

Dairy Un-Forbidden: Discover the Virtues of Raw Milk (Opinion)

(NaturalNews) Dairy has come under attack in recent years, and it's no wonder why. Milk has been linked to all sorts of health problems such as allergies, sinus infections and even cancer. But the commercial dairy industry touts milk as a health food that is necessary for healthy bones and teeth. So, what is fact and what is fiction? Is milk a superfood or a wicked fiend? The truth is that milk began as a powerful health food and has been corrupted by greed into its modern commercially-processed counterpart.

The fact that milk is an inherently unhealthy food is a misconception which is not entirely unfounded. The truth is that almost all of the milk we encounter today is an industrialized, processed product. It is not anything close to a whole, natural food. Modern milk is hit hard when it comes to commercial processing:

Pasteurization

Most people can link the term pasteurization with Louis Pasteur, but few people realize he originally developed the pasteurization process to preserve beer and wine, not milk. In the world of dairy, pasteurization only became necessary when dairy operations became more concerned with profits rather than the cleanliness of their milk. Pasteurized milk meant they could cut corners and produce filthy milk, only to "clean" it up with a nifty, high-heat sanitation process.

The purpose of pasteurization is to eliminate all bacteria and enzymes. The process is not selective - all friendly bacteria and beneficial enzymes are destroyed along with any potential pathogens. Most people don't realize this actually makes pasteurized milk more susceptible to contamination because it has no good bacteria to fight off the bad.

Among valuable living organisms destroyed during pasteurization Lactobacilli bacteria aids in the digestion of lactose. Many people who are lactose-intolerant may find they can add milk back into their diet if it's raw, simply because of this specialized bacteria. Enzymes are also destroyed during pasteurization. Lipase, an important fat-assimilating enzyme, is non-existent in pasteurized milk, as well as phosphatase, the enzyme that makes calcium absorption possible.

In addition to killing off beneficial bacteria and enzymes, pasteurization also destroys other nutritional aspects of milk. Pasteurized milk often contains less than half the vitamin A, C, D and E compared to raw milk (the vitamin D content in commercial milk is synthetic). Valuable B6 and B12 vitamins are completely obliterated when exposed to heat. In addition, the minerals in pasteurized milk are not bioavailable like those in raw milk. Amino acids like tyrosine and lysine are also altered during pasteurization.

Ultra-pasteurization is a process that involves even higher temperatures for longer periods. This method has become an industry standard because it virtually kills milk and makes it completely sterile. It is no longer a living food rich in vital substances - it is simply dead.

Homogenization

This process essentially breaks up and redistributes the fat in milk so the cream will no longer rise to the top. Almost all commercial milk is homogenized. The homogenization process is harmful because it causes the milk fat to oxidize. Oxidized fat is a dangerous substance that can be linked to modern diseases like cardiovascular disease.

Reconstitution

Low-fat versions of commercial milk are made more palatable with the addition of powdered milk, which is blasted with high temperatures during dehydration. This causes oxidation and the formation of potentially carcinogenic compounds. Commercial milk may also be completely reconstituted from powdered milk or milk solids. This does not have to be stated on the food label because according to legal technicalities it is considered to be "milk."

Drinking milk that has gone through these types of processing is akin to eating irradiated vegetables or hydrogenated oils. Commercial processing mutates a health food into a disaster, and we have learned this the hard way.

Is Milk the Real Problem?

One of the most objectionable aspects of the dairy industry Although the commercial dairy industry insists the milk that comes from such cows is

healthy, that is very difficult to believe. It can be said that all of the problems associated with the dairy products have nothing to do with milk and everything to do with commercialized industry and its obsession with the almighty dollar, coupled with complete disregard for the health and well-being of consumers.

Good Beginnings

There is a special recipe for nourishing milk, and it begins with a healthy cow. Dairy cattle should be raised humanely, primarily on pasture, and without the use of hormones, antibiotics or unnatural feeds. All milking cows should be visibly healthy and preferably certified. Ideally, raw milk should come from a local dairy where you can actually visit and see the operation in person. Bringing home a gallon of milk from a farm you have actually seen with your own eyes is a reward in itself, and the experience of bringing home a truly wholesome local food is priceless.

The Amazing Health Benefits of Raw Milk

The nutritional content of raw milk is broad and highly bioavailable. Raw milk is a complete package of proteins, natural carbohydrates, natural fats, vitamins, and minerals complete with the enzymes necessary to completely digest and assimilate all of these valuable nutrients. It is rich in minerals like calcium, magnesium, chloride, zinc, selenium, manganese, iodide, phosphorus and many others. Its range of vitamins includes A, C, D, E, K, B1, B2, B6, B12, niacin, pantothenic acid, biotin and folic acid. All of these vital nutrients remain intact only when milk is raw.

Raw milk is considered a complete protein - meaning it contains all eight of the essential amino acids that can't be manufactured by the body. These aminos are important building blocks for cells, neurotransmitters, bones, muscles and the other non-essential amino acids. The natural fats in raw milk are essential for using all the important fat-soluble vitamins in raw milk. Again, these remain undamaged only in raw milk.

There are groups of native people, such as those from the Loetschental Valley in Switzerland, whose traditional diets consisted of mostly raw milk and its various food products (such as raw cheese, butter and cultured dairy foods). These people exhibited fine health and longevity. Several early studies revealed that raw milk can be vital for growing children, preventing common maladies such as asthma, allergies, tooth decay, influenza, pneumonia and many others, while improving overall growth and development (studies are cited below). Naturopathic doctor Ron Schmid, author of *The Untold Story of Milk* and raw milk enthusiast, regularly prescribes raw milk in his practice as a healing food. He especially notes raw milk's ability to reduce allergies, prevent infections and improve overall health. It is possible for us to learn from examples such as these, and consider raw milk a healthy choice.

For many of us, the decision about whether or not we include dairy products in our diet is a multi-faceted one. Consuming milk isn't right for everyone, for a variety of reasons. But if you've avoided milk because of its tainted reputation, it's important to realize raw milk can be a wholesome and healing addition to your diet.

About the Author

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