

# Milk is Vitamin D-licious!

## What's the Big D-eal?

### Where can kids (and parents) get it?

- Vitamin D is called the “sunshine vitamin” because the body can make it when exposed to enough sunlight.
- Most people have limited exposure to sunlight and need to get vitamin D from the foods they eat and drink.
- Milk is one of the few food sources of vitamin D—in fact, it's the leading source of vitamin D in the American diet.
- Cod liver oil and some fatty fish like salmon, sardines and tuna are naturally high in vitamin D, but most of the vitamin D in our diets comes from fortified foods like milk, cereal, and some juice, yogurt and cheese.
- All milks—whole, reduced-fat, low-fat and fat-free, are fortified with 100 International Units (IU) of vitamin D per 8-ounce cup.

### Why do kids need vitamin D?

- Vitamin D works with calcium to build strong, healthy bones—without vitamin D the body can't absorb calcium.
- Vitamin D deficiency can cause rickets, a crippling bone disease, in children.
- Vitamin D was first added to milk in the 1930's which virtually eliminated rickets in the United States.
- Vitamin D is considered an “essential nutrient” and is needed by every cell in the body.
- New research suggests vitamin D may help support a healthy immune system, improve brain function, and may help prevent diseases like diabetes, heart disease, gum disease and some cancers.



### How much is enough?

- Most kids aren't getting enough vitamin D.
- The American Academy of Pediatrics, in 2008, recommended doubling the amount of vitamin D for infants, children and teens from 200 IU to 400 IU per day based on research showing rickets is making a comeback.
- Three 8-ounce glasses of low-fat or fat-free milk provide 75 percent of the current recommended daily value of vitamin D along with many other nutrients essential to bone health like calcium, potassium, phosphorus, and riboflavin.
- Children with low milk intakes are more likely to be deficient in vitamin D.

### D-licious ways to boost your D:

- Milk is liquid sunshine! Drink at least 3 cups of low-fat milk every day.
- For a double dose of D, start the day with a bowl of fortified cereal and low-fat milk.
- Blend vitamin D fortified yogurt with fruit for a smoothie.
- Top French toast with vanilla vitamin D fortified yogurt for a sweet treat.
- Use low-fat milk to make soup that's nutrient-rich.
- Enjoy fresh cut veggies with yogurt dip for a snack.
- Warm kids up with hot cocoa made with low-fat chocolate milk.
- Get more D-licious ideas at [www.adadc.com](http://www.adadc.com).

