

# MILK...

## Part of a Healthy Eating Pattern

**Drinking milk is an important habit for young children and serving them milk at meals is a CACFP requirement.**

Each sip of milk is loaded with essential nutrients needed for growth and development. Milk is high in protein, calcium, potassium, and vitamin D.

### Dairy milk delivers more!

- Builds strong bones and teeth
- Contains high-quality protein to help children grow and build strong muscles
- Keeps you fuller between meals and snacks
- Reduces risk of developing type 2 diabetes<sup>1</sup>

### CACFP Creditable Milk

All of these types of milk are equally wholesome and safe to drink. Whole milk is only creditable for 1 year olds. Low-fat and fat-free milk are only creditable for ages 2 and older. Lactose-free milk is creditable for all ages 1 and older.



**Whole Milk**



**1% Low-Fat Milk**



**Fat-Free Milk**



**Lactose-Free Milk**

Low-fat and fat-free milk have all the same essential nutrients found in whole milk, but with less fat. No water is added.

**Not all 'milk' is the same.** Drinks made with nuts, rice, or coconuts often contain little or no protein. Non-dairy beverages that are not nutritionally equivalent to cow's milk are not a creditable replacement for milk in the CACFP.

<sup>1</sup>ref: 1 Drouin-Chartier, JP et al., 2016





**One Year**  
Whole Milk  
*(unflavored)*



**2-5 Years**  
1% or Fat-Free  
*(unflavored)*



**6 & Older**  
1% or Fat-Free

## The Truth About Dairy Milk

- 1 Milk is an important beverage for nutrients and hydration, even when your child has a cold.
- 2 Milk is a natural, fresh product that comes from cows, traveling from a local dairy farm to your grocery store in about two days.
- 3 In pasteurized milk, natural hormones and bacteria are destroyed or are broken down and do not enter the body.

**Don't kids need fat to be healthy?** Yes, children ages 12 months through 23 months need fat for brain and nerve growth and development. After age 2, children need less fat in their diet as growth slows significantly.

**Isn't whole milk more nutritious than low-fat?** Low-fat milk is equally nutritious as whole milk. Key nutrients in milk like vitamin A, vitamin D and calcium are the same or a little higher in 1% and fat-free milk compared to whole milk.

**I'm concerned if I offer low-fat milk my kids won't drink it.** It is surprising how easily most children make the transition from whole milk to 1% or fat-free. Serving milk very cold may be the key to the transition.

**Are soy beverages creditable?** Some fortified soy beverages may be creditable and served in the CACFP when the parent has submitted a written request and the soy beverage is nutritionally equivalent to cow's milk.

## CACFP in the Know

- For newborn through 11 months, breastmilk and iron-fortified formula are reimbursable. Breastmilk is allowed at any age in the CACFP.
- Between the ages of 12 months and 13 months, iron-fortified formula may be served to children to help with the transition to whole milk.
- Between the ages of 24 months and 25 months, unflavored whole milk and unflavored reduced-fat (2%) milk may be served to help with the transition to fat-free (skim) or low-fat (1%) milk.
- Many non-dairy beverages may only be served when there is a medical statement on file. Contact your sponsoring organization or state agency for more information.
- Flavored milk is not allowed for children 5 years old and younger.\*
- Lactose-free and organic milk are reimbursable without a written request.



Learn more about healthy eating at [HealthyEating.org](http://HealthyEating.org).



Visit [cacfp.org](http://cacfp.org) for more helpful tools.