

Fuel Your Brain & Body

Grades
6–12

Dear Educator,

Good nutrition is an important part of your students' growth, learning, and lifelong health. These engaging, inquiry-based activities help students explore nutrients their bodies need for strong bones, healthy development, and overall wellness.

The activities align with the 2025–2030 Dietary Guidelines for Americans, which recommend three daily servings of dairy within a 2,000-calorie diet and recognize milk at all fat levels as part of healthy dietary patterns. As students analyze nutrition information and food options, they'll strengthen critical-thinking skills to make their own informed food choices which can be carried into the future.

We hope that you will share this program with other teachers. Please let us know your opinion of the materials by visiting ymiclassroom.com/feedback-midwestdairy. We look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,
Dominic Kinsley, PhD
Editor in Chief
Young Minds Inspired



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More Information

usdairy.com
ymiclassroom.com/midwestdairy

Questions? Contact YMI toll-free
at 1-800-859-8005 or by email at
feedback@ymiclassroom.com

Target Audience

Grades 6–12

Program Components

Available at ymiclassroom.com/midwestdairy:

- This teacher's guide
- Three reproducible student activities in English and Spanish
- A handout for school nurses
- Curricular standards

Concepts and Skills

Nutrition	Analyzing data
Dietary guidelines	Critical thinking
Dairy and wellness	Decision making

How to Use the Program

Make photocopies of the activity sheets for each student. Students may complete the activities independently or in small groups. They will need computer access for Activity 2.

Activity 1: What's Your Dairy IQ?

Introduce the program with a quiz to help assess students' knowledge about dairy foods and nutrition. The activity challenges students to evaluate information that they might encounter online, serving as a reminder that it's important to assess information carefully.

Part 1. Pass out the activity sheet, review the instructions, and have students complete the quiz. Review the answers and share the information below with students before they do Part 2.

Part 2. Encourage students to think critically about the content that they read online. For example, is the source an influencer trying to sell a product, or a professional expert sharing valid nutrition information? Also, ask students to assess which statements are fact vs opinion.

ANSWERS: PART 1:

1. **FALSE.** One serving of milk provides **13** essential nutrients: calcium, protein, vitamin D, vitamin A, vitamin B12, riboflavin (vitamin B2), niacin (vitamin B3), pantothenic acid (vitamin B5), phosphorus, potassium, zinc, selenium, and iodine.
2. **TRUE.** The teenage years are a critical window for building strong bones and reaching peak bone mass.

3. **TRUE.** Skim milk has the fat removed, but the calcium remains. That's why skim and whole milk contain similar amounts of calcium.

4. **TRUE.** Current health guidelines include milk at all fat levels (skim, 1%, 2%, and whole) as part of healthy eating patterns. In addition to 13 essential nutrients, whole milk also provides fat that supports nutrient absorption and can help with fullness. The Whole Milk for Healthy Kids Act allows schools to offer whole and 2% milk to students.

5. **TRUE.** Milk provides fluids and minerals for hydration, carbohydrates to help restore energy, and high-quality protein to help refuel muscles. Chocolate milk has the best ratio (3:1) of carbohydrates and protein to refuel after exercise.

6. **FALSE.** Lactose-free milk is real dairy milk. The lactase enzyme is added to break down the sugar lactose, making it easier for people with lactose intolerance to digest.

7. **FALSE.** Most energy drinks contain little or no protein. In comparison, one 8-ounce glass of dairy milk provides 8 grams of high-quality protein.

8. **TRUE.** Milk provides key nutrients, including calcium, vitamin D, and potassium. These nutrients are often under consumed, making nutrient-rich foods especially important during the teen years.

ANSWERS: PART 2:

1. **B;** clues: "Registered dietitians and current dietary guidelines." 2. **A;** clues: "Current dietary guidelines." 3. **B;** clues: "Research shows."

Activity 2: A Tall Glass of Nutrients

Students explore milk's nutrients by researching and writing about them. Pass out the activity sheet and go over the instructions. When the students have completed Part 2, have them share their social media posts and discuss them as a class. Consider displaying them on a healthy eating bulletin board.

Activity 3: Snack Swap

Reinforce the importance of making healthy food choices by encouraging students to brainstorm nutritious snack options. Pass out the activity sheet and go over the instructions. When the students have completed the activity, invite them to share their snack swaps.

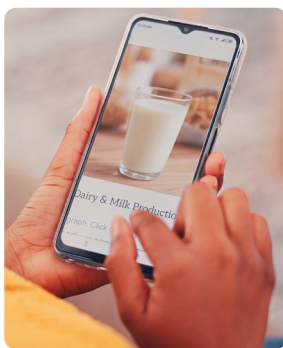


What's Your Dairy IQ?

Dairy foods, which include milk and foods made from milk such as cheese and yogurt, can be a tasty way to get nutrients your body needs to grow, stay strong, and feel your best.

PART 1

Our world is full of nutrition claims, but not all of them are accurate or reliable. If you spotted the milk-related statements below online, would you know which ones were valid? Decide whether each statement is *True* or *False*, and then write your answer on the line.



1. Milk provides 7 essential nutrients. _____
2. Teen years are an important stage for building bone strength. _____
3. Skim milk and whole milk contain similar amounts of calcium. _____
4. The 2025–2030 Dietary Guidelines for Americans include whole milk as part of a healthy eating pattern. _____
5. Drinking milk after a workout helps your body refuel. _____
6. Lactose-free dairy milk is not real milk. _____
7. An energy drink provides the same 8 grams of high-quality protein as an 8-ounce glass of dairy milk. _____
8. Milk provides multiple nutrients that many teens may not get enough of in their daily diets. _____

PART 2

Use your dairy knowledge and fact-checking skills to review each pair of imaginary social media posts below. For each pair, **circle** the letter of the statement that seems factual and accurate. Then on the line, list the clues that helped you select your answer.

1. **A.** "I stopped drinking milk for two weeks and I have SO much more energy now. Seriously, everyone should try it!"
B. "Registered dietitians and current dietary guidelines point to dairy foods as sources of nutrients that support bone health."

Clues: _____

2. **A.** "Current dietary guidelines include whole milk and other full-fat dairy foods as options within a healthy eating pattern."
B. "Whole milk is obviously unhealthy because it has more fat."

Clues: _____

3. **A.** "This energy drink is literally the BEST thing for you after a workout."
B. "Research shows that milk provides fluids, carbohydrates, and high-quality protein that can help you refuel after exercise."

Clues: _____

Choose a factual statement you circled. Would you share it with others? Why or why not?



Activity 2

A Tall Glass of Nutrients

Milk and dairy foods provide nutrients that help support health and wellness.

An 8-ounce glass of milk provides 8 grams of high-quality protein, a nutrient that is essential to our bodies and helps build and repair tissues, including muscles, bones, hair, and nails. High-quality proteins are also called complete proteins because they contain all nine essential amino acids that the body cannot make on its own. Milk has two complementary types of high-quality proteins: casein and whey. Whey is digested more quickly, while casein is digested more slowly, providing amino acids to the body at different rates. Together, they help support muscle growth, repair, and recovery. What other nutrients are found in milk and dairy foods?

PART 1

Use the sources below to research the 13 essential nutrients in milk. Then complete the chart.

- 13 Ways Milk Can Help Your Body: bit.ly/4wQpSkF
- Milk Facts and Health Benefits: Is Milk Healthy? usdairy.com/dairy-nutrition/products/milk
- Understanding High-Quality Proteins: How to Choose the Best Protein Options for Your Health: usdairy.com/news-articles/what-is-high-quality-protein

PART 2

When done with the chart, use what you've learned to design a social media post featuring three nutrients in milk and explain why they are important. Showcase your favorite protein-rich dairy food, such as regular or chocolate milk, yogurt, or string cheese. Add an illustration, emojis, or an image to support your message.

Did You Know?

Essential nutrients are the vitamins, minerals, proteins, fats, and other nutrients your body needs every day because it can't produce enough of them itself.

Nutrients in milk

What does the nutrient do for the body?

1. Calcium	
2. Iodine	
3. Niacin (Vitamin B3)	
4. Pantothenic Acid (Vitamin B5)	
5. Phosphorus	
6. Potassium	
7. Protein	
8. Riboflavin (Vitamin B2)	
9. Selenium	
10. Vitamin A	
11. Vitamin B12	
12. Vitamin D	
13. Zinc	



Activity 3

Snack Swap

Healthy eating often depends on individual needs, preferences, and circumstances, but nutrition should always be the priority. Can you influence other teens to make nutritious food choices?

Read the social media posts below. Write an engaging reply to encourage the teen to swap their food choice for a more nutritious option that will also help them meet the recommended three daily servings of dairy as part of a healthy eating pattern. Use the ideas below or go to usdairy.com/recipes and select "Appetizer/Snack" from the dropdown menu.

Example:



Post: "There's just no time after my skincare routine to eat breakfast before school, so I grab an energy drink and I'm out the door!"



Reply: "Your skincare routine deserves a breakfast sidekick! Try a Greek yogurt with fruit or overnight oats made with milk. You'll get protein plus other essential nutrients to help fuel your morning, and you can still make it out the door on time!"



1. Post: "Lunch today: a bag of chips and a soda from the vending machine. Basically a balanced meal, right?"

Your reply: _____



2. Post: "I'm STARVING. Time for my favorite afterschool snack while I scroll socials — a pack of cookies."

Your reply: _____



3. Post: "Practice was brutal! I'm grabbing a giant slushie on the way home for hydration."

Your reply: _____



4. Post: "It's 10 p.m., I still have homework, and dinner was forever ago. Guess I'm surviving on candy until midnight."

Your reply: _____

Snack Ideas



- Greek yogurt with berries and granola
- Fruit smoothie made with milk or Greek yogurt
- String cheese with whole-grain crackers
- Cottage cheese with fruit
- Chocolate milk and a banana
- Cheese and apple slices
- Whole-grain quesadilla with cheese and beans
- Overnight oats made with milk and fruit
- Turkey-and-cheese wrap with vegetables
- Ricotta toast with fruit
- Cereal with milk and banana
- Baked potato topped with cheese



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School Nurse News: Dairy, Nutrition, & Student Wellness

As a school nurse, you play an important role in supporting your students' health and wellness. Nutrition is a key part of this, especially as students navigate busy schedules, developmental changes, and, for some, inconsistent access to nutritious foods. Milk is a simple, convenient, nutrient-rich way to help nourish growing bodies, active days, and developing minds.

Dairy Means More for Kids

An 8-ounce serving of milk provides 13 essential nutrients that can help children meet their daily nutritional needs and support their overall health.

- Healthy fats and protein in milk support growth.
- Milk's nutrients help fuel learning and concentration.
- Protein in milk helps keep kids full and energized.
- Milk provides fluids and electrolytes to support hydration, making it a good choice after sports.

Milk Choice

The Whole Milk for Healthy Kids Act of 2025 expands milk options to include whole and 2% milk at school. Offering more variety may encourage students to choose milk, helping them get the protein and other nutrients they need.



Milk & Satiety

Whether it's skim, 1%, 2%, or whole milk, all milk contains the same amount of protein which helps with satiety, or feeling full. Whole milk also contains more fat, which may also increase satiety and help students stay satisfied longer.

Put It Into Practice

You can help students connect nutrition information to real-life choices through simple activities:

- **Compare the Protein:** Have students calculate the amount of protein in their school lunch when they choose milk as their beverage compared with another beverage choice.
- **Build a Nutrient-Rich Snack:** Ask students to create a snack that pairs a dairy food, such as milk, Greek yogurt, cheese, or cottage cheese, with another nutritious food.
- **Explore the Label:** Compare Nutrition Facts labels from different milks and identify the key nutrients.
- **Track the Nutrients:** Challenge students to identify how many of milk's 13 essential nutrients they can find using a food label or nutrition resource.

For **ready-to-use activities** that help students explore dairy nutrition, evaluate health information, and make informed food choices, check out "Fuel Your Brain & Body" at ymiclassroom.com/midwestdairy.



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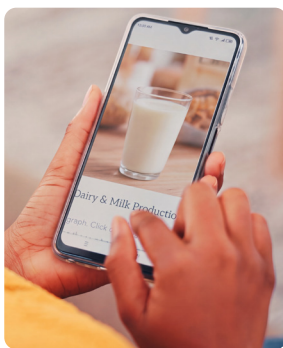


¿Cuánto sabes sobre los lácteos?

Los productos lácteos, que incluyen la leche y los alimentos elaborados con leche, como el queso y el yogur, pueden ser una forma deliciosa de obtener los nutrientes que el cuerpo necesita para crecer, mantenerse fuerte y sentirse lo mejor posible.

PARTE 1

Nuestro mundo está lleno de afirmaciones sobre nutrición, pero no todas son precisas ni confiables. Si encontraras en internet las siguientes afirmaciones relacionadas con la leche, ¿sabrías cuáles son correctas? Decide si cada afirmación es *verdadera* o *falsa* y escribe la respuesta en la línea.



1. La leche aporta 7 nutrientes esenciales. _____
2. La adolescencia es una etapa importante para desarrollar huesos fuertes. _____
3. La leche descremada y la leche entera contienen cantidades similares de calcio. _____
4. Las Guías Alimentarias para los Estadounidenses 2025-2030 incluyen la leche entera como parte de un patrón de alimentación saludable. _____
5. Tomar leche después de hacer ejercicio ayuda al cuerpo a recuperar energía. _____
6. La leche sin lactosa no es leche de verdad. _____
7. Una bebida energética aporta los mismos 8 gramos de proteína de alta calidad que un vaso de 8 onzas de leche de vaca. _____
8. La leche aporta varios nutrientes de los que muchos adolescentes quizás no obtengan una cantidad suficiente en su alimentación diaria. _____

PARTE 2

Usa lo que sabes sobre los lácteos y tus habilidades para verificar información para revisar los siguientes pares de publicaciones ficticias en redes sociales. En cada par, marca con un **círculo** la letra de la afirmación que parezca basada en hechos y correcta. Luego, anota en la línea las pistas que te ayudaron a elegir la respuesta.

1. **A.** "Llevo dos semanas sin tomar leche y ahora tengo MUCHÍSIMA más energía. En serio, ¡todos deberían intentarlo!"

B. "Según los dietistas registrados y las guías de alimentación actuales, los lácteos son fuentes de nutrientes que favorecen la salud de los huesos".

Pistas: _____

2. **A.** "Según las guías alimentarias actuales, la leche entera y otros productos lácteos enteros son opciones que forman parte de una alimentación saludable".

B. "Obviamente, la leche entera no es saludable porque tiene más grasa".

Pistas: _____

3. **A.** "Esta bebida energética es, literalmente, lo MEJOR después de hacer ejercicio".

B. "Según las investigaciones, la leche aporta líquidos, carbohidratos y proteína de alta calidad que pueden ayudarte a recuperar energía después de hacer ejercicio".

Pistas: _____

Elige una afirmación basada en hechos que hayas marcado. ¿La compartirías con otras personas? ¿Por qué sí o por qué no?



Un vaso lleno de nutrientes

La leche y los productos lácteos aportan nutrientes que ayudan a mantener la salud y el bienestar.

Un vaso de leche de 8 onzas aporta 8 gramos de proteína de alta calidad, un nutriente que el cuerpo necesita que ayuda a formar y reparar tejidos, como los músculos, los huesos, el cabello y las uñas. Las proteínas de alta calidad también se conocen como proteínas completas porque contienen los nueve aminoácidos esenciales que el cuerpo no puede producir por sí solo. La leche contiene dos tipos complementarios de proteínas de alta calidad: caseína y proteína de suero. La proteína de suero se digiere más rápido, mientras que la caseína se digiere más despacio. Así, el cuerpo recibe aminoácidos durante diferentes periodos de tiempo. En conjunto, ayudan al crecimiento, la reparación y la recuperación de los músculos. ¿Qué otros nutrientes hay en la leche y los productos lácteos?

PARTE 1

Usa las fuentes que aparecen a continuación para investigar los 13 nutrientes esenciales presentes en la leche. Luego, completa la tabla.

- 13 Ways Milk Can Help Your Body (13 formas en las que la leche puede ayudar a tu cuerpo): bit.ly/4wQpSkF
- Milk Facts and Health Benefits: Is Milk Healthy? (Datos sobre la leche y sus beneficios para la salud: ¿Es saludable la leche?) usdairy.com/dairy-nutrition/products/milk
- Understanding High-Quality Proteins: How to Choose the Best Protein Options for Your Health (Comprender las proteínas de alta calidad: cómo elegir las mejores opciones de proteína para tu salud): usdairy.com/news-articles/what-is-high-quality-protein

PARTE 2

Cuando termines con la tabla, usa lo que aprendiste para crear una publicación en redes sociales sobre tres nutrientes de la leche y explica por qué son importantes. Destaca tu producto lácteo favorito rico en proteína, como la leche regular o chocolatada, el yogur o los palitos de queso. Agrega una ilustración, emojis o una imagen para reforzar tu mensaje.

Nutrientes de la leche

¿Qué aporta este nutriente a tu cuerpo?

1. Calcio	
2. Yodo	
3. Niacina (vitamina B3)	
4. Ácido pantoténico (vitamina B5)	
5. Fósforo	
6. Potasio	
7. Proteína	
8. Riboflavina (vitamina B2)	
9. Selenio	
10. Vitamina A	
11. Vitamina B12	
12. Vitamina D	
13. Zinc	



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¿Sabías
que...?

Los nutrientes esenciales son las vitaminas, los minerales, las proteínas, las grasas y otros nutrientes que el cuerpo necesita todos los días porque no puede producirlos en cantidad suficiente por sí solo.



Actividad 3

Elige una mejor merienda

Una alimentación saludable suele depender de las necesidades, preferencias y circunstancias de cada persona, pero siempre es importante elegir alimentos nutritivos. ¿Puedes animar en otros adolescentes para que elijan alimentos nutritivos?

Lee las siguientes publicaciones en redes sociales. Escribe una respuesta atractiva para animar al adolescente a cambiar lo que eligió por una opción más nutritiva que además le ayude a cumplir con la recomendación de consumir tres porciones diarias de lácteos como parte de una alimentación saludable. Usa las ideas de abajo o visita usdairy.com/recipes y selecciona "Appetizer/Snack" (Aperitivo/Merienda) en el menú desplegable.

Ejemplo:



Publicación: "Después de mi rutina de cuidado de la piel, no me queda tiempo para desayunar antes de ir a la escuela. Así que tomo una bebida energética y ¡salgo de casa!"



Respuesta: "¡Tu rutina de cuidado de la piel merece ir acompañada de un desayuno! Prueba un yogur griego con fruta o avena preparada con leche desde la noche anterior. Obtendrás proteína y otros nutrientes esenciales que te darán energía por la mañana, y aun así podrás salir de casa a tiempo".



1. Publicación: "Almuerzo de hoy: una bolsa de papas fritas y un refresco de la máquina expendedora. Básicamente, una comida equilibrada, ¿no?"

Tu respuesta: _____



2. Publicación: "Me MUERO de hambre. Es hora de comer mi merienda favorita después de clases mientras reviso mis redes sociales: un paquete de galletas".

Tu respuesta: _____



3. Publicación: "¡El entrenamiento estuvo durísimo! Voy a comprar un *slushie* gigante de camino a casa para hidratarme".

Tu respuesta: _____



4. Publicación: "Son las 10 p. m., todavía me queda tarea y cené hace una eternidad. Supongo que voy a sobrevivir a base de dulces hasta la medianoche".

Tu respuesta: _____

Ideas para meriendas



- Yogur griego con fresas, arándanos y granola
- Batido de frutas preparado con leche o yogur griego
- Palitos de queso con galletas integrales
- Queso *cottage* con fruta
- Leche chocolatada y una banana
- Queso y rodajas de manzana
- Quesadilla con tortilla integral, queso y frijoles
- Avena preparada con leche y frutas desde la noche anterior
- Wrap de pavo y queso con verduras
- Tostada con queso ricota y fruta
- Cereal con leche y banana
- Papa al horno cubierta con queso



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