

New research links drinking lowfat milk to lower risk for heart disease

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Grabbing as little as one glass of lowfat or fat free milk could help protect your heart, according to a new study published in the *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition*. Researchers found that adults who had at least one serving of lowfat milk or milk products each day had 37 percent lower odds of poor kidney function linked to heart disease compared to those who drank little or no lowfat milk.

To determine heart disease risk, researchers from several universities in the United States and Norway measured the kidney function of more than 5,000 older adults ages 45 to 84. They tracked eating patterns and tested albumin-to-creatinine ratio (ACR) – a measure that when too low, can indicate poor kidney function and an extremely high risk for cardiovascular disease, according to the American Heart Association.

Researchers found that people who reported consuming more lowfat milk and milk products had lower ACR, or healthier kidney function. In fact, lowfat milk and milk products was the only food group evaluated that on its own, was significantly linked to a reduced risk for kidney dysfunction. The study authors cited other research suggesting milk protein, vitamin D, magnesium and calcium may contribute to milk's potential heart health benefits.

An overall healthy diet, including lowfat milk and milk products, whole grains, fruits and vegetables was also associated with a benefit – 20 percent lower ACR or healthier kidney function.

The National Kidney Foundation estimates that kidney disease affects about 26 million Americans – and kidney disease is both a cause and a consequence of cardiovascular disease, the number one killer of Americans. An estimated one out of three adults is currently living with some form of cardiovascular disease.

Milk provides nine essential nutrients, including calcium, vitamin A, vitamin D, protein and potassium. The U.S. Dietary Guidelines for Americans recommend drinking three glasses of lowfat or fat free milk each day.

Source: Weber Shandwick Worldwide

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