

[IMAGE]

Worth the Occasional Mustache

One of the most prevalent and dangerous cancers is colorectal cancer, or cancer of the large intestine.

Colorectal cancer causes more deaths in the U.S. than any other type except lung cancer, but there may be a way to help avoid it. Research suggests that consuming milk and dairy products may protect against this disease.

To evaluate the association between consumption of dairy products and the risk of colorectal cancer, cancer cases reported by the Finnish Cancer Registry were determined over approximately 25 years. This *European Journal of Clinical Nutrition* study was conducted in Finland because it has one of the highest per capita rates of milk consumption in the world.

People who consumed the most milk and milk products were less likely to develop colon cancer than those who consumed the least, although there was no significant link between rectal cancer and milk and/or milk products. Those with diets high in lactose (a sugar found in milk) also had a reduced risk of colon cancer, but vitamin D and calcium intake did not reduce the risk.

Lactose may have properties that inhibit the growth and development of cancer cells in the bowels. The best known natural source of lactose is milk, so consider meeting the U.S. recommended daily allowance of dairy products (2-3 daily servings for adults; 3-4 for children). Always try to stick to the low-fat versions, and don't worry about the inevitable "milk mustache."

Reference:

Jarvinen R, Knekt P, Hakulinen T, et al. Prospective study on milk products, calcium and cancers of the colon and rectum. *European Journal of Clinical Nutrition* 2001;55, pp. 1000-1007.

For more facts about nutrition, check out <http://www.chiroweb.com/tyh/nutrients.html>.

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