

Whole Milk Dairy Foods & Cardiovascular Disease Risk Factors



There is a growing body of evidence that challenges the belief that consuming whole milk dairy foods increases the risk of cardiovascular disease (CVD) through elevating total and LDL cholesterol, because of their high saturated fatty acid content.¹

In a 12-week randomized-controlled trial, men and women with metabolic syndrome (MetS) consuming a diet rich in whole milk dairy foods saw no change in LDL cholesterol and other classic CVD risk factors* compared to those following diets limited in dairy or rich in low-fat dairy.²

After a 4-week run-in period, study participants were randomized to 1 of 3 diets with:

- Limited dairy, not more than 3 servings of non-fat milk per week
- Non-fat milk and yogurt and low-fat cheese, 3.3 daily servings
- Whole milk, full-fat yogurt and full-fat cheese, 3.3 daily servings

** Other CVD risk factors included fasting total cholesterol, HDL-cholesterol, triglycerides, free fatty acids & blood pressure*

Key Takeaway:

The results of this study indicate **dairy fat, when consumed as part of complex whole foods, does not adversely impact these classic CVD risk factors in people with MetS.**



National Dairy Council's (NDC) mission is to bring to life the dairy community's shared vision of a healthy, happy, sustainable world with science as our foundation. On behalf of America's dairy farmers and importers, NDC strives to help people thrive across the lifespan through science-based information on dairy's contributions to nutrition, health and sustainable food systems.

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Fat Flexibility

Good news! Americans ≥ 9 years of age can allow for some fat flexibility, making 1 of their 3 daily servings of dairy whole- or reduced-fat – like whole milk, yogurt or cheese – while staying within the Dietary Guidelines for Americans recommendations for saturated fat consumption.



Consider This!

- The fat in milk is the most complex of all naturally occurring fats – milk fat contains approximately 400 different types of fatty acids.⁴
- Not all saturated fats are equal or have the same effects on health.¹
- The food matrix in which the saturated fat is found plays an important role on the fat's effect on health.¹

Blueberry Lavender Greek Yogurt Popsicles

Ingredients

- 1-2 tsp dried lavender buds
- 2 c fresh blueberries
- 3 TB agave nectar, divided
- 1 lemon, zested and juiced
- 2 c Greek yogurt (fat level of your choice)
- 1/2 tsp vanilla extract

Instructions

1. Place 1 to 2 TB of dried lavender buds in a blender or food processor and puree to a powder.
2. Add blueberries, 1 TB of agave nectar and lemon juice to the lavender powder and blend until blueberries reach a chunky soup consistency. Set aside.
3. In a large bowl, combine lemon zest, Greek yogurt, vanilla extract and remaining agave nectar. Stir until well combined, then gently fold in the blueberry mixture to create a swirled consistency — do not over mix.
4. Pour mixture into popsicle molds and freeze for at least 6 hours or overnight.

References

1. Astrup A, Bertram HC, Bonjour JP, et al. WHO draft guidelines on dietary saturated and trans fatty acids: time for a new approach? *BMJ*. 2019;366:l4137
2. Schmidt KA, Cromer G, Burhans MS, et al. Impact of low-fat and full-fat dairy foods on the fasting lipid profile and blood pressure: exploratory end-points of a randomized controlled trial. *Am J Clin Nutr*. 2021. Co-funded by National Dairy Council
3. Hess JM, Cifelli CJ, Fulgoni VL 3rd. *Modeling the Impact of Fat Flexibility With Dairy Food Servings in the 2015-2020 Dietary Guidelines for Americans Healthy U.S.-Style Eating Pattern*. *Front Nutr*. 2020;7:595880.
4. Månsson HL. Fatty acids in bovine milk fat. *Food Nutr Res*. 2008;52:10.