

Truth Meter: The Dairy Edition

Confused by the hearsay surrounding milk, yogurt and cheese? We've got your answers. **By Julia Westbrook**



Milk Douses the Flames of Spicy Peppers

In a recent study, chasing spicy tomato juice with a swig of milk eased the burn better than other beverages. Peppers get their heat from capsaicin, and you feel the fire when this compound binds to taste receptors on your tongue. It doesn't readily dissolve in water, but does respond to milk's casein, a protein that lifts the capsaicin off of your tongue, bringing relief.

SOURCES: PHYSIOLOGY & BEHAVIOR; ACS



Dairy Causes Pimples

Research has found that people who drink more milk (especially skim milk) tend to have more acne—with a few key caveats. First, this type of study design can't prove the dairy *caused* the breakouts. And this association only holds true for moderate to severe acne, not occasional blemishes.

SOURCE: JOURNAL OF THE EUROPEAN ACADEMY OF DERMATOLOGY AND VENEREOLOGY



Cheese Makes You Constipated

Eating more than 30 grams of saturated fat a day is linked with being backed up (and cheese is high in this type of fat: 1 ounce typically has 5 grams of saturated fat). But the problem isn't unique to cheese—any fatty food can have this effect.

SOURCE: NEUROGASTROENTEROLOGY & MOTILITY



Probiotics Cure Lactose Intolerance

If your body doesn't make enough of the enzyme that breaks down lactose, the dairy sugar winds up in the colon undigested. There, it feeds bacteria that create gas, causing GI distress. Probiotics can't make your body generate more enzymes, but they may lessen symptoms. Still, not all strains help, not everyone sees a benefit and issues may return if you stop taking them.

SOURCE: CRITICAL REVIEWS IN FOOD SCIENCE AND NUTRITION



Organic Milk Has Way More Omega-3s

Yes, organic milk averages 62% more omega-3s than conventional. The catch: milk isn't a good source of these healthy fats to begin with. Recommended daily amounts are 1,100 mg (for women) and 1,600 mg (for men). But while a glass of conventional whole milk supplies about 50 mg, organic has 80—not much more. Cartons that tout significantly more are typically fortified.

SOURCE: PLOS ONE

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