

TIPS FOR GETTING YOUR CHILDREN TO CHOOSE MILK OVER SOFT DRINKS

Flavored milk may be mom's best weapon to battle the widespread calcium deficiencies among teens. Research has shown that flavored milk helps boost overall calcium intake, without increasing total added sugar in the diet. Children and teens who drink flavored milk, drink more milk overall and fewer soft drinks and sugar-sweetened fruit drinks.

Tips to help your child choose calcium-rich flavored milk over high sugar beverages:

- Stock the fridge with single-serve containers of flavored milk so they're convenient for grab-and-go snacks and after-school treats.
- Make nutritious frozen treats by pouring flavored milk into a paper cup along with a popsicle stick. Hold in the middle of the cup with plastic wrap until frozen.
- Pour chocolate milk into ice cube trays and freeze. Add to a tall glass of chocolate milk for a double-chocolate treat. Or try different flavors: add banana milk cubes to chocolate milk or strawberry milk cubes to vanilla milk.
- Substitute flavored milk for a dessert. Serve an ice-cold glass of cotton candy, cookies and cream or caramel milk to end the meal.
- For a tempting treat: add orange milk to frozen lowfat vanilla yogurt to make an orange dreamsicle.
- Use vanilla milk to stir up a batch of instant pudding for a quick and easy dessert. Or use it as a dip for fresh fruit.
- Make a smoothie with flavored milk. In a blender add fresh berries, a banana and ice with strawberry milk and blend until smooth.
- Have a blender party and let teens create their own flavors of smoothies.