

# NEWS You Can Use

March 2014

## NUTRITION EDUCATION WITH SENIORS



**A** dults age 51+ should consume three cups of low-fat or fat-free dairy products daily. Items from the dairy group include milk, yogurt, **cheese**, and milk-based desserts such as pudding, frozen yogurt, and ice cream. Most dairy products (except for cream cheese) are good sources of both calcium and vitamin D.



**CALCIUM:** Important for building and maintaining strong bones and teeth, blood clotting, regulating heart rhythm, and muscle contraction and relaxation. Calcium intake may help reduce your risk for osteoporosis and heart disease.

**VITAMIN D:** Vitamin D is often added to milk products because it helps calcium be better absorbed. Other vitamin D benefits include decreasing the risk of chronic disease (e.g. cancer, diabetes).

When selecting dairy products, choose those that are reduced fat, low-fat, or fat-free, as these items have a lower calorie, fat, and cholesterol content, but offer similar amounts of both calcium and protein.

## I'll have some cheese, please!

**Reduced fat, reduced sodium processed American cheese** is a combination of natural cheese and other added ingredients. It has been pasteurized in order to reduce spoilage and bacterial growth, therefore, making the product safer to eat.

### Storage:

- ◆ Store in the refrigerator for three to four weeks.
- ◆ Eat by the "best if used by" date.
- ◆ Block cheese is typically less expensive. To make sure you don't waste it, you can freeze the cheese in no larger than one-half pound size chunks. Wrap tightly with plastic wrap or place in an airtight container for up to six months.
- ◆ Freezing may change the texture of the cheese, making it crumbly once thawed, but it will retain its original flavor.



### Nutrition:

- ◆ Each slice of reduced fat, reduced sodium processed American cheese contains about 80 calories, 6 grams of fat, and 210 milligrams of sodium.
- ◆ Two ounces of processed American cheese (about 2½ slices) or 1½ ounces of hard cheese (about the size of two dice) counts as one cup from the MyPlate dairy group.
- ◆ Good source of calcium.

### Uses:

- ◆ Macaroni and cheese, grilled cheese sandwich, tuna melt, placed on top of a hamburger or casserole

## Did you know?

It takes 10 pounds of milk to make one pound of cheese!

# Food Safety for Dairy Products

Use these important food safety tips to keep your dairy products safe and lower your risk of foodborne illness:

## Dairy (general):

- Pick up your dairy products last in order to keep them cold. Check the “sell by” date (the date indicating the last day the item can be sold on the shelf) and the “best by” date (the date by which the product should be eaten) before buying.
- Do not purchase unpasteurized dairy items (e.g., raw milk) as these foods increase the likelihood of foodborne illness.



## Cheese:

- After opening, place the cheese into an airtight container and store in the refrigerator.
- Throw away cottage cheese, cream cheese, soft cheeses, and shredded/crumbled/sliced cheese that contains mold.
- For hard or semi-soft cheeses (i.e., cheddar, Swiss) that contain mold, cut away the moldy part and at least one inch around where the mold originated.

## Margherita Grilled Cheese

Serves: 1

Serving size: 1



### Ingredients:

- 2 slices whole grain bread
- 1 thin slice reduced fat, reduced sodium American cheese
- 2 thin tomato slices
- 2 tablespoons reduced fat shredded mozzarella cheese
- 2 small fresh basil leaves, thinly sliced
- 2 teaspoons unsalted butter or margarine, softened

### Instructions:

1. Spread butter on the outside of each piece of bread.
2. Top bread slices with both cheeses, tomato, and basil.
3. Cook in a skillet (medium heat) for three minutes or until golden brown on both sides.
4. Eat with a salad or side of fruit.

Nutritional analysis (1 sandwich): 280 calories, 14g fat, 8g saturated, 1g trans, 480mg sodium, 26g carbohydrates, 4g fiber, 4g sugar, 15g protein

Source: <http://www.kraftrecipes.com/kraftcheese/recipes/grilled-cheese-margherita.aspx>

## Helpful Resources

Polk County Congregate Meals  
(515) 286-2062

Commodity and Supplemental Foods  
(515) 286-3679

Nutrition, Food Preparation and Food Safety  
ISU AnswerLine  
1-800-262-3804

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