



Thirsty Thursday: Milk Alternatives 101

When it comes to choosing milk, the options in the grocery aisle can feel overwhelming. Beyond traditional cow's milk, there are plenty of plant-based choices like soy, almond, and oat. Each has unique nutrition benefits, so the best option really depends on your health goals, taste preferences, and budget. **Cow's Milk**

- Protein: 8 g per cup
- Calcium & Vitamin D: Naturally rich in calcium; fortified with vitamin D
- Other nutrients: Good source of potassium and B vitamins
- Best for: Those looking for a high-protein option that supports bone health

Soy Milk

- Protein: 7–8 g per cup (closest to cow's milk)
- Calcium & Vitamin D: Usually fortified to match cow's milk
- Other nutrients: Contains heart-healthy isoflavones
- Best for: People seeking a plant-based milk with high protein and complete nutrition

Almond Milk

- Protein: 1 g per cup
- Calcium & Vitamin D: Fortified versions provide similar levels to cow's milk
- Other nutrients: Naturally low in calories and fat
- Best for: Those looking for a light, low-calorie option (great in smoothies or cereal)

Oat Milk

- Protein: 3 g per cup

- Calcium & Vitamin D: Fortified versions offer comparable nutrients
- Other nutrients: Naturally higher in carbohydrates and fiber; creamy texture
- Best for: Coffee lovers or anyone who enjoys a rich, creamy option

What does fortified mean?

Fortified simply means that vitamins or minerals—like calcium and vitamin D—have been added to the milk to boost its nutrition.

Takeaway

If protein is your priority, cow's milk or soy milk are strong choices. For those who want a lighter option, almond milk may be a good fit. If you prefer something creamy and versatile, oat milk might win your vote.

No matter which you choose, always check the label—fortified versions ensure you're still getting important nutrients like calcium and vitamin D.