

What does Milk Contain?



Milk is white nutritious liquid produced by female mammals as food for their young ones. Milk obtained, especially from cows, buffaloes, goats, etc. is drunk by human beings. Butter, cheese, curd, etc. are also made from it.

Nothing definite can be said as to when exactly man started using milk but it is certain that around 5000 years ago man had started domesticating milk-producing animals.

Cow, buffalo, sheep and goat are the main milk producing animals. In northern Europe, milk from reindeer is also used. In the Middle East countries, goat's milk is commonly used for consumption.

From the very beginning, milk has been known to be a perfect food. It contains all the nutritional elements like sugar, proteins, fats, vitamins, minerals, salts and water needed to our body. Cow's milk contains 87.2% water, 3.7% fat, 3.5% proteins, 4.9% sugar and many minerals and vitamins. The milk of various other animals contains all the above mentioned nutrients in varying percentages.

We extract fat present in milk in the form of butter. Fats give us extra energy. The proteins present in the milk strengthen the muscles of our body. The sugar is easily absorbed by the body and acts as a fuel. Minerals like calcium and phosphorus are useful for our bone formation. Vitamins A, B, C, D, E, K and niacin present in milk reduce the vitamin deficiency of our body.

Milk gets spoiled very soon. As such, it should be cooled to 10° C within two hours of milking. It should be maintained at this temperature till it is transported to other places. Its fermentation can be prevented by boiling it several times a day.

In many countries, pasteurized and homogenized milk is sold. Skimmed milk is popular with dieters because most of the fat is removed before the milk is sent out for sale.