



Memorandum

#14-120

TO: WIC Regional Directors
WIC Local Agency Directors

FROM: Amanda Hovis, Director
Nutrition Education/Clinic Services Unit
Nutrition Services Section

DATE: October 7, 2014

SUBJECT: FAQs on the Change to Low-fat Milk

As WIC is transitioning participants to low-fat milk this month, these FAQs will help with participant questions and concerns.

Why is WIC switching to low-fat milk?

The WIC Program nationwide is providing low-fat (1%, ½%) and fat free milk for all women and children 2 years and older.

The WIC Program is making improvements to the food packages to be consistent with the *Dietary Guidelines for Americans* and the American Academy of Pediatrics recommendations of drinking low-fat dairy products for all children older than two years.

Lower fat milks provide the same great taste and nutrition (vitamins, minerals and protein) but with less fat and calories. Two percent (2%) milk has about double the amount of fat as 1% milk and nearly 5 times the amount of fat as fat free milk. Over time, too much fat, especially saturated fat, in our diets could lead to an unhealthy weight, and possibly even heart disease and stroke.

This food package change is consistent with other federal programs such as Head Start and the National School Lunch Program, which provide 1% and fat free milk.

What if my child won't drink 1% or fat free milk?

Making changes isn't always easy, and we understand your concern that your child may not like the switch. Below are some suggestions:

- 1) Start slow. Begin by mixing together whole or 2% with 1%, ½% or fat-free milk. Over time, gradually increase the amount of 1%, ½% or fat free milk in your mixture, until the change is complete. Your family is more likely to accept the change if you make it one step at a time.
- 2) Try a taste test with your child to see if they like 1% milk. Often times, children don't even notice a difference! As the parent, you can set an example by showing that you like fat free, 1/2%, or 1% milk too.
- 3) You can also use fat free, 1/2%, or 1% milk in recipes. You often can't taste the difference when it is mixed with other ingredients.

What if my child needs extra calories for his/her weight?

A WIC nutritionist can help your family explore healthy fats if your child requires extra calories. Be sure to check with your doctor if your child has medical needs that require a prescription for a special food package.

Why are some people still getting 2% lactose-free milk?

Due to supply issues with lactose-free 1% milk in some stores, WIC participants who are issued lactose-free milk can continue to receive 2% lactose-free milk on a temporary basis until November 1, 2014. All WIC participants receiving lactose-free milk are encouraged to buy 1% or fat-free lactose-free milk if available in their area. See Memo #14-117 for more information on this temporary extension.

Additional resources:

Recommend the new CCNE lesson: Make the Switch to 1% or Fat Free Milk. This lesson covers common challenges to making the switch, along with information on the health benefits and helpful tips for the whole family to try.

If you have any questions, contact Paula Kanter, Clinic Nutrition Specialist, at 512-341-4574 or paula.kanter@dshs.state.tx.us.