

THE MILK COMPONENT

Fluid milk is one of the required food components on the CACFP Meal Pattern Chart for children 1 through 12 years of age. Milk is a required component at breakfast, lunch, and supper. Milk could also be one of the two required components served at snack. Milk provides important nutrients such as calcium, protein, vitamin A, vitamin D, and other nutrients necessary for children's proper growth and development.



The Dietary Guidelines for Americans recommends all persons ages 2 years and older to consume 1% or fat-free milk. Therefore, the CACFP requires all milk served to children and adults ages 2 years and older must be 1% or fat-free. The following milk types meet the definition of milk and are creditable:

- Low-fat (1%) or fat-free (skim) flavored or unflavored milk
- Low-fat (1%) or fat-free (skim) lactose reduced milk
- Low-fat (1%) or fat-free (skim) lactose free milk
- Low-fat (1%) or fat-free (skim) buttermilk
- Low-fat (1%) or fat-free (skim) acidified milk
- Whole milk for children between the ages 1 to 2 years only.

IMPORTANT REMINDERS ABOUT THE MILK COMPONENT

- Milk must be pasteurized and served in fluid form.
- Dry, reconstituted milk is not creditable and cannot be served to meet the milk component.
- 1% or fat-free milk should not be served to children under the age of two years. This age group must be served whole milk. Whole milk contains fats that are important for proper brain and nervous system development.
- Two fluids cannot be served at snack. If milk is one of the two components served at snack, juice cannot be the second component.
- The minimum required amount of milk for each child must be on the table at the beginning of the meal service:
 - If the children are serving themselves, as in family style dining, at least the minimum required quantity of milk for each child seated at the table must be in the pitchers, on the table, at the beginning of the meal service.
 - If staff members are pouring the milk for the children, at least the minimum required amount must be poured into the cups at the beginning of the meal service. The cups used must be sufficient in size to comfortably hold at least the minimum required amount in the first pour.