

**New Science Review Examines Multiple Health Benefits of Dairy Foods:
*Important Findings for Children and Adults***

WHAT: Food prices rose by 5.5 percent in the past year and are expected to increase up to an additional 4 percent in 2009.¹ Americans are seeking to get the most out of their dollar, and since together, dairy foods provide a unique package of nine essential nutrients, they are a nutritional bang for the buck.

In a supplement to the current issue of the *Journal of the American College of Nutrition (JACN)*, several prominent nutrition researchers weigh in on an updated review of the health benefits of consuming dairy foods. This supplement further contributes to the well-established evidence that consuming the recommended servings of dairy foods each day is a convenient and affordable way to get several key nutrients that many Americans do not consume enough.

Together, milk, cheese and yogurt provide a unique package of nine essential nutrients at a low cost per serving. Research cited in the review supports consuming three to four daily servings of dairy foods and indicates that these nutrients contribute to several health benefits.

Highlights include:

- **Child nutrition** – Children and adolescents between the ages of 9-18 need, on average, four servings of dairy foods a day to meet calcium recommendations and at least three servings to meet magnesium recommendations. Adolescents who do not regularly consume dairy, on average, only meet 40 percent of the Adequate Intake for calcium.
- **Bone health** – The evidence supports the 2005 Dietary Guidelines for Americans recommendation to meet nutrient needs through foods, including dairy foods, rather than supplements. Studies continue to show that dairy foods provide a unique nutrient package beneficial for bone mass and play a major role in lifelong bone health.
- **Cardiovascular health** – Low-fat and fat-free dairy foods play a key role in the Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension (DASH) diet, which has been shown to lower blood pressure and prevent hypertension. Eating the recommended servings of dairy foods can lower blood pressure and is associated with a lower risk of developing high blood pressure.
- **Healthy weight** – Studies show that dairy foods may favorably impact body composition and weight maintenance, particularly in overweight or obese adults who consume three servings of dairy foods daily while moderately reducing daily caloric intake.
- **Shortfall nutrients** – Dairy foods play a vital role in building a diet that contains the nutrients Americans consistently do not consume enough of including calcium, potassium and magnesium. The most practical way to meet these nutrient recommendations may be to add an additional serving of dairy to the current daily recommendation.

WHEN: The overview was released on July 1, 2009, as a supplement to the current issue of the *Journal of American College of Nutrition*, Vol. 28, No. 1, 69S-129S (2009)

WHO: Dr. Penny M. Kris-Etherton, PhD, RD, author of one of the supplements, is available for interview

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¹ United States Department of Agriculture Economic Research Services. "Food CPI and Expenditures"
<http://www.ers.usda.gov/Briefing/CPIFoodAndExpenditures/> (accessed June 3, 2009)