

Drinking milk in the morning may help stave off lunchtime hunger

22 June 2009

Now there's a new reason for the weight-conscious to drink fat free milk at breakfast time, suggests a new study published in the July issue of the *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition*. Researchers in Australia found that drinking fat free milk in the morning helped increase satiety, or a feeling of fullness, and led to decreased calorie intake at the next meal, as compared with a fruit drink. The milk drinkers ate about 50 fewer calories (or nearly 9% less food) at lunch.

In the study, 34 overweight but otherwise healthy men and women participated in two testing sessions - one in which they were served about 20 ounces of fat free milk, and one in which they were served the same amount of a fruit drink (both beverages contributed about 250 calories to the breakfast meal). During the four hours between [breakfast](#) and lunch, the men and women gauged their feelings of fullness and were allowed to eat until comfortably full at lunch. The researchers found that the milk-drinking adults reported feeling fuller, more satisfied and therefore ate fewer calories at lunch.

The researchers suspect that milk's protein content (providing 16% of the daily value per cup), the lactose (the natural sugar in milk) or simply the thickness of the beverage may play a role in the satiety benefits. And, research suggests choosing foods that can help enhance satiety is an important success factor in any weight management plan.

Experts are increasingly focused on small behavior changes that can make a big difference when it comes to maintaining a healthy weight. A calorie decrease as little as 50 calories per day can add up in the long run. Americans may be gaining weight at a rate of up to two pounds per year, likely caused by an average of less than 100 calories per day, according to recent research.

Fat free milk is packed with nine essential nutrients Americans need, including calcium and vitamin D,

and contains 80 [calories](#) per 8-ounce serving. The Dietary Guidelines for Americans recommend three servings of fat free or lowfat milk each day.

More information: Dove, ER, Hodgson JM, Puddey IB, Beilin LJ, Lee YP, Mori TA. Skim [milk](#) compared with a fruit drink acutely reduces appetite and energy intake in overweight men and women. [American Journal of Clinical Nutrition](#). 2009;90:70-75.

Source: Weber Shandwick Worldwide ([news](#) : [web](#))

APA citation: Drinking milk in the morning may help stave off lunchtime hunger (2009, June 22) retrieved 20 November 2022 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2009-06-morning-stave-lunchtime-hunger.html>

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