

## Milk is a source of protein plus 14 essential vitamins and minerals.

Many of these nutrients play a direct role in lowering blood pressure and protecting against heart disease.

Nutrients in milk with a direct link to heart health include:

<i>Potassium</i>	<i>Protein</i>	<i>Vitamin B12</i>
<i>Magnesium</i>	<i>Vitamin D</i>	<i>Selenium</i>
<i>Calcium</i>	<i>Vitamin B6</i>	<i>Zinc</i>

These nutrients help regulate blood pressure, inflammation and oxidative damage, and may help prevent heart disease<sup>3,4</sup>

## PLANT-BASED BEVERAGES CONTAIN LESS PROTEIN THAN MILK.

Some plant-based beverages are fortified with a few vitamins and minerals to mimic milk, but none contain the same wide array of nutrients.

Calcium naturally occurs in milk but is added to plant-based beverages. The added calcium is heavy and tends to sink to the bottom of the beverage container, and it may not get consumed.<sup>8</sup>

### INTERESTING FACTS:

Unshaken rice and oat beverages had **96%** less calcium compared to well-shaken beverages.<sup>9</sup>

Milk is considered a minimally processed whole food. **90%** of plant-based beverages are ultra-processed foods.<sup>9</sup>

Plant-based beverages often contain sweeteners, oils, flavour enhancers and thickeners. If you want more whole foods and fewer ultra-processed foods in your diet, **choose milk** instead of plant-based beverages.

References available at:

[milk.org/Health-and-Nutrition/Health-Care-Professionals](http://milk.org/Health-and-Nutrition/Health-Care-Professionals)

# THE HEART HEALTH BENEFITS OF MILK

## Learn how nutrition is at the heart of good health

Did you know that diet and lifestyle play a role in heart disease prevention? As many as 80% of heart disease cases be prevented if you eat a balanced diet, remain physically active and quit smoking.<sup>1</sup>

Heart disease remains the second-leading cause of death in Canada, but there are steps you can take to reduce your risk.<sup>2</sup>



For more information, visit [milk.org](http://milk.org).

# BUILD A HEALTHY PLATE!

The best dietary patterns for heart disease prevention include the Mediterranean diet and the Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension (DASH) diet.<sup>5,6</sup> Both of these eating patterns:

- Contain milk, dairy products, vegetables, fruit, whole grains, legumes, poultry and fish
- Contain mostly whole foods and few ultra-processed foods
- Reduce red meat and sugar intake

At breakfast, lunch and dinner, you can create balanced meals based on these nutritious dietary patterns by:

- Filling half of your meal with vegetables and fruit. You can choose fresh, frozen, canned, raw or cooked options
- Filling a quarter of your meal with whole grains, such as oatmeal, barley, brown rice, or whole grain bread, cereals or noodles
- Filling a quarter of your meal with protein rich foods, such as milk, yogurt, cheese, eggs, legumes, fish or poultry



# CHOOSE WHOLE FOODS FOR HEART HEALTH

Canadians get 48% of calories from ultra-processed foods, which increases heart disease risk.<sup>7</sup> Creating a balanced plate and eating more whole foods is a better option.

How can you recognize an ultra-processed food? It usually has added sugar, salt, fat, additives, preservatives, colours and flavours.<sup>8</sup> Here are some examples of whole vs. ultra-processed foods:

WHOLE FOOD	ULTRA-PROCESSED FOOD
Milk	Cola, soda, sweetened plant-based beverages
Fruit	Fruit-flavoured candy
Vegetables	Potato or corn chips
Chicken breast	Chicken nuggets
Rice or pasta	Powdered, seasoned rice or pasta
Olive oil	Margarine

Choose whole foods most often when preparing meals and snacks. Ultra-processed foods should be chosen less often. Milk is a whole food that contains 15 essential nutrients, many of which protect the heart.