Benefits of drinking goat's milk

By Sandra Piddock

Alongside the regular cow's milk in the dairy cabinet of your supermarket, you may find goat's milk. It has a slightly sweeter, creamier taste, as the fat is evenly suspended throughout the milk, without the need for mechanical homogenization. It's an acquired taste for some people, but it has some benefits over cow's milk, so it may be worth a try.

Good for those intolerant to cow's milk

People who are sensitive to cow's milk often find they can drink goat's milk with no problems. This is probably something to do with the different protein constituents in the two milks, but more research is needed into this.

Anti-inflammatory

Oligosaccharides - short-chain sugar compounds to the non-scientific among us - are present in goat's milk. These have anti-inflammatory properties, making goat's milk a good choice for people with allergies such as eczema and asthma, and inflammatory conditions such as rheumatoid arthritis and various infections. Drinking goat's milk may alleviate some of the symptoms of these conditions.

Easy to digest

Those same oligosaccharides make goat's milk easier to digest than cow's milk. People with intestinal problems such as irritable bowel syndrome (IBS) or Crohn's Disease may find goat's milk easier to tolerate. It's closer to human breast milk than any other food, so it's ideal for weaning babies, although it lacks some of the nutrients they need, such as folic acid. Goat's milk is a good choice for convalescents who may have trouble digesting cow's milk as they recuperate. Goat's milk is also a natural antacid, so it can ease heartburn.

Higher in calcium

Goat's milk contains around 10% more calcium than cow's milk, making it ideal for people with bone problems such as osteoporosis, as well as growing children and young adults. Calcium is also good for the teeth, and although 10% extra may not seem very much, it could make a significant difference to bone and mouth health.

Boosts mineral absorption

Goat's milk helps the body to absorb iron and copper, both of which are essential to overall health. People with anemia or other blood disorders could benefit from making the change to goat's milk.

Good for breathing

Goat's milk produces less mucus than cow's milk in the human body. People with respiratory diseases may find that they suffer less congestion and fewer breathing problems if they switch to goat's milk.

Higher in vitamins A and D

Vitamin D is needed for bones and teeth, and to help the body absorb calcium. Vitamin A is essential for good vision and healthy skin. There are more of both of these vitamins in goat's milk.

Overall, goat's milk seems to be more beneficial than cow's milk, so it may be well worth making the change. However, goat's milk should not be viewed as a miracle food. The best way to ensure your body receives all the nutrients it needs is to eat a varied, healthy diet, of which goat's milk can form part.

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