



NEW STUDY FINDS TEENS WITH HIGHER DAIRY INTAKE HAVE LOWER BODY FAT *Three Servings of Dairy Each Day a Core Part of Healthy Diet*

Augusta, Maine, February 2009 – A new study released in the *Journal of American College of Nutrition* found that adolescents who consumed closer to the recommended three servings of dairy foods per day had a lower body mass index (BMI) and less body fat than those with lower daily dairy consumption.¹

“The results of the study further support existing evidence that nutrient-rich foods, such as low-fat and fat-free dairy products, are a core part of a healthy diet and may protect against adding excess body fat for children and adolescents,” said Sarah Platt, Registered Dietitian with the Maine Dairy and Nutrition Council. “Encouraging kids to eat three servings of milk, cheese or yogurt each day is a deliciously easy way to help them build and maintain strong, healthy bones, muscles and teeth.”

The study explored the association between dairy consumption and body fat among more than 10,000 U.S. children and adolescents participating in two of the National Health and Nutrition Examination Surveys (NHANES), from 1988-1994 and 1999-2002. Results showed that, in both survey periods, a low dairy intake among 12-16 year-olds—less than one serving per day for girls and less than two servings per day for boys—was associated with a higher BMI and greater body fat. Additionally, similar results were seen when examining total calcium intake in relation to body fat among the same age range. However, among younger children, ages 5-11, there was no consistent association between dairy food or calcium intake and body fat levels.

The 2005 Dietary Guidelines for Americans (DGA) encourages children and adolescents 9 years of age and older to consume three servings of low-fat or fat-free milk, cheese or yogurt each day.² The DGA identified five “nutrients of concern” for which children have inadequate intakes—fiber, vitamin E, calcium, potassium and magnesium. Dairy foods supply three of these shortfall nutrients—calcium, potassium and magnesium.

Flavored milk is a nutritious and delicious solution to help children come closer to meeting these recommendations. Research demonstrates that children and adolescents who drink either flavored or plain milk consume more nutrients and have a lower or comparable BMI than children who don't drink milk.³ Additionally, added sugar or fat consumption does not differ in children who drink flavored milk compared to children who do not drink milk, but flavored milk drinkers do have higher calcium intakes.⁴

¹ Moore LL, Singer MR, Qureshi MM, Bradlee ML. Dairy Intake and Anthropometric Measures of Body Fat Among Children and Adolescents in NHANES. *Journal of the American College of Nutrition* 2008;27:702-710.

² U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and U.S. Department of Agriculture. *Dietary Guidelines for Americans*, 2005. 6th Edition, Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, January 2005.

³ Murphy MM, Douglass 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. Journal of the American Dietetic Association*. 2008;108:631-639.

⁴ Johnson, et al. The nutritional consequences of flavored milk consumption by school-aged children and adolescents in the United States. *Journal of the American Dietetic Association* 2002;102:853-856.

The Maine Dairy and Nutrition Council and National Dairy Council are working to improve children's health by educating and collaborating with health professionals, schools and parents to ensure that our nation's youth reap the many health benefits of nutrient-rich, low-fat and fat-free dairy foods. The dairy industry has made improvements to increase milk's appeal to children, including plastic packaging, one or more additional flavors, and better refrigeration and merchandising, resulting in a 37% increase in school milk consumption.⁵ The National Dairy Council is also working with industry partners to develop flavored milk formulations that will appeal to children, schools and moms, including reduced-sugar and low-fat and fat-free varieties.

For more information on the health benefits of dairy foods, visit www.drinkmainemilk.org or www.NationalDairyCouncil.org.

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National Dairy Council® (NDC) is the nutrition research, education and communications arm of Dairy Management Inc™. On behalf of U.S. dairy farmers, NDC provides science-based nutrition information to, and in collaboration with, a variety of stakeholders committed to fostering a healthier society, including health professionals, educators, school nutrition directors, academia, industry, consumers and media.

Established in 1915, NDC is dedicated to educating the public on the health benefits of consuming milk and milk products throughout a person's lifespan. For more information, visit www.nationaldairycouncil.org.

⁵ National Dairy Council and American School Food Service Association. The School Milk Pilot Test. Beverage Marketing Corporation for NDC and ASFSA, 2002.