

THE OTHER MILKS

BY MICHELLE GIBEAULT TRAUB

Lactose intolerance and a vegetarian diet are two popular reasons for avoiding milk. Add to that the growing number of individuals with dairy allergies, and the desire to replace milk becomes an essential for many. Fortunately, healthy alternatives abound. With just a quick review of the nutrition label, you can find your ideal choice.

First, focus on calcium (30 percent) and vitamin D (25 percent), two nutrients that must be replaced if dairy is avoided. Next, review the saturated-fat and sugar content, to ensure the drink is heart-healthy and low in calories. Finally, vegetarians should note the protein content, since their diets may not provide enough. Most dairy alternatives are nutritious, so the ultimate decision comes down to your taste buds.

Michelle Gibeault Traub is a registered dietitian and health writer.

TYPE OF MILK				
	Calories (per cup)	Pros	Cons	Where to find it
Cow (1 percent)	110	A good source of calcium, vitamin D, riboflavin and protein (9 g)	Often allergenic; contains lactose, which is difficult to digest; contains saturated fat and cholesterol	In the dairy case
Lactose-free				
Lactaid (1 percent)	110	Has all the nutritional benefits of cow's milk but is easier to digest for those with lactose intolerance	Has an unusually sweet flavor; contains saturated fat; more expensive than regular milk	In the dairy case
Lactose-free and vegetarian				
Rice	(unsweetened: 113) (sweetened: 130)	Good for those with allergies; shelf-stable and ideal for travel	Tends to be a bit watery; low in protein	In aseptic packages in the natural-foods aisle
Soy	(unsweetened: 80) (sweetened: 110)	A good source of protein (7 g) and isoflavones, which help lower cholesterol	Can negatively impact those with thyroid disease; has a slightly grainy taste	In aseptic packages in the natural-foods aisle, and in the dairy case
Almond	(unsweetened: 40) (sweetened: 90-100)	No saturated fat or cholesterol; lower in calories; a good source of magnesium and vitamin E	Has a creamy consistency; low in protein	In aseptic packages in the natural-foods aisle, and in the dairy case
Hemp	150	Contains the omega-3 fatty acid ALA, making it good for reducing inflammation; contains iron; has a rich, nutty taste	Higher in calories; not readily available in grocery stores; more expensive than other options	At health-food stores, and in aseptic packages in the natural-foods aisle

Nightcap = no doze?

The nightcap, long considered a way to "take the edge off" before bedtime, may actually prevent a good night's sleep, according to a new study conducted by Japanese researchers.

HealthDay reports that the team "found that alcohol increased heart rate and interfered with the restorative functions of

sleep – and the more alcohol the participants drank, the greater the effect."

EEGs reveal what appears to be good sleep in the first half of the sleep cycle. But the picture changes in the second half, leading the researchers to conclude that drinking leads to insomnia. For some, a small drink may initiate sleep, but large amounts of alcohol "interfere with sleep quality and the restorative role of sleep."

