

You Should Know

There's an Eggnog for Everyone: Low-fat, Fat-free, Lactose-free, Soy

It's holiday time, when fruitcakes and eggnog are ubiquitous at family get-togethers, office parties and New Year's Eve celebrations. We can't help with those half-ton fruitcakes, but eggnog, in dire need of a makeover, has some healthful options for the holiday season.

Used to be, people made eggnog at home by cracking real eggs, pouring whole milk and heavy cream, sweetening with sugar and flavoring with pure vanilla extract and a dusting of nutmeg. And you didn't forget the bourbon, brandy or rum to make things interesting. But times have changed and the traditional calorie-laden, saturated-fat nightmare is now often updated to be more healthful. Although not always.

21st Century Eggnog. These days, in fact, you need look no further than the dairy section of your supermarket to find a carton of regular, organic, low-fat or even pumpkin-flavored eggnog, as well as a soy version suitable for vegans. Just open and pour. But before you do, open your eyes to the Nutrition Facts label. If you choose a traditional eggnog, stick to the

standard serving size of four ounces—a clue it's sky-high in fat and calories.

However, *EN* suggests trying a low-fat or fat-free eggnog. There's even a *Lactaid* version for those who are lactose-intolerant, though it is still high in fat and calories. A more healthful option is *Silk Nog*, an eggnog-flavored soymilk that's suitable for those who are vegans, lactose intolerant or allergic to milk.

Celebrate Springly. Check out the nogs and alternatives in the chart below to make the smartest choice this holiday season. Not all varieties are available nationwide—local dairies often offer their own selections—but this sampling of brands may be typical of your options. And remember, if you spike your eggnog, you're upping the calorie counts higher than the chart shows.

Eggnog Anyone? A Comparison of Selected Options*

Eggnogs are listed alphabetically. Serving size is 4 fluid ounces.

Brand	Calories	Fat (grams)	Sat. Fat (grams)	Protein (grams)	Sugar** (grams)	Sodium (milligrams)
AltaDena Dairy Honey-Sweetened Eggnog	200	10	6	5	24	105
Hood Fat Free Eggnog	55	0	0	4	6	105
Hood Light Eggnog	140	4	2.5	4	21	100
Hood Pumpkin Eggnog	180	9	5	4	21	90
Horizon Organic Lowfat Eggnog	140	3	2	6	22	135
Lactaid Eggnog (lactose-free)	170	9	5	4	19	95
Organic Valley Egg Nog	180	10	6	5	17	85
Silk Nog (soy)	90	2	0	3	12	75

* Many eggnogs are produced regionally, but your local dairy may sell an eggnog comparable to one here.
** Includes the naturally occurring sugars in milk.
Sat. Fat = saturated fat

Research News

Eat Beans, Fruits and Vegetables, Drink Milk, Get Sleep, Say Researchers

EN was at this year's recent national Food and Nutrition Conference and Expo in Philadelphia. Here are some highlights of the research presented:

- **Beans appear to be much richer in the antioxidant mineral selenium than previously thought**—up to 14 times higher than amounts usually quoted. They are also rich in natural phytonutrients like catechins, ellagic acid and tannic acid, which may help tame inflammation linked to chronic diseases. According to researchers from the University of Arizona and the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the health benefits of beans include a decreased risk of heart disease, type 2 diabetes and colon cancer.
- **Vitamin D may have anticancer and immune benefits that rival its bone prowess.** According to research from Creighton University in Omaha and the University of Notre Dame, vitamin D may prevent cells from growing and multiplying uncontrollably and may help regulate immune function. Low blood levels of D may leave you vulnerable to infections as well as cancer.
- **Milk may promote fat loss thanks to the amino acid leucine in whey.** It seems extra whey (60 grams a day) promotes weight loss even without exercise. Milk proteins, especially whey, help build muscle after resistance exercise. Researchers at McMaster University in Ontario and the University of Toronto found that whey protein also lowers triglyceride levels, significantly reduces waist size, curbs appetite and lowers blood pressure.
- **Eating a low-glycemic-index diet may reduce the risk of insulin resistance and type 2 diabetes** by affecting gene expression related to insulin signaling. Researchers from the University of Texas Health Science Center and Baylor College of Medicine also found that modest increases in physical activity (starting at 30 minutes a day) help prevent diabetes and cardiovascular disease.
- **Compounds in fruits and vegetables may help protect against age-related declines in mental and physical function.** The compounds are the same ones that help plants survive environmental stress, likely through antioxidant and anti-inflammatory properties. Animal research at Tufts University suggests that eating antioxidant-rich whole foods like strawberries, blueberries and purple grape juice, may improve communication between neurons in the brain and spur the growth of new neurons.
- **Sleeping less than or more than seven to eight hours a night increases the risk of weight gain, type 2 diabetes, heart disease and stroke.** Research findings were presented by a panel of experts suggesting that a lack of sleep has a negative impact on several hormones that are important for regulating blood sugar levels, weight gain and the immune system.

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