

# 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 white 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>In fact, this school year when kids pick up a carton of flavored milk with their lunch, the majority will be less than 150 calories. It’s projected to contain, on average, just 31 calories more than white milk – the result of an ongoing commitment to improve the profile of school milk by the nation’s milk processors.<sup>1</sup></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.<sup>2</sup></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.<sup>3</sup></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 38% in the last five years.<sup>1</sup></p> <p>The American Academy of Pediatrics, American Dietetic Association 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.<sup>4</sup></p>
<p>When flavored milk is removed from schools, kids will drink white 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.<sup>5</sup></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.<sup>5</sup></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 <i>2010 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%) of 8-ounce servings of chocolate milk served in schools have 150 calories or less.<sup>1</sup></p> <p>Children who drink flavored milk don’t have a higher body mass index (BMI) than those who do not drink milk.<sup>2</sup></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 20%-26% of kids’ total milk intake.<sup>6</sup></p>

## REFERENCES

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got milk?  
FLAVORED MILK  
the facts