

Ask the Dietitian

Today's Topic: Milk

Can you summarize the CACFP requirements for fluid milk?

Of course! We have found that fluid milk is the most confusing of the meal components because the age requirements don't line up with the other meal requirements. We hope this handy chart will help you:

AGE	MILK REQUIREMENT
0–11 months	Breastmilk or Iron-Fortified Infant Formula
12–23 months	Whole cow's milk
24 months	Any type of fluid milk—this is your “transition month”
25–35 months	Skim or low-fat unflavored milk
3 years–5 years	Skim or low-fat unflavored milk
6 years +	Skim (unflavored or flavored) milk or low-fat unflavored milk

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Is there a sugar limit for fluid milk?

No. The only foods with sugar limits in CACFP are breakfast cereal and yogurt.

Can I add my own flavored syrup or powder to plain milk for children under 6?

No. Adding your own syrups or powders to plain milk would make it flavored milk.

Why is it best for one-year old children to have whole milk?

The fat in whole milk promotes healthy brain development.

Did you know that the human brain is nearly 60% fat?

Can a child over 12 months old have breastmilk instead of whole cow's milk?

Yes. There is no age limit for the substitution of breastmilk for fluid cow's milk.

Why does USDA allow flavored milk for children over the age of 5?

USDA decided to allow flavored milk for older children to encourage milk consumption, which has been associated with increased nutrient intakes of calcium, folate, and iron.

How can My Food Program help with milk requirements?

We make it easy for you to meet the documentation requirements for milk from your state agency. We support you in three separate ways with meeting the requirements for milk.

#1: Menu Planning

If you just type “milk” into the search bar in our menu planner you will come up with 18 results! You can select the documentation option that is right for you:

1. If your state agency does not require separate food production record amounts for different types of milk, then simply select the menu item “Milk, fluid”. Using this as your menu item indicates to the state agency that children are receiving milk in the appropriate fat percentage for their age category, but does not track amounts by separate milk types.
2. If your state agency does require separate food production record amounts for different types of milk, then you need to be more specific.

If you use a different type of milk for children that are exactly 24 months (the transition month), then you need to select at least **FOUR** types of milk when planning a meal with milk.

AGE	MILK CHOICES
12–23 months	Whole milk
24 months	Skim, 1%, 2% or whole
25–35 months	Skim or 1%
All participants 3+	Skim or 1%

If you do not serve a different type of milk to children that are exactly 24 months, then you need to select at least **TWO** different types of milk when planning a meal with milk:

AGE	MILK CHOICES
12–23 months	Whole milk
All participants 2+	Skim, 1%, 2% or whole

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#2: Food Production Records with Specific Fluid Milk Type

If you select specific fluid milk types when planning menus, then your food production records will allow you to track specific amounts of each type of milk. After you enter a menu, click on “Edit Food Production”. Our Food Production Record estimates are separated into food and milk (since the milk age ranges don’t match the age ranges for the rest of the meal components). Enter the number of participants in each age range for food and for milk. Click “Estimate Food Production” and My Food Program will multiple the number of participants in each age category by the minimum portion size requirements!

Number of participants Our Estimate		Milk Age Range
1	0	24 Months - 24 Months
2	0	12 Months - 23 Months
5	0	25 Months - 35 Months
15	0	3 Years - 5 Years
11.25	Cup	1% milk for all participants 3 years and older
3.75	Cup	1% Milk for ages 25-35 months
0.5	Cup	1% Milk for ages 24 months (transition month)
1	Cup	Whole milk for ages 12-23 months

Save

#3: Milk Report

The “Milk Served by Type” report automatically adds up all the fluid milk that you served on a certain day, week or month to ease your reporting!