

WIC Client Concerns: The 2% Milk Change

Michigan WIC has put together answers to some of your common questions and concerns about the new milk change.

When is the last day I can get 2% milk?

September 14th. Keep in mind, though, that you may not be able to buy 2% milk if you are shopping late at night on September 14th.

I keep hearing that I can get 2% milk until September 15th, but my shopping list already says I can only get 1% milk or lower. Which is right?

You can still buy 2% milk through September 14th. Shopping lists were changed early so we can discuss this change in advance and you aren't surprised on September 15th.

My child doesn't like the taste of lower fat milk. He won't drink it.

Making changes isn't always easy, and we understand your concern that your child won't like the switch. Below are some suggestions to help ease into the change.

- 1) Make the change gradually. Start by mixing 2% and 1% milk, then go to all 1%. Use this for a while, then you could do the same with 1% and 1/2% or skim milk. Your family is more likely to accept the change if you make it one step at a time.
- 2) Try a taste test with your child to see if he likes 1% milk. Often, if children are used to drinking 2% milk, they can't tell the difference between the taste of 2% and 1% milk. As the parent, you can set an example by showing that you like skim, 1/2%, or 1% milk too.
- 3) You can also use skim, 1/2%, or 1% milk in recipes. Often you can't taste the difference when it is mixed with other ingredients.

Click this link for a helpful handout:

http://www.nationaldairycouncil.org/SiteCollectionDocuments/education_materials/wic/Low-Fat%20Milk%20Handout_English.pdf

Why do we have to switch? Does it really make that much of a difference to my health or my child's health?

Federal food programs like WIC, Head Start and the School Lunch Program have switched to lower fat (skim, 1/2%, or 1%) milks because they are healthier choices.

Lower fat milks provide the same nutrition but with less fat. 2% milk has about double the amount of fat as 1% milk and nearly 5 times the amount of fat as skim milk. Over time, too much fat in our diets can lead to an unhealthy weight, and possibly even heart disease.

Click this link for more information:

http://www.nationaldairycouncil.org/SiteCollectionDocuments/education_materials/wic/WhichMilkisHealthiestHandout.pdf

What's the difference? Is lower fat milk really as nutritious as other milk?

Yes! Simply put, lower fat milks provide the same nutrition but with less fat. All milk has the same amount of calcium and vitamin D to support strong teeth and bones. All milk has nearly the same amount of protein to support muscle growth. The main difference between milks is the amount of fat and calories, and lower fat milk has less of both. Reducing the amount of fat and calories in your diet can help you control your weight, lower your cholesterol, and reduce your risk of heart disease. Also, most of the fat in whole milk is saturated fat, which is considered an unhealthy kind of fat.

Click this link for more information:

http://www.nal.usda.gov/wicworks/Sharing_Center/TX/Station3.pdf

What if my child needs extra calories for weight gain?

Adding extra calories can be done through many ways other than drinking higher fat milk. A WIC nutritionist can offer several helpful suggestions for ways your child can best increase their calories. If your child has special medical needs that can be met through higher fat milk, your WIC nutritionist can offer this option.

More information:

- Learn more while completing your nutrition education needs with the www.wichealth.org lesson “Building Strong Kids with Dairy Foods.” (www.wichealth.org)
- Check out this link to see the different amounts of fat in milk: http://www.kansaswic.org/download/moovetolowfatmilk/lowfat_milk_handout.pdf.
- Other helpful suggestions and information can be found at <http://efnep.ucanr.edu/files/93482.pdf>.