

# 12 Tips for Getting Kids to Drink More Milk



Milk is one of the most nutritious choices that kids can make at home or at school. It's a natural, nutrient-packed food that is a "good" or "excellent" source of nine essential nutrients that growing children need for good health and strong bones. Here are 12 easy tips to follow to ensure your kids get the three servings of milk they need each day.

- ① Serve milk ice-cold, the way kids like it, between 35-40 degrees F. Pour it right before serving and promptly return the container to the refrigerator so the milk maintains its fresh taste.
- ② Be a role model. When children see you drink milk, they are more likely to drink it, too.
- ③ Serve milk at meals. Set expectations ahead of time that milk is the beverage of choice at meal times.
- ④ Serve flavored milk. Kids love it, and ounce for ounce it has the same nutrients as unflavored milk.
- ⑤ Stock the fridge with single-serve containers of white and flavored milk for grab 'n go.
- ⑥ Serve milk in special glasses and with a straw. Let older kids use mix-ins to create a new milk flavor.
- ⑦ Let children use a straw to drink the milk left in the bowl after finishing their cereal.
- ⑧ Order low-fat flavored milk in kid-friendly, single-serve containers instead of soda when eating out.
- ⑨ Remind children to drink milk with School Lunch. Studies show that when children drink milk at lunch, they have higher intakes of several critical nutrients, including calcium, zinc and vitamin A.<sup>1</sup>
- ⑩ Send milk money and have children buy milk when they take their lunch to school.
- ⑪ Ask if your child's school serves the *New Look of School Milk* — ice-cold milk served in a variety of flavors, in kid-friendly, plastic packaging, on the school meal line. If not, talk to the school nutrition director. Research shows that when the *New Look of School Milk* is available, children take and drink more milk.<sup>2</sup>
- ⑫ Remember that children eat first and foremost for taste. If your child prefers whole or reduced-fat milk, cut fat elsewhere in the diet and gradually switch to low-fat or fat-free milk.

1. Johnson, RK, et al. *Journal of Child Nutrition and Management*. 1998, 2:95-100.

2. National Dairy Council and School Nutrition Association (SNA; formerly American School Food Service Association). *The School Milk Pilot Test*. Beverage Marketing Corporation for NDC and SNA, 2002.