

More cheese, please: News study shows dairy is good for your metabolic health

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Dairy is considered part of a healthy diet and dietary guidelines recommend the daily consumption of 2-4 portions of milk-based products such as milk, yogurt, cheese, cream and butter.

It's well known that [dairy products](#) contain calcium and minerals good for bones, but new research has shown that [dairy consumption](#) may also have beneficial effects on metabolic health and can reduce risk of [metabolic diseases](#) such as obesity and type 2 diabetes.

Curious about these impacts, researchers from CHU de Québec Research Center and Laval University studied the dairy-eating habits of healthy French-Canadians' and monitored how dairy consumption may have an effect on their overall metabolic health. They published their findings today in the journal *Applied Physiology, Nutrition, and Metabolism*.

The aim of this study was to determine associations between dairy intake and specific metabolic risk factors, including anthropometric status, plasma glucose, plasma lipid profile, inflammatory markers and [blood pressure](#), in a healthy population.

A total of 254 participants from the greater Quebec City metropolitan area were recruited; 233 participants (105 men and 128 women) met all the eligibility criteria for the study ? subjects had healthy metabolic profiles.

The study showed that the average individual consumed 2.5 ± 1.4 portions of dairy per day. However, nearly 45% of the population in this study did not meet Canada's Food Guide recommendations of at least 2 portions of dairy products a day. These findings are supported by recent Canadian surveys that highlighted an under consumption of dairy products by Canadians.

Data suggest that trans-palmitoleic acid found in plasma may be potentially used as a biomarker to evaluate dairy consumption. Trans-palmitoleic acid, is naturally present in milk, cheese, yogurt, butter, and meat fat but cannot be synthesized by the body. This fatty acid has been recently shown to have health-promoting effects. In this study, that trans-palmitoleic acid level was related to lower blood pressure in men and women, and to lower body weight in men.

Dairy intake is associated with lower blood glucose and blood pressure in the population studied, though no causal relationships can be made due to the cross-sectional design. This study adds to a growing body of literature demonstrating a lack of detrimental health effects with higher [dairy intake](#).

Dr. Iwona Rudkowska, a research scientist at the Endocrinology and Nephrology Department, at the CHU de Québec Research Center and assistant professor at Laval University , says "additional well-designed intervention studies are needed to

ascertain the effects of increased dairy consumption on metabolic health in healthy and in metabolically deteriorated populations."

More information: The paper "Associations between dairy intake and metabolic risk parameters in a healthy French-Canadian population" was published today in *Applied Physiology, Nutrition, and Metabolism*: www.nrcresearchpress.com/doi/10.1139/apnm-2014-0154

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