

MILK



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In recent years the milk market has changed dramatically. There are so many options for “milk” to choose from now. Sales of cow’s milk have fallen in the last decade while those for soy, almond and coconut milk have increased. All over the world you can purchase different kinds of milk including hemp (does not contain THC), horse, buffalo, yak, camel and even cockroach milk. Yummy! While these milks can be used in your diet in very similar ways, nutritionally they are quite different. Here are some quick tips to help guide your choice.

Cow’s milk – Cow’s milk has a blend of fat, protein, carbs and potassium to make it a strong contributor to a healthy diet as well as a great recovery drink after a workout. Each glass meets 30% of your daily need for calcium and is a good source of protein. About 30 million Americans have some degree of intolerance to lactose, the naturally occurring sugar in milk. Lactaid milk is cow’s milk, but has the lactose broken down for problem-free digestion. Organic cow’s milk provides the same general nutrient profile as non-organic milk, and is available as lactose-free as well.

A2 Milk – Cow’s milk contains two types of protein – A1 and A2 casein. The A1 casein seems to be more difficult for some people to digest. Symptoms of having an intolerance to milk protein can include diarrhea or constipation, bloating, cramps, skin rashes, fatigue and joint pain. Some breeds of cows only produce A2 casein or now you can purchase A2 milk that doesn’t contain any A1 casein. Keep in mind the A2 milk still contains lactose. If you aren’t sure which part of dairy foods causes your symptoms, eat some cheddar cheese. If you have symptoms, then you are more likely to have the A1 casein intolerance as cheddar cheese doesn’t contain lactose.

Goat’s Milk – This milk is similar to cow’s milk in nutrition. Like cow’s milk, make sure you buy the low fat variety. Goat’s milk is a little lower in lactose than cow’s milk and doesn’t contain any A1 casein (see below) so it is considered a little more

digestible. Interestingly, different breeds of goats produce a slightly different flavor of milk. It is generally more expensive and less available than cow’s milk.

Rice milk – This milk is primarily carbohydrate, which can make it quick fuel before a workout. It is considered the most hypoallergenic of the alternative milks. It is a good option for those on potassium or protein restricted diets.

Almond milk –Produced by toasting and grinding almonds then blending with water, almond milk is a good source of magnesium, selenium and vitamin E. It is very low in carbohydrates and protein so it won’t give you a feeling of fullness or provide much fuel for your workout. It is your pick if you are limiting your calories and carbohydrates.

Soy milk – This milk is made by soaking dried soybeans and grinding them in water. Soy milk is a good source of protein like cow’s milk. It also may help lower bad cholesterol.

Coconut milk - surprisingly, coconut milk is not the fluid inside the coconut. It is made by shredding the meat of the coconut, simmering in water and straining out the pieces. It doesn’t contain any protein and is high in saturated fat. Some feel the kind of saturated fat (medium chain fatty acid) in coconut milk has some health benefits, but the evidence now doesn’t support that so limit your portion. Coconut milk has a creamier texture that makes it more appealing.

Nutritional Profiles of the Most Common Milks & Milk Alternatives (values will vary depending on brands)

1 cup portion, unsweetened	Calories	Total Fat (g)	Saturated Fat (g)	Sodium (mg)	Carbs (g)	Protein (g)	Calcium (mg)	Potassium (mg)
Cow’s Milk, 1%	105	2.4	1.5	127	12	8	300	397
Lactaid Milk	110	2.5	1.5	125	13	8	300	410
Goat’s Milk, 1%	90	2.5	1.5	100	9	7	327	498
Rice Milk	70	2.5	0	125	11	0.7	300*	65
Almond Milk	36	2.5	0	173	1	1	480*	163
Soy Milk	105	4	0	115	12	7	300*	298
Coconut Milk	40	4	3	45	1	0	460*	310

*calcium fortified

Make sure the milk you choose provides about 30% of recommended daily value for calcium unless you are taking a separate calcium supplement. It is even better if your milk is fortified with vitamin D as well to enhance the absorption of calcium. Non-dairy milks may be fortified with vitamin B12 as well to match that of cow’s milk.

