

THE TRUTH ABOUT FLAVORED MILK

Some schools have made the decision to remove chocolate and other flavored milks from the cafeteria. Even though these bans have been well intentioned, they have done more nutritional harm than good. Lowfat chocolate milk is the most popular milk choice in schools and kids drink less milk – and get fewer essential nutrients – if it’s taken away.

Learn more about the myths and realities of flavored milk in the cafeteria.

Myth	Reality
<p>Flavored milk isn't as nutritious as regular milk.</p>	<p>Chocolate milk contains the same nine essential nutrients as white milk, including vitamin D, calcium and potassium – “nutrients of concern” that most kids fail to get enough of, according to the <i>Dietary Guidelines for Americans</i>.</p> <p>School flavored milk now has 40% less added sugar than just five years ago, and on average, just 132 calories per serving.¹ The numbers are expected to be even lower when kids return to school this fall, complying with the new USDA regulations that include fat free and lowfat white milk and fat free chocolate milk on the school lunch line.</p> <p>Flavored milk “counts” as a serving of dairy – and most Americans fall far short of the recommended three servings for kids ages 9 and up.</p> <p>Milk drinkers consume more calcium, phosphorus, magnesium, potassium and vitamin A than non-milk drinkers.²</p>
<p>Flavored milk contains a high sugar content, up there with soft drinks.</p>	<p>Research shows that flavored milk contributes just 3% of added sugars to kids’ diets versus sodas and fruit drinks, which account for close to half of the added sugar and deliver much less, if any, nutritional value.³</p> <p>Not all of the sugar you see on the label is “added sugar.” Some of the total grams are naturally-occurring lactose.</p> <p>Dairy companies have worked with schools to reduce the amount of added sugar by an average of 40% in the last five years.¹</p> <p>The American Academy of Pediatrics, Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics and other groups agree that flavored milk is a positive trade-off for soft drinks, which are the primary source of added sugars in children’s diets.⁴</p>
<p>When flavored milk is removed from schools, kids will drink regular milk. If there's any dip in consumption, it will rebound.</p>	<p>A study showed eliminating flavored milk from elementary schools resulted in a dramatic drop in milk consumption (35%), which means many children will miss out on essential nutrients that milk provides.⁵</p> <p>Research suggests milk consumption does not recover over time when flavored milk is removed. In the same study, even the 40 schools that were in their second year of a limited or no-flavors policy did not see students moving to white milk. On average, students at these schools drank 37% less milk compared to when they had flavored milk available every school day.⁵</p> <p>If milk is not consumed with the noon meal, it’s nearly impossible for children to meet their needs for calcium, vitamin D and potassium – which are already identified by the 2010 <i>Dietary Guidelines for Americans</i> as limited in children’s diets.</p>
<p>Flavored milk adds too many extra calories to children's diets and is contributing to the obesity crisis among American children.</p>	<p>Nearly all (95%) 8-ounce servings of chocolate milk served in schools have 150 calories or less.¹</p> <p>Children who drink flavored milk don't have a higher body mass index (BMI) than those who do not drink milk.²</p>
<p>Once kids drink flavored milk, they no longer drink white milk.</p>	<p>Drinking flavored milk doesn't mean kids neglect white milk. It's a small, but significant contributor to kids' milk intake. In fact, flavored milk only makes up 22%-29% of kids' total milk intake.⁶</p>
<p>Just offering one nutritious choice is the best way to encourage kids to drink more milk.</p>	<p>Offering nutritious choices in school – like fat free and lowfat white milk and fat free chocolate milk – helps kids learn food and nutrition lessons and research suggests “choice” helps boost kids’ overall intake of nutritious foods. For example, Cornell University researchers found that children ate more carrots when they were offered a choice between carrots or celery, compared to when they only were provided carrots.⁷</p> <p>Four out of five moms (79%) believe kids need healthy choices at school including chocolate milk, according to a recent survey, while three in four (77%) say they think their children should be able to choose which beverage to drink at school.⁸</p>

REFERENCES

- 2011-2012 School Milk Product Profile, MilkPEP School Channel Survey, conducted by Prime Consulting Group, July, 2012. Responses were received from processors who collectively serve 62% of all K-12 public schools. The MilkPEP Annual School Channel Survey is a joint project of the Milk Processor Education Program (MilkPEP), the National Dairy Council and the School Nutrition Association.
- Murphy MM, Douglas JS, Johnson RK, Spence LA. Drinking flavored or plain milk is positively associated with nutrient intake and is not associated with adverse effects on weight status in U.S. children and adolescents. *J Am Diet Assoc.* 2008; 108:631-639.
- National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey, NHANES (2003-2006), ages 2-18.
- Science Supports the Important Role of Milk, including Flavored Milk, in Children’s Nutrition. November, 2009.
- The impact on student milk consumption and nutrient intakes from eliminating flavored milk in schools. 2009. MilkPEP research conducted by Prime Consulting Group. Presented at the School Nutrition Association Annual National Conference, 2010.
- MilkPEP 2010 Consumption Tracker Q3 2010-Q1 2011. Among stand alone milk drinkers.
- Conducted by Brian Wansink, PhD of Cornell Center for Behavioral Economics in Child Nutrition in 2011.
8. 1,000 interviews with moms of kids in grades K through 12 between 3/9/12 and 3/14/12. Conducted by KRC Research.



FLAVORED MILK
the facts

got milk?