



## The Many Faces of Milk

You're out of milk. Do you run to the store and grab a half-gallon of...whole, reduced-fat, lowfat or fat-free? Choosing a milk that everyone in the family likes can be a challenge. And which variety is healthiest for toddlers, growing children and teens?

Children under age 2 need whole milk, according to Mildred Bentler, registered dietitian at Lehigh Valley Hospital and Health Network.

"After that," she says, "you can begin introducing lower-fat milk. You may want to mix equal parts of higher-fat milk and lower-fat at first." Most healthy children, she says, should be drinking 1 percent milk by age 5.

Promoting that goal are the Allentown Health Bureau and Allentown School District, co-sponsors of a "One Percent or Less" milk campaign. One target of the campaign is Allentown-area teen-agers. Nearly a third are overweight, according to Tina Amato, registered dietitian for the health bureau. "Teens who switch from whole milk to fat-free milk eliminate more than 350 pounds of fat from their diet over a lifetime," she says. As a major source of saturated fat, whole milk is a leading contributor to heart disease.

In an effort to make milk varieties easier to understand, milk labels are getting a facelift. The good news is that the healthier, lower-fat types have just as much vitamin D and calcium—needed for strong bones at every age—as whole milk.

Want to reduce the milk fat in your diet? Here are some ways to make the process painless:

- To get used to the lowfat taste, switch gradually from whole to reduced-fat to lowfat to fat-free (mixing varieties can be helpful).
- Cook with fat-free or lowfat milk.
- Try evaporated fat-free milk for rich flavor in soups and sauces.
- Choose nonfat yogurt and cottage cheese.

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# Healthy You

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