

# Helping Floridians *Mooove to Lowfat or Fat Free Milk*

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Members of the Florida Interagency Food and Nutrition Committee<sup>1</sup> are joining forces to help Floridians *Mooove to Lowfat or Fat Free Milk*. The *Mooove* campaign is designed to encourage Floridians to switch from whole or reduced fat (2%) milk to lowfat (1%) or fat free milk. The goal is to reduce fat intake and associated long-term health risks among children (over 2 years of age), teenagers, and adults.

## Diet and Chronic Disease Risk

Lifestyle, including diet, can affect risk for obesity, diabetes, cancer, heart disease, stroke, and osteoporosis. The *Mooove* campaign can decrease risk for obesity, diabetes, and heart disease, since these diseases are related to fat consumption.<sup>2</sup>

### Overweight and Obesity

Overweight and obesity are growing health concerns in the U.S. Approximately 300,000 deaths a year are associated with these conditions. Risk of death from cardiovascular disease and cancer increases with an increase in body mass index. Other health effects of overweight and obesity include increased risk for gallbladder disease and sleep disturbances. Obesity also can contribute to low self-esteem and depression.

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<sup>1</sup>The Florida Interagency Food and Nutrition Committee includes representatives from a number of governmental and educational agencies throughout Florida with the mission of providing effective food and nutrition services to the public.

<sup>2</sup> If the campaign encourages people to drink more milk, it can also help reduce risk of osteoporosis. Since this is not the primary focus of the *Mooove* campaign, osteoporosis risk is not addressed in this paper.

During the 1990s, there was a 61 percent increase in obesity in the U.S. The monetary cost of overweight and obesity was about \$117 billion in 2000, and the personal costs are inestimable. Members of low-income families, and racial and ethnic minorities (particularly women) are more likely to be overweight or obese.

### Diabetes

The overall incidence of diabetes in the U.S. increased 49 percent between 1990 and 2000. About 800,000 new cases are diagnosed each year. In recent years, we've seen dramatic increases in type 2 diabetes in young people associated with high rates of obesity.

### Cardiovascular Disease

Heart disease is the leading cause of death in men and women in this country. Each year, more than 950,000 persons die from cardiovascular disease, including heart disease and stroke. An increase in cardiovascular disease is likely in the future due to recent increases in obesity and diabetes in the U.S.

## Federal Dietary Guidelines

Long-term eating habits play a significant role in health. When people make positive dietary choices, they promote their health and reduce risks for major chronic diseases. This is a basic tenet of the *Dietary Guidelines for Americans*. The dietary guideline that most directly supports the *Mooove* campaign is "Choose a diet that is low in saturated fat and cholesterol and moderate in total fat." Also, by "moooving" to lowfat or fat free milk, consumers will reduce their total fat and calorie intake which can help them "Aim for a healthy weight," which is another guideline that is critical for good health.

## **Role of Communities in Promoting Healthy Lifestyles**

Communities can play a significant role in reducing people's health risks. They can provide an environment conducive to positive lifestyle choices such as physical activity and healthful food choices.

Recently, the Surgeon General asked schools to provide lowfat food options, including lowfat or fat free milk products, on campuses and at school events. Currently, 63 percent of all milk ordered by public schools is whole or two percent. Studies have found that students will drink lowfat milk when it is promoted.

## **Milk Consumption Patterns**

The Food Guide Pyramid recommends two to three servings of milk products per day. Choosing lowfat or fat free milk and milk products helps us meet the Dietary Guidelines recommendation for limiting fat intake to 30 percent or less of total calories. Young children (ages 2 to 8 years) and adults (ages 19 to 50 years) need two servings of milk products per day. Older children and teens (ages 9 to 18 years), and adults over the age of 50, need three servings of milk products daily. During pregnancy and lactation, the recommended number of milk group servings is the same as for nonpregnant women. Americans currently get about 1.6 servings of milk products per day.

There has been a healthy trend toward reduced consumption of whole milk in the U.S. In the late 1960s, Americans consumed four times as much whole milk as lower fat milk, but by the late 1980s, reduced-fat outsold whole milk.

## **Why Should People *Moove* to Lower Fat Milk Choices?**

Milk products are a major source of fat in the diet of American children and adults. People who drink higher fat milk can lower their fat and saturated fat intake by making the switch to lower fat milk. Lower fat diets can reduce serum

cholesterol and the risk of cardiovascular disease and mortality. It can also reduce the risk of diabetes.

Children (ages 2 to 19 years) who drink lowfat or fat free milk can keep their fat intake at the recommended 30 percent of calories and, at the same time, maintain adequate intake of micronutrients and calories. This fact is important for parents and caregivers to understand, so that they will be willing to switch children (age 2 years and older) to lower fat milk.

In summary, higher fat milks, such as whole and reduced fat (2%), contribute to fat and saturated fat consumption in the U.S. Changing milk consumption patterns to lower fat choices can reduce fat and saturated fat intake while maintaining consumption of critical nutrients.

## **The *Moove* Campaign**

The *Moove* campaign encourages adults and children (age 2 years and older) who drink whole or reduced fat (2%) milk to make the switch to lowfat (1%) or fat free milk. The *Moove* message is being disseminated to the public through posters, displays, buttons, activity sheets, newsletter articles, and lesson plans. Young people and adults are being targeted at public schools, health departments, WIC clinics, child care centers, adult care centers, senior centers, health fairs, Extension offices, and grocery stores.

Prepared by Linda B. Bobroff, Ph.D., RD, LD/N, University of Florida, Gainesville, for the Florida Interagency Food and Nutrition Committee's *Moove to Lowfat or Fat Free Milk* campaign. Visit our website at: [www.doh.state.fl.us/family/cvh/nutrition/milk.html](http://www.doh.state.fl.us/family/cvh/nutrition/milk.html)

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