

Dr. Axe
FOOD IS MEDICINE

**RAW MILK
BENEFITS SKIN,
ALLERGIES &
IMMUNITY**

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If you've been told that drinking raw milk is dangerous, you'll be surprised to know that you've been misled. The truth about raw milk? An extensive look into research and claims made by the FDA and CDC related to raw milk being dangerous have been found to be completely unwarranted. It actually benefits your body in many ways, and although it might have earned a reputation among some for being dangerous, you shouldn't miss out on all this amazing superfood has to offer because raw milk benefits are truly impressive.

What is "raw milk" exactly? It's milk that comes from grass-fed cows, is unpasteurized and unhomogenized. This means raw milk contains all of its natural enzymes, fatty acids, vitamins and minerals — making it what many refer to as a "complete food."

But can't raw milk cause problems due to the risk of consuming bacteria? The risk of this happening is very, very low. In fact, according to medical researcher Dr. Ted Beals, M.D., you are 35,000 times more likely to get sick from other foods than you are from raw milk.

5 Raw Milk Benefits

1 Reduces Allergies

Studies now suggest that children who drink raw milk are 50 percent less likely to develop allergies and 41 percent less likely to develop asthma compared to children who don't.

You might be wondering: How can raw milk reduce allergies, and isn't dairy tied to high rates of intolerance or sensitivities? Nutrients like probiotics, vitamin D and immunoglobulins (antibodies) found in raw milk naturally boost the immune system and reduce the risk of allergies in both children and adults. Enzymes found in raw milk help with

digestion but are often reduced or destroyed during pasteurization, which can contribute to lactose intolerance.

2 Helps Improve Skin Health

Dairy might have a bad reputation when it comes to causing or worsening acne and skin inflammation, but this is far from the case with raw milk. As we've seen, the benefits of raw milk are numerous, but surprisingly one of the most common reasons that people consume it is to benefit their skin.

Raw milk benefits the skin for the following reasons:

- ▶ It contains healthy fats: Because raw milk contains large amounts of healthy saturated fats and omega-3 fats, it supports skin hydration. In fact, some people don't only consume raw milk, but they use raw milk as a moisturizer topically.
- ▶ It supplies probiotics: Probiotics in raw milk can kill off or balance bad bacteria in your gut, which can dramatically affect the health of your skin.

3 Helps Prevent Nutrient Deficiencies

One serving of raw milk contains about 400 milligrams of calcium, 50 milligrams of magnesium and 500 milligrams of potassium. These minerals are vitally important for cellular function, hydration, building bone density, blood circulation, detoxification, muscle health and metabolism. These happen to be three minerals many children and adults are deficient in, which is especially problematic considering most people have a high sodium intake.

4 Can Be Used to Make Probiotic Foods

Probiotics are microorganisms that line your gut and support nutrient absorption. They also help protect you from foreign invaders like E. coli and parasites. The best way to include probiotics in your diet is to get them in their most natural state, which includes raw milk products, such as cheese, kefir and yogurt.

5 Doesn't Contain Added Sugar or Synthetic

Ingredients

In addition to pasteurization, conventional milk also usually undergoes a homogenization process. Homogenization is a high-pressure process that breaks down fat into tiny particles — however, fat subjected to high heat and pressure becomes oxidized and rancid. Many low-fat dairy products also have thickening agents added to make up for lost texture, and some have even been tied to rising rates of inflammatory diseases like cancer. Raw milk needs no added thickeners or shelf-stabilizers and also doesn't contain added sugar or flavors.

Nutritional Profile of Raw Milk

What exactly makes raw milk such an incredible superfood? Let's take a look at its unique nutritional profile, and it will become clear.

Fat-Soluble Vitamins A, D and K2

Because raw milk comes from cows or goats grazing on grass, research studies have shown that it contains a higher level of heart-healthy, cancer-killing, fat-soluble vitamins than milk that comes from factory-farm cows.

Short Chain Fatty Acids, CLA and Omega-3s

In addition to being high in anti-inflammatory omega-3 fatty acids, raw milk from grass-fed animals is a rich source of butyrate, a short chain fatty acid that's widely known to control health issues related to inflammation, slow metabolism and stress resistance.

Essential Minerals and Electrolytes: Calcium, Magnesium and Potassium

Raw milk is one of the highest sources of minerals and electrolytes, which many people don't get enough of. Unfortunately, a significant percentage of these minerals is lost during high-heat pasteurization.

Whey Protein and Immunoglobulins

By far, the best-tasting curds and whey protein come from raw milk. Whey protein is fantastic for anyone who's looking to burn fat and build or retain lean muscle. Whey is high in the following enzymes and proteins (amino acids) and the best way to get these immunity boosters is in their natural forms: alpha-lactalbumin, beta-lactoglobulin, bovine serum albumin and immunoglobulin.

Probiotics: Kefir, Cheese and Yogurt

Probiotics are only found in small amounts in raw milk, but when you ferment raw milk to make foods like kefir, yogurt or cheese, the good bacteria dramatically increase. In fact, there are no other foods in the world as naturally high in probiotics as cultured dairy products.

The infographic features a blue background with the title 'RAW MILK vs. CONVENTIONAL MILK' in large white and blue letters. Below the title is a table with three columns: 'Nutrient and Immune Factors', 'Pasteurized Milk', and 'Raw Milk'. The table lists various nutrients and their status in each type of milk. At the bottom right of the infographic is the logo for 'Dr. Axe FOOD IS MEDICINE'.

Nutrient and Immune Factors	Pasteurized Milk	Raw Milk
Vitamin A	35% Reduction	100% Active
Vitamin C	25-77% Reduction	100% Active
Vitamin E	14% Reduction	100% Active
Iron	66% Reduction	100% Active
Zinc	70% Reduction	100% Active
B-Complex Vitamins	38% Reduction	100% Active
Calcium	21% Reduction	100% Active
Enzymes	100% Destroyed	100% Active
Immunoglobulins	Damaged	100% Active
Whey Protein	Denatured	100% Active

How to Purchase and Use Raw Milk

Raw dairy isn't always easy to find, since laws differ from state to state regarding consumers' rights to buy raw milk. There are three main places you can look for raw dairy products:

Local farmers market — I go to my local farmers market and buy raw goat's milk kefir, raw cheeses and plain raw milk. In the state I live, it's labeled "for pet consumption only," and while I do give raw milk to my dog, my whole family enjoys the benefits of raw milk from the farmers market.

Whole Foods Market — I buy a lot of "raw" cheeses at health food stores. Whole Foods has a large selection of raw cheeses, including raw sheep cheese, which is my absolute favorite. For a healthy and delicious appetizer or dessert, my family will dip our cheese in raw, local honey.

Online — There are certain online companies that sell raw dairy products directly to consumers, including Beyond Organic, Wise Choice Market and Real Milk. These retailers will have raw cheeses shipped right to your front door.

You will likely come to find that there are different kinds of raw milks or raw dairy products available from these retailers, including those from cows and also from sheep or goats. Raw goat milk can be a great alternative to cow milk, since for many people it's even easier to digest. It can be beneficial to experiment with different types of raw dairy products to see which you enjoy most and benefit most from.

If you're accustomed to eating sweetened dairy products, such as fruit-flavored yogurt or chocolate milk, then the taste of unsweetened raw dairy might not be what you're used to. However, you'll be happy to know that most people absolutely love the flavor of raw dairy, and many claim that it tastes much, much better than the store-bought kinds. Instead of buying sweetened dairy, try sweetening your own raw dairy when needed with small amounts of natural sweeteners, such as raw honey, coconut sugar, dates and organic stevia leaf.

How to Use Raw Milk on Your Skin

To benefit from raw milk's skin-soothing nutrients, you can easily make your own raw milk face cream. Simply mix the ingredients below, then put the mixture onto freshly washed skin and leave for two to five minutes before rinsing off.

- ▶ 2 tablespoons of raw cream
- ▶ 2 tablespoons of raw honey
- ▶ 2 teaspoons of lemon juice

If you can't find raw cream, try using raw kefir instead, which is quite possibly the highest probiotic-rich food on the planet. Using kefir as a face wash and also consuming it internally can kill off bad bacteria on both your skin and within your GI tract that are the main cause of dry, flaking skin and acne.

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