, "the brittle bone disease," later in life.

Helping Kids Build Stronger Bones and Better Bodies

Help your family to get 3-A-Day of Dairy — eating three servings of milk, cheese or yogurt a day — for its unique nutrient package providing calcium and eight other nutrients essential to help keep bones strong and bodies fit.

Help your kids develop positive eating behaviors when they're young to build healthy habits that last a lifetime with these five tips:

Offer a Variety of Dairy Foods

Milk, cheese and yogurt provide a powerful nutrient package and are available in a variety of types, flavors, and convenient on-the-go packaging to meet the taste and nutritional needs of your family.

- Low fat and fat free varieties of milk, yogurt and cheese provide the same amount of calcium as full-fat versions. Be sure your family enjoys lower fat options of dairy often.
- Milk and other dairy products, compared to other foods, offer the most natural-occurring calcium per serving. They also contain other nutrients essential for good health including phosphorus, potassium, protein, vitamins D, A, and B12, riboflavin and niacin.

- The best way to get enough calcium is by eating and drinking foods that naturally contain calcium. Other sources of calcium include tofu, legumes, some green leafy vegetables and calcium-fortified orange juice.

Involve Children in 3-A-Day of Dairy

Give kids "ownership" of their nutrition — they'll have fun and take it seriously.

- Invite your children to help prepare meals. Studies show that when kids participate in meal preparation they are more likely to try new foods.
- Teach kids the importance of calcium-rich foods in their diet by asking them to choose their favorite cheese at the grocery store, mix up a yogurt dip for raw vegetables, and pour their favorite flavor of milk at mealtime.
- Use the 3-A-Day of Dairy tracker on the back of this page to help your children tally your family's dairy intake each day.

Provide Snacks for Added Nutrition

Children benefit from the added nutrition from daily snacks.

- Milk, cheese and yogurt, including low fat and fat free varieties, are

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HAVE YOU HAD YOUR 3-A-DAY OF DAIRY?

name	monday	tuesday	wednesday	thursday	friday	saturday	sunday
	MILK <input type="checkbox"/> CHEESE <input type="checkbox"/> YOGURT <input type="checkbox"/>						
	MILK <input type="checkbox"/> CHEESE <input type="checkbox"/> YOGURT <input type="checkbox"/>						
	MILK <input type="checkbox"/> CHEESE <input type="checkbox"/> YOGURT <input type="checkbox"/>						
	MILK <input type="checkbox"/> CHEESE <input type="checkbox"/> YOGURT <input type="checkbox"/>						

Serving sizes¹: Milk – 8 ounces or 1 cup
 Cheese (natural e.g. Cheddar, mozzarella) – 1 to 1.5 ounces
 Yogurt – 8 ounces or 1 cup

¹Milk, cheese and yogurt products are sold in the marketplace in various sizes.

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readily available in the dairy case at supermarkets and convenience stores. Encourage your kids to snack on “cool” dairy products including single serve bottles of flavored milk, cheese cubes and drinkable yogurts.

Model Healthy Eating

As a parent, you can positively influence your children’s calcium status, bone health, and overall diet quality.

- Studies show that mothers who

drink milk more frequently tend to have children who drink milk more often and consume fewer soft drinks.

- Increase opportunities for children to have access to milk, cheese and yogurt — especially low fat and fat free varieties — and be sure to enjoy your 3-A-Day of Dairy with them.

Protect Family Mealtime

Although this may be a challenge for your busy family, turn off the television and connect with your children as you enjoy a healthful meal together.

- A recent study among teenagers found that greater frequency of family meals was associated with higher intakes of fruits and vegetables, grains, and calcium-rich foods such as milk, cheese, and yogurt, and lower consumption of soft drinks.
- Try to include at least three of the five Food Groups (Milk, Meat, Fruit, Vegetables and Grains) at each meal.
- Including milk, cheese or yogurt with each meal will ensure your family gets their 3-A-Day of Dairy.

Information

The American Dietetic Association Knowledge Center



For food and nutrition information or for a referral to a dietetics professional in your area call:

800/366-1655

or visit:
www.eatright.org



NATIONAL DAIRY COUNCIL
www.nationaldairycouncil.org

Visit the Mom’s Corner section on www.3aday.org to print more 3-A-Day of Dairy trackers to post on your fridge.



American Dietetic Association
 “Your link to nutrition and health”SM
 120 South Riverside Plaza, Suite 2000
 Chicago, Illinois 60606-6995