

Children who often drink full-fat milk weigh less

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Eight-year-old children who drink full-fat milk every day have a lower BMI than those who seldom drink milk. This is not the case for children who often drink medium-fat or low-fat milk. This is one conclusion of a thesis presented at the Sahlgrenska Academy at the University of Gothenburg, Sweden.

The study showed that [children](#) who drink full-fat [milk](#) every day weigh on average just over 4 kg less.

"This is an interesting observation, but we don't know why it is so. It may be the case that children who drink full-fat milk tend also to eat other things that affect their weight. Another possible explanation is that children who do not drink full-fat milk drink more soft drinks instead", says dietician Susanne Eriksson, author of the thesis.

The scientists also discovered a difference between overweight children who drink full-fat milk every day and those who do not. Children who often drink milk with a [fat content](#) of 3% are less overweight. The thesis shows also that the children eat more saturated fat than recommended, but those children who have a high intake of fat have a lower [BMI](#) than the children with a lower intake of fat.

Susanne Eriksson has investigated the [nutrition](#), [body composition](#) and [bone mineralization](#) of 120 healthy 8-year-olds. Much of the results can now be used as a standard to determine what is normal for healthy children at that age. The children recounted what they had eaten during

the previous day, and answered questions concerning how often they ate certain foods. Various risk markers in the children's blood were also measured.

"Many of these children had been examined when they were four years old, and we discovered that their eating habits were pretty much unchanged four years later. It appears to be the case that eating habits are established early", says Susanne Eriksson.

The thesis found that 62% of the children had low levels of [vitamin D](#) in their blood. The general guideline value for all people for vitamin D is 75-100 nmol/l, but most children had less than this. High levels of vitamin D are found in oily fish, while certain dairy products have been fortified with vitamin D. It can be difficult to obtain sufficient levels of the vitamin through the diet.

"We could not determine whether the children's level of vitamin D is correlated with their consumption of fish, but we did see that those children who ate oily fish, such as salmon and mackerel, at least once a week have higher values of the long-chain fatty acids EPA and DHA in their blood. This shows how important it is to eat such fish, instead of processed fish such as fish fingers", says Susanne Eriksson.

Source: University of Gothenburg ([news](#) : [web](#))

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