

No evidence for milk increasing mucus production from lungs

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(HealthDay)—There is no evidence to support the myth that milk

increases mucus production from the lungs, according to a review published online Sept. 6 in the *Archives of Disease in Childhood*.

Ian M. Balfour-Lynn, M.D., from the Royal Brompton Hospital in London, examined a myth that members of his department hear repeatedly from patients: Drinking [milk](#) increases [mucus production](#) from the lungs. These patients therefore stop their children from having milk.

Balfour-Lynn notes that in an Australian survey, 45, 25, and 11 percent of whole, reduced-fat, and soy milk drinkers, respectively, agreed that milk causes [mucus](#); 20, 8, and 5 percent believed that milk caused asthma. In a study conducted in 1948, the author found that there was no excess mucus among those who drank milk. In a study conducted by an Australian group, there was no correlation between milk/dairy intake and symptoms of upper/lower respiratory tract congestion or weight of nasal secretions produced. In another Australian study, adults reported difficulty swallowing and perceived thickness of saliva and mucus rather than increased amounts of mucus. Salivary mucins induce extensive droplet flocculation of the milk emulsion, which could affect the sensory perception of milk mixed with saliva, in terms of its thickness coating the mouth and the feeling after drinking when small amounts of emulsion remain in the mouth.

"While certainly the texture of milk can make some people feel their mucus and saliva is thicker and harder to swallow, there is no evidence (and indeed evidence to the contrary) that milk leads to excessive mucus secretion," Balfour-Lynn writes. "The milk-mucus myth needs to be rebutted firmly by [health care workers](#)."

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