

NUTRI-SERVE TIP OF THE WEEK

By Kristen Mueller, RD (Nutri-Serve Corporate Dietitian)

Celebrate the Power of Milk!

Milk offers several important vitamins and nutrients that promote good health. Milk is actually one of the required components of the school lunch and breakfast mainly because of the calcium content which can be hard to match with other foods. Sweetened milk in schools are always fat free and white milk can be fat free or 1% low fat milk.

A couple of important nutrients are:

- *Calcium- for bone and teeth health. School age children need between 1,000-1,300 mg of calcium per day. A milk carton contains about 300 mg toward your child's daily requirement. Milk is also high in vitamin D which aids in calcium absorption. Dark green vegetables like spinach and broccoli contain a decent amount of calcium but it is not as well absorbed by the body.*
- *Protein: A cup of milk provides 8-11 grams of protein per serving. Milk is high in whey protein which helps to repair and build muscle tissue.*
- *Potassium: necessary for muscle contraction. Muscle cramps are often caused by a lack of potassium. Chocolate milk actually has a little bit more potassium than white from the chocolate!*

The great chocolate milk debate.....

Massachusetts experimented with eliminating sweetened milk in schools and it resulted in a 35% decrease. Work as a family to find balance by setting some sweetened milk consumption goals!

Here are some examples:

- If you are going to drink chocolate milk at lunch skip a snack that day.
- Drink chocolate milk in school and white milk at home.
- Make your own chocolate milk with chocolate syrup to control the sweetness.
- Mix chocolate milk at home with seltzer to make a fizzy chocolate drink and lower the calories.
- Make a commitment to be extra active on the days you drink chocolate milk.
- Treat yourself to chocolate milk on Fridays with pizza.
- Try to only drink chocolate milk a set number of days per week.

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