

New study finds milk drinkers may have a healthy weight advantage

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Now there's a new reason to grab a glass of milk when you're on diet, suggests a new study published in the *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition*. In a 2-year weight loss study, milk drinkers had an advantage over those who skipped the milk. Israeli researchers found that adults who drank the most milk (nearly 2 glasses per day) and had the highest vitamin D levels at 6 months, lost more weight after 2 years than those who had little or no milk or milk products -- nearly 12 pounds weight loss, on average.

Researchers also found that each additional 6-ounce serving of milk or milk products (about 3/4 of a glass of milk) was associated with 10 pounds successful weight loss above the average, at 6 months.

More than 300 overweight or at risk men and women ages 40 - 65 participated in the study following low-fat, Mediterranean or low-carb diets for 2 years. Regardless of diet, researchers found participants with the highest dairy calcium intake 6 months into the study (averaging about 580mg per day - the amount in nearly 2 glasses of milk) lost about 12 pounds at the end of the 2 years, compared to about 7 pounds for those with the lowest dairy calcium intake (averaging about 150mg, or about half of a glass).

Beyond calcium, the researchers also found that vitamin D levels independently affected weight loss success and in line with previous research, milk and [milk products](#) were the top contributors to vitamin D in the diets of the study participants.

Despite the potential health benefits, many Americans are still not getting the recommended 400IU of vitamin D each day - the amount in four glasses of fat free or lowfat milk. This D-ficiency may put their health at risk, for healthy weight and beyond. Well known for its role in keeping bones strong, vitamin D is now being hailed for so much more. Emerging science suggests vitamin D may also help protect against diabetes, hypertension, heart disease and certain cancers. It also supports a healthy immune system.

Fat free milk is packed with nine essential nutrients Americans need, including calcium and [vitamin D](#), and contains 80 calories per 8-ounce serving. Research suggests eating right, getting active and drinking the recommended three glasses of lowfat or fat free [milk](#) daily can help you maintain a [healthy weight](#).

More information: Shahar DR, Schwarzfuchs D, Fraser D, Vardi H, Thiery J, Fiedler GM, Blüher M, Stumvoll M, Stampfer MJ, Shai I. Dairy calcium intake, serum vitamin D, and successful weight loss. *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition*. 2010. Published ahead of print.

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