

Is drinking milk every day dangerous for your health?

By Jean-Marc Dupuis

Milk sales in France have been falling year on year for the past 10 years. The French are the *smallest milk consumers* in Europe, behind Germany and England [1]!

Thanks to the remarkable work of scientific journalists such as **Thierry Souccar** (author of *Lait, mensonges et propagande*), it is becoming known that:

- milk does not strengthen the skeleton, does not prevent fractures; the calcium in milk is poorly assimilated. It is better for the bones to eat vegetables, rich in potassium and assimilable calcium; and above all, vegetables are basifying (the opposite of acidifying), which is good for the skeleton and preserves the minerals in the bones and muscles;
- Milk is poorly tolerated by the majority of the population, who have difficulty digesting lactose (milk sugar), leading to headaches, intestinal porosity and digestive problems;
- milk promotes allergies;
- milk may even increase the risk of prostate, ovarian and possibly breast cancer somewhat, probably due to hormones and 'growth factors'.

In case of asthma, eczema, headaches, digestive problems, acne, mood swings, the first products to be eliminated are... milk and dairy products, on a par with gluten.

In short, the myth of "three dairy products a day" is collapsing.

The end of the "three dairy products a day" myth "

According to epidemiologist Philippe Froguel of the Pasteur Institute in Lille, interviewed in 2014:

"In the famous recommendations of the PNNS [National Nutrition and Health Programme, editor's note], the advice to eat fruit and vegetables can be justified, but the advice to eat three dairy products a day is pure propaganda for the milk lobby, as it has no scientific basis [2].

This statement was made 5 years ago. In the meantime, the French Health Authorities have changed their recommendations, at least for adults. They now recommend only two portions of dairy per day for adults [3].

However, they continue to recommend four dairy products a day "for children, adolescents and the elderly".

Yet, according to a large Swedish study published in 2014 in the British medical journal *BMJ*, women who drink more than three glasses of milk a day are more likely to suffer fractures (+60%) and die prematurely (+90%), compared to those who drink less than one glass a day.

It also turns out that Finland, the world's largest consumer of milk, holds the record for type 1 diabetes.

It is not clear on what basis older women are recommended to consume four dairy products a day.

The French authorities are gradually aligning themselves with the recommendations of the Harvard School of Public Health

Despite this, there is cause for celebration, since the French health authorities are taking small steps towards the recommendations of the Harvard University public health team, a world reference in this field.

However, Harvard goes much further. It recommends :

It is also important to note that the European Union has a policy of "**limiting** milk and milk products to a maximum of one or two portions per day" [4]. But if you like milk, should you deprive yourself of this pleasure?

For those of us who remember the pewter cup under the cow's udder, filled with hot, frothy milk, handed to us by a smiling grandfather, should we write off this "Proust's madeleine" for good?

Old milk versus new milk

It all depends on the type of milk you consume.

If you are like the vast majority of French people, you only have easy access to milk on pallets in supermarkets.

But this milk has nothing to do with the raw milk from the cow's udder of your grandparents (or great-grandparents!).

It is a dead and denatured product for many reasons:

- The cow species have been selected to the extreme, resulting in cows that are almost physiologically deformed to produce 40 to 50 litres of milk per day, compared to only 4 litres in the normal state. This ultra-productivity is accompanied by an impoverishment of nutritional quality;
- fodder: France no longer produces enough fodder for its cows. It is obliged to use Import from Brazil or Argentina, where agricultural practices are not controlled as in Europe (GMOs, pesticides, plastics in fodder);
- battery farming, which stresses the animals, limits their movements, encourages contagion and therefore medication, particularly antibiotics;
- the practice of *milking pregnant cows*, which was not done in the past: the milk therefore contains more female hormones, which can disturb the metabolism of women, as well as that of men;
- UHT treatment, which consists of heating the milk to 150°C for 3 seconds, destroys the enzymes and most of the vitamins;
- Homogenisation of milk, a process that breaks up the globules of fat in the milk, changes its texture;
- Filtering, to recover and sell separately the cream of the milk and the butter, depletes the milk, which is presented as 'semi-skimmed' or 'skimmed' and wrongly considered by consumers as being healthier.

It should be noted that in Switzerland it is *forbidden by law* to put the word "milk" on this type of product, which is sold under the name "*drink*".



*In Switzerland it is forbidden to call the watery, vitamin-poor white liquid presented in other countries by the **agro-industry as "UHT semi-skimmed milk" "milk". It is therefore written "Drink" on the packaging, which simply means " beverage".***

Conclusion: UHT milk is like any other highly processed product

However, if you are one of the privileged few to have an authentic pasture near your home with a cow belonging to an ancient species, not treated with antibiotics, living in the traditional way, grazing on good natural grass, the milk it offers you will have nutritional qualities that can only do you good.

Drink raw, unhomogenised milk, and certainly not UHT treated.

**Subsidiary question: is the drop in milk consumption in France really linked to an awareness of the need to reduce the consumption of milk?
the importance of health?**

I began this letter by mentioning the excellent work done by certain authors such as Thierry Souccar, on milk.

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But is this really the only or even the main reason for the population's disaffection with milk?

It seems that this drop in consumption is also linked to a less positive cause, namely the destructuring of lifestyles and rhythms [5].

As in the United States, the French population is losing the habit of eating real meals, snacking and eating at all hours of the day and night.

Late bedtimes and poor sleep lead to disorganisation in the morning, causing more and more people to skip breakfast, which is the meal where traditionally the most milk was drunk.

According to a Crédoc study, this destructuring affects children in particular.

The number of children who skip at least one breakfast a week because they go to bed too late the night before increased by 150% between 2013 and 2016.

Instead of a real breakfast, parents give them biscuits, a Pom'Potes or a small bottle of flavoured milk, which are swallowed in the car in the middle of traffic jams on the way to school.

Not necessarily good news for their health and future problems of overweight and diabetes.