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Drinking Milk Daily May Lower Colon Cancer Risk

A study in the latest issue of the Journal of the National Cancer Institute found that increased consumption of milk and calcium were related to lower risk of colon cancer.

People who consumed one glass or more of milk per day lowered their risk of colon cancer – the third most common cancer worldwide – by 15 percent compared to those who drank less than one-third cup of milk per day.

Researchers pooled results of 10 prospective studies in North America and Europe, totaling more than half a million people, nearly 5,000 of whom eventually got colorectal cancer.

"This is an exciting analysis because it contributes to previous research on the topic," said Stephanie Norris, a registered dietitian for the Dairy Council of Florida. "Earlier studies have found that increasing calcium consumption from sources including milk, cheese and yogurt may reduce the risk of colon cancer by slowing the abnormal growth of cells that eventually lead to colon cancer."

Health professionals recommend that Americans get 3 to 4 servings of dairy foods daily to get the calcium, vitamin D, potassium and other nutrients they need. In addition to nine essential nutrients, dairy foods contain compounds such as conjugated linoleic acid (CLA) and lactoferrin, which have been found to have anti-cancer properties.

Visit www.nationaldairycouncil.org for more information on the health benefits of dairy foods. For nutrition tips and easy dairy recipe ideas, visit www.3aday.org.