

“NUTRITION IN DISGUISE:”

What the Midwest Dairy Council Has to Say About Chocolate Milk
(A report on the Midwest Dairy Association’s Infomercial.
By Mannie Tarenworth)

If you secretly love chocolate milk, you’re in for some happy news. Recently, the Midwest Dairy Association released an infomercial that argues chocolate milk is, according to nutritionist Melissa Dobbins, “nutrition in disguise.”

In the infomercial, Ms. Dobbins, who introduces herself as a nutritionist for the Dairy Association and a mom, brings along three young friends to help her demonstrate that chocolate milk is a healthy part of a young person’s diet. As Ms. Dobbins puts it, “the fact is, that chocolate and other flavored milks have the same 9 essential nutrients as white milk, and a small amount of added sugar compared to other beverages. Best of all, because they love the taste, some kids drink more milk when it’s flavored.”

You only have to watch kids in the lunch line to see the truth of what Ms. Dobbins says. Given a choice, almost any child will choose chocolate milk over white. “We serve six or seven cartons of chocolate for each one of white milk at lunch,” says Mrs. Rally, a server in a local elementary school cafeteria. “In fact, it’s pretty much only with breakfast cereal that any kid would choose white milk.”

What’s the attraction of chocolate milk? Well, if you haven’t had any for awhile, give it a try. You’ll have to admit that the creamy, smooth, chocolaty taste is truly delicious. But is it good for you? Ms. Dobbins says... yes. “Research shows that children who drink flavored milk meet more of their nutrient needs, do not consume more added sugar, fat, and calories, and are not heavier than non milk drinkers,” says Ms. Dobbins.

Ms. Dobbins explanation is supported by her analysis of the nutrition information in other flavored drinks. Joined by a trio of healthy young girls, hair gleaming and teeth shining, Ms. Dobbins analyzed the contents of a sports drink, a cola, and a chocolate milk. Here’s what she finds. In the sports drink, there are 14 grams total carbohydrates. This amount clearly concerns Ms. Dobbins, and her anxiety is infectious. “That means that there is about 3 ½ added teaspoons of added sugar per serving. But if you drink the whole bottle, it’s 7 teaspoons of added sugar,” explains the Midwest Dairy Council nutritionist. Next Ms. Dobbins looks at the cola. Same story. Her young friend shows that there are 39 grams total carbohydrates. That, Ms. Dobbins

explains, equals about 9 teaspoons of added sugar.” Clearly sports drinks and sodas are a bad choice for kids. Too many carbs, too much sugar.

Chocolate milk, on the other hand, has 27 grams total carbohydrates, and according to Ms. Dobbins, about 3 teaspoons of added sugar – much lower than the amount of sugar that is added to cola and sports drink. And chocolate milk, unlike the other flavored drinks, gives important nutrients, including protein, vitamin A, vitamin D, calcium.

We’re convinced. Chocolate milk is tasty and nutritious. “Chocolate milk provides the nutrients kids need for good health, and it has less than half the added sugar of cola. Chocolate milk also helps kids get the three daily servings of dairy, recommended by dietary guidelines for Americans,” sums up Ms. Dobbins, handing bottles of chocolate milk to her young friends. We’re next in line, Ms. Dobbins! Bring on the “nutrition in disguise!”

You can find more nutrition information about flavored milk at www.Midwestdairy.com, and view the video which this article summarizes at: <http://www.midwestdairy.com/Op17i200/flavored-milk-tasty-nutrition/>

Sidebar: Ms. Dobbins suggests that to compare the nutrients and sugars in flavored drinks, look at the nutrition labels. These labels give important information to the consumer.