

Full-fat dairy not linked to childhood obesity, studies show, raising questions about US dietary guidelines

There's little scientific evidence behind recommendations by US health organizations that kids should stop eating full-fat dairy after the age of two, according a new analysis of 29 peer-reviewed studies on the role of dairy and childhood obesity.

"Taken as a whole, the limited literature in this field is not consistent with dietary guidelines recommending children consume preferably reduced-fat dairy products," said lead author Therese O'Sullivan, a clinical dietitian at Edith Cowan University in Australia.

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If the child is growing well, existing guidelines suggest parents switch to low-fat dairy products starting at age two to protect children from the risk of obesity and cardiovascular disease.

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The new study, [published \[March 2\] in the journal Advances in Nutrition](#), found whole-fat dairy products were not linked to weight gain, obesity or any measures of cardiovascular disease risk.

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But that doesn't mean that recommendations will be immediately changed or that parents should start giving their child full-fat dairy. Why not? Because of the quality of the research that's been done on the topic

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Many of the studies are "observational" studies, which is a type of research that can only find an association between two outcomes; it cannot establish cause and effect.

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