

A Guide to HEALTHY CHEESE



Healthy or not healthy?

Cheese is a great source of calcium and even protein but can also be high in saturated fat and sodium. Cheese can fit in a healthy diet as long as it is chosen wisely.

Soft or hard cheese?

Natural hard cheeses like cheddar are usually higher in fat, however they provide more nutrients and less artificial ingredients than processed cheeses. While natural hard cheeses often have 30-40% fat, you can find cheeses made from skim milk with 7-15% fat. When choosing soft cheeses, look for those made from skim milk. When choosing natural hard cheeses, cut back on your fat intake with "low fat" versions. Another benefit of aged cheese is that it's often higher in calcium.

Lactose Intolerant?

If you are lactose intolerant, there may still be cheeses that you are able to enjoy. Cheeses made from sheep or goat milk, such as feta, are lower in lactose. Aged cheese also has less lactose as the lactose converts into lactic acid which is easier to digest.

HEALTHY CHEESE CHOICES

Look for low-fat, low-sodium cheese, as little processed as possible. Some specific cheeses are better for you for a variety of reasons:

- **Parmigiano Reggiano**, is one of the healthiest cheeses, made from natural skim milk, low in fat and aged for 3 years. Great for salads, pasta or with chicken.
- **Italian Ricotta**, is naturally low in fat because it is made from whey. It tastes great with desserts, bagels and crackers.
- **Cottage Cheese**, is a low-fat choice that is high in protein for muscle building and available in low-sodium! Enjoy with fruit or jam or replace ricotta cheese in recipes.
- **Feta**, a healthy Mediterranean choice that is low in lactose! Pair with salads, wraps and pita.
- **Gouda**, can be fairly high in fat so watch out for a low-fat version. The good news is that this may work for people with lactose intolerance if the cheese is aged for at least one year. Works great with sandwiches, snacks or with pasta and potatoes.



What about SODIUM ?

Cheese can be high in salt, depending on the type. Soft cheeses often have less sodium than hard cheeses. Swiss (Emmentaler) and Parmigiano Reggiano are naturally lower in sodium. In general, avoid cheeses with more than 400mg of sodium per serving.



Source: coreperformance.com



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