

MILK IT
FOR ALL IT'S
WORTH



From Dairy Goodness to Diva Goddess!




Department of
**Agriculture,
Fisheries and Food**
An Roinn
**Talmhaíochta,
Iascaigh agus Bia**



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INTRODUCTION

Adopting a positive attitude to our diet and lifestyle early in life can assist in laying the foundations of good practices for our future – helping to ensure our own, and our family’s, health and wellbeing. This Information Guide explores specific topics such as the nutrient value of dairy products, body weight management and bone health. Included also are convenient and tasty recipes for you to enjoy.

DAIRY GOODNESS: WHAT’S IN IT FOR YOU?

The Department of Health and Children recommends that adults and children consume three servings of dairy per day. In order to achieve the increased calcium requirements during the teenage years, pregnancy and breastfeeding, five portions of dairy each day are recommended. One serving of dairy equals $\frac{1}{3}$ pint of milk, 1 carton of yogurt or 28g of cheddar-type cheese.

Milk and milk products are among the main sources of dietary calcium in the Irish diet, with national surveys showing this food group to be an important contributor to the intake of calcium and other nutrients. As well as contributing to your immediate nutritional needs, the nutrients in dairy are associated with other positive benefits; for example calcium and phosphorus are needed for maintaining healthy bones and also contribute to the maintenance of our teeth.

Dairy Food (per 100g)	What’s in it for you?
Milk (whole)	Protein, calcium, iodine, riboflavin and vitamin B12
Cheese (cheddar)	Protein, calcium, phosphorus, vitamin A, zinc, iodine, riboflavin, folic acid and vitamin B12
Yogurt (whole milk, plain)	Calcium, protein, phosphorus, iodine and riboflavin

BODY WEIGHT MANAGEMENT: A BALANCING ACT

A significant proportion of Irish adults are reported to be either overweight or obese, which is quite worrying as being overweight can be detrimental to our health. Weight gain results if, over time, the energy we consume is greater than the energy expended – which can subsequently lead to overweight and obesity. Recognised are a number of factors that can influence this equation e.g. genetics, culture, economics; nonetheless, the balance between energy intake and energy expenditure is central to body weight. Both healthy dietary habits and physical activity participation are recommended for effective weight loss and weight maintenance.

The National Guidelines on Physical Activity recommend that adults (18-64 years) should engage in at least 30 minutes of moderate activity on five days per week (or 150 minutes per week). These guidelines should be modified for weight loss or weight maintenance – for more information, visit: www.getirelandactive.ie

Controlling those Calories

Some tips include:

- Avoid energy-rich, nutrient-poor snacks. Instead, choose snacks that provide plenty of nutrients without the excess calories such as a yogurt, fresh fruit salad, small salad sandwich.
- Boil, grill, steam and bake foods as opposed to frying them.
- Control portion sizes.
- Adopt a regular meal pattern and avoid skipping meals as this can provide the temptation to fill up on unhealthy snacks.
- When dining out choose healthier options, opt for salads and vegetables as side orders and remember those portion sizes!

Don't Ditch the Dairy!

When attempting to achieve weight loss or 'watching our weight', many people cut out/limit certain food groups. It is important to remember that although energy or calorie intake should be reduced as part of a weight-loss diet, the quality of the diet should not be compromised. The recommended intakes of nutrients must still be met even when following a weight-loss diet. For example, dairy products are a natural source of a number of essential nutrients; however, milk and dairy foods are often avoided in the mistaken belief that they are fattening.

To clarify, Irish whole milk typically contains only 3.5% fat, semi-skimmed milk contains 1.5 –1.8% fat and skimmed milk has no more than 0.5% fat. Furthermore, the nutritional value of reduced-fat dairy is relatively similar to whole milk equivalents. The wide range of dairy products on our supermarket shelves, including many low-fat options, ensures that dairy can be easily included and enjoyed as part of a healthy, balanced diet – even if watching your weight!

Dairy Delights: On your way to 3-a-day!

Breakfast cereal with milk	Cheese sandwich
Cheese and crackers	Yogurt/Yogurt drink
Smoothie	Hot chocolate made with milk
Latte/Cappuccino	Yogurt over fresh fruit

oflavin

osphorus

vitamin A

vitamin B12

calcium

protein

DEM BONES, DEM BONES...

Bone health is something which many young people overlook and perhaps even consider it an issue for older people. However, many lifestyle choices made during the younger years can determine long-term consequences for bone health.

Bone is a living tissue which is continuously 'turned-over' throughout our lifetime. This is a natural process whereby old bone is broken down and replaced by new bone. Bone mass increases until peak bone mass is reached, with the majority being reached by the late teens. Once this peak is achieved, bone mass remains largely stable until about 45-50 years of age when the rate of bone loss tends to exceed renewal. The extent to which the bones are weakened due to this process is dependent on the peak bone mass achieved during growth, along with the rate of age-related bone loss. Childhood and adolescence are critical years in terms of bone development and achievement of peak bone mass; however, a 'bone-friendly' diet and lifestyle is important at all life-stages.

Key Factors Influencing Bone Health*

- Genetics
- Gender
- Race
- Hormone levels/status
- Diet and nutrition
- Physical activity (especially weight-bearing activity)

*This is not a definitive list

If concerned about your bone health, speak to your GP who will advise you on how to arrange a DXA (Dual Energy X-ray Absorptiometry) scan. This is a simple and painless scan which measures bone density. The patient is required to lie still for approximately 8-10 minutes while the scanning arm passes over the area of the body being scanned.

Diet

A well-balanced diet which provides adequate nutrients is essential for our bone health. About 99% of the body's calcium is found in our bones and teeth; milk, cheese and yogurt are among the best dietary sources of calcium - and among the most 'bioavailable' sources i.e. easily absorbed and used by the body. Dairy foods also contain other important nutrients which contribute to the building and maintenance of bone such as protein and phosphorus. Vitamin D contributes to the normal absorption/utilisation of calcium. Sunlight is the best source of this vitamin via synthesis in the skin in the presence of UVB sunlight. Nonetheless, dietary sources of vitamin D are still important; these are limited but include oily fish, eggs and fortified milk.

Lifestyle

Regular participation in weight-bearing activities (any activity which puts the full weight of your body on your feet) is also important for bone health. Examples of such activities include walking, running, dancing and most team sports.

Other lifestyle tips that favour the development of strong, healthy bones are to achieve/maintain a healthy body weight, avoid excessive alcohol intake and avoid smoking.



INCLUDING DAIRY CUISINE IN YOUR DAILY ROUTINE

Did you know that heat has little impact on the calcium content of food? Therefore, cooked meals containing milk, cheese and yogurt retain their calcium goodness and can help you meet your recommended daily intake of dairy foods. Furthermore, dairy foods are versatile and can be used in cooking or baking and enjoyed as part of breakfast, lunch or dinner. We've included some tasty dairy recipes below for the whole family to savour and to help you achieve your three servings of dairy a day.

BERRY SURPRISE SMOOTHIE

2-3 handfuls of mixed berries
(e.g. raspberries, blueberries,
blackberries)
 $\frac{1}{2}$ pot (60 ml) of natural yogurt
100 ml milk
100 ml fresh orange juice
1 small banana

Method:

Simply chop up the fruit, spoon in the yogurt, add orange juice, milk and whiz in a food blender for about 30 seconds and your dairy treat is ready to go! Smoothies are ideal for breakfast, lunch, a snack or as a nutritious dessert.



CHEESE AND BROCCOLI SOUP

2 large broccoli florets (about 900 g in weight)
600 ml water
40 g butter
40 g plain flour
600 ml milk
90 g mature Irish cheddar (grated)
Salt and freshly ground pepper

(Serves 4-6)

Method:

Melt the butter in a heavy bottomed saucepan. Stir in the flour, a little salt and pepper and cook for one minute. Remove from the heat and add the milk, whisking continuously. Return to the heat and cook at a fast simmer for two minutes. Take off the heat, add the cheese and stir until melted.

Prepare the broccoli by trimming the base of the stalk and peeling tough skin from stalk. Cut into very thin slices and break broccoli into florets. Bring water to a fast boil, add the broccoli and cook until tender.

Buzz the broccoli and water in a food processor or pass through a food mill until smooth. Combine broccoli purée and cheese sauce and reheat gently. Garnish with grated cheese or a spoonful of lightly whipped cream. Serve with a crusty roll or soda bread.



CREAMY THREE CHEESE MIXED VEGETABLE BAKE

$\frac{1}{2}$ cauliflower head
 $\frac{1}{2}$ broccoli head
1 large carrot (all trimmed
and cut into pieces
approximately one
centimeter in length)
300 g cream cheese
50 g Irish cheddar cheese
125 g blue cheese, crumbled
25 g walnuts, roughly chopped
1 tsp Dijon mustard
Salt & freshly ground
black pepper

(Serves 4)

Method:

Bring 5 cm depth of water to the boil in a saucepan, add the prepared cauliflower and carrot and cook for about 5 minutes. Add the broccoli and cook until all vegetables are tender - about 3 minutes further. Drain, and return to the pan. Mix the cream cheese and mustard with the vegetables, then stir in the blue cheese.

Season with a little salt, to taste, and plenty of pepper. Pour the mixture into a shallow gratin dish. Scatter the walnuts on top and cover with the cheddar cheese. Place under a preheated hot grill for 10-15 minutes, or until the top is golden brown and the inside is hot and bubbling.

Enjoy!

For more recipe ideas, log onto www.ndc.ie



oflavin
osphorus
ne
vitamin A
vitamin B12
calcium
folic acid
protein



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Dairy Den is a free club for mothers of very
young children which provides nutritional
information relevant to the various stages
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