

Dairy

Do We Need Dairy In Our Diets?

- Nutrients in cow and other animal milks are readily available in other whole and fortified foods.
- Beans, grains, and many vegetables are excellent sources of protein.
- Calcium is more highly absorbed from beans and most greens (40–64%) than from milk (32%).
- Fortified cereals, juices, soy milk, rice milk, and others have higher concentrations of calcium that is absorbed nearly as well as dairy calcium (28–36%).
- Some of the richest sources of potassium include orange juice, bananas, potatoes, honeydew melon, and lima beans.

New Research Into Dairy

Although cow milk has been widely recommended in Western countries as necessary for growth and bone health, evidence collected during the past 20 years shows the need to rethink strategies for building and maintaining strong bones. Osteoporotic bone fracture rates are highest in countries that consume the most dairy, calcium, and animal protein. Most studies of fracture risk provide little or no evidence that milk or other dairy products benefit bone. Accumulating evidence shows that consuming milk or dairy products may contribute to the risk of prostate and ovarian cancers, autoimmune diseases, and some childhood ailments.'

- The American Journal of Clinical Nutrition, Volume 89, Issue 5, 1 May 2009, Pages 1638S–1642S

Despite the common conception that dairy consumption leads to strong and healthy bones, there is increasing evidence to show that this may not in fact be the case. The correlation between dairy consumption in countries globally and osteoporosis or bone fracture rates per capita, shows a strong trend that increasing dairy consumption leads to an increase in osteoporosis rates.

There are many other health risks that appear to be caused by increasing dairy consumption such as; risk of prostate and ovarian cancers, autoimmune disease, incidence of type 1 diabetes, and some childhood ailments.

The Dairy Industry

There are many ethical concerns also with the Dairy Industry and the treatment of Dairy Cows. Its not nice to think about where our food comes from however it is important to understand the processes involved from getting milk to our tables.

- Dairy cows must become pregnant and have calves in order to produce milk. This is done through artificial insemination.
- Calves are generally taken away from their mothers within 24 hours of birth, causing immense distress for both mother and calf.
- Male calves are either killed shortly after birth or sent away to be reared for veal.
- Females are milked continually throughout their lives, usually after four or five pregnancies the cows are considered 'spent'.
- As a result of unnaturally high milk yields, over a third of British dairy cows suffer from mastitis, a painful udder infection.
- They are generally kept indoors for at least half of the year.
- Dairy cows are considered spent between 7 -8 years at which age they are slaughtered. If allowed to exist free of exploitation and slaughter, however, dairy cows can live 25 years or more.