

# Adult Lesson Plan

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## Goal

To help adults learn how to select low fat and fat-free dairy foods daily.

## Objectives

After completing the lesson, adults will know:

- Why dairy foods are an important part of daily food choices.
- The importance of eating low fat or fat-free dairy foods.
- How to control symptoms if someone has trouble digesting lactose (milk sugar).
- Ways to incorporate dairy foods at the breakfast meal.

Handouts are found in the “Lesson Plan Handouts and Activities” section of this manual.

## Activity 1—Are You Getting Enough Dairy Foods Each Day?

### Materials needed

- **Handout for Activity one: “Tips for including low fat or fat-free dairy foods in your daily food choices”**

## Discussion

### Why do we need to eat dairy foods, especially low fat dairy foods?

Overall, dairy products such as milk, yogurt, and cheese are the major contributors of calcium in the U.S. diet, although some ethnic groups avoid dairy products for various reasons. All of us need calcium for the constant rebuilding of bone. During childhood, there is a higher amount of bone building and less breakdown. In early and middle adulthood, these processes are relatively equal. Among older adults, bone breakdown is greater than bone formation, resulting in bone loss. So, the stronger your bones are when you are a young adult, the stronger they will be as age increases. In addition to our bones and teeth, our heart, muscles, and nervous system need calcium to function properly. It is reported that approximately 78 percent of American women and 55 percent of American men ages twenty and over do not get enough calcium in their daily food intakes. To encourage Americans to get enough of the nutrients they need

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for good health, the United States Department of Agriculture has developed the MyPyramid food guidance system. The food groups in MyPyramid include grains, vegetables, fruits, milk, and meat and beans. Today we are reviewing the Milk Group for adults. MyPyramid recommends that adults consume three cups of milk or equivalent each day.

## Each of the following counts as one cup of milk in the Milk Group:

- 1 cup (8 fluid ounces) of milk
- 1 cup (8 fluid ounces) of yogurt
- 1½ ounces of natural cheese
- 2 ounces of processed cheese

Choose low fat or fat-free dairy foods for fewer calories and less fat. There are a variety of low fat and fat-free milk and other dairy products available in stores. These low fat and fat-free products contain the same amount of calcium as the comparable higher fat dairy products; some even contain slightly more calcium per serving!

## Some examples of low fat or fat-free dairy foods are:

- low fat (1%) milk
- Fat-free, nonfat, or skim milk
- low fat flavored milk
- low fat or fat-free yogurt
- low fat, fat-free, or nonfat cheese

Also, many people think that “reduced fat” or “part skim” dairy products are low fat products. **This is not true.**

## Food Labeling Related to Fat Content of a Food

For a product to be labeled as “low fat,” it must have **three grams of fat or less** per serving. Look at some of the following examples of reduced fat or part skim dairy products and their fat contents, and you will see why reduced fat or part skim dairy products are NOT low fat:

- Reduced fat (2% milk fat) milk = 5 grams of fat per cup
- Part skim ricotta cheese = 4.5 grams of fat per 2 oz. serving
- Part skim mozzarella cheese = 5 grams of fat per 1 oz. serving



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## Are You Getting Enough Dairy Foods Each Day?

Ask the participants the following question: **How many cups of milk or other dairy products do you eat daily?**

**Remember: One cup of milk, one cup of yogurt, 1½ ounces of cheese, or two ounces of processed cheese all count as one cup in the Milk Group.**

Discuss the answers that the participants give to this question. To help each person reach his or her goal of 3 cups of milk or other dairy products, go over the handout for Activity one. Have a class discussion about the two sections of the handout.

## Activity 2—“Moove” to low fat and Fat-Free Milk

### Materials needed

- **Handout for Activity 2: Conduct the “Taste Test Activity”**

### Discussion

#### What can YOU do to switch from whole milk or reduced fat milk to low fat or fat-free milk?

To ‘moove’ to low fat (1%) or fat-free dairy foods, make changes gradually:

For adults who don’t like the low fat (1%) or fat-free varieties of milk products, a good plan is to *gradually* change from higher to lower fat dairy products. Do this over a period of time. For example:

- Start by mixing one-half cup of whole milk and one-half cup of low fat (1%) milk.
- After approximately two weeks, add one-fourth cup of whole milk to three-fourths of a cup of low fat (1%) milk.
- Next, after about two weeks, reduce the fat even further by adding three-fourths low fat (1%) milk and one-fourth fat-free milk.
- Then continue on until your taste buds have adjusted to the fat-free dairy choices. It’s a gradual process, but well worth the effort to eat less fat and fewer calories, while getting the nutrients needed for good health.
- Remember reduced fat milk (2%) is NOT low fat (1%)!



## Activity 3—Lactose Intolerance

### Materials needed

- Handout for Activity 3—“Lactose in Dairy Foods“

### Discussion

Some people have trouble digesting the sugar (lactose) in dairy foods. This is called lactose intolerance. For people with lactose intolerance, the milk sugar or lactose that is naturally found in dairy foods causes gas, bloating, cramps, or diarrhea within about two hours after eating dairy foods. Try these suggestions if you think that you have lactose intolerance:

- Eat or drink small amounts of dairy foods more often, instead of eating or drinking a large amount at one time.
- Eat or drink dairy foods along with other foods at a meal or snack.
- Use foods that contain less lactose, such as lactose-reduced milk, hard cheeses, cottage cheese, or yogurt with active cultures.
- Buy foods labeled low lactose or lactose free.
- Ask your pharmacist or doctor for special drops or tablets (*lactase enzyme*) that help to digest milk.
- Introduce dairy to your diet slowly. Start with small portions and gradually work up to three servings a day.



## Activity 4—Breakfast Dairy Foods

### Materials needed

- Handout for Activity 4—“Dairy foods you can include at breakfast.”

### Discussion—I do not take time for breakfast.

If the word “breakfast” is thought of as “break” “fast,” it might help you to understand the need for a nutritious meal in the morning. When you skip breakfast, you deprive your body of the nutrients that get you going for the day. Studies have shown that people who typically eat breakfast tend to have a healthier diet than those who skip breakfast. Breakfast foods do not have to be about eating the “same old boring foods” each day. In fact, there are many ways to incorporate dairy products into your daily breakfast meal plan. Now, go to the handout for Activity 4—called “Dairy foods you can include at breakfast” and discuss this handout with your class. Ask participants if they can think of other examples of dairy products that can be incorporated into their breakfast.

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