

Plant Based Beverages

Plant based or non-dairy beverages are made from plants such as soy, rice, almonds, hemp or flaxseed. They may be used by someone who avoids milk, either because of a cow's milk allergy, lactose intolerance, or personal, cultural or religious preferences and dietary practices, such as a vegan diet, which does not include animal products.

Only unsweetened soy beverages fortified with calcium and vitamin D count as a milk alternative in *Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide* and in *Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide – First Nations, Inuit and Métis*. Unsweetened fortified soy beverages have added vitamins and minerals, and a similar amount of protein to make them a nutritionally adequate alternative to cow's milk.

Other plant based beverages can be a good source of calcium and vitamin D if they are “enriched” or “fortified” with these nutrients. Choose unsweetened plant based beverages instead of the sweetened, flavoured varieties to get calcium and vitamin D without added sugar.

References

OSNPPH, *Sip Smart!™ Ontario Teacher Resource Guide*, 2016 (adapted with permission)

Healthlink BC, *Food Sources of Calcium and Vitamin D*, August 2014

Health Canada, *Canadian Nutrient File*, April 2012

