



By Nancy Zwick
American Dairy Council

July is National Ice Cream Month. Can you enjoy your favorite ice cream and not feel like you have to go to the gym to work off what you just ate? Scoop, after scoop, Americans can't seem to get enough ice cream. As a nation, we consume 8 billion pounds of the frozen delight every year.

Ice Cream is a popular frozen food made of milk, cream, sugar, and flavoring. Ice cream probably originated in China around 2000 BC. It was first made in Italy in the 17th century and appeared in the United States in the early 18th century. The U.S. ice-cream manufacturing industry began in 1851.

Research suggests that the nutritional makeup of ice cream when eaten as part of a balanced diet may help burn fat faster than if you had not eaten the fat and calorie rich indulgence. Ice cream's fat-burning ability seems to have a direct connection to its calcium content. Studies have showed people who ate between 1,200 and 1,300 milligrams of calcium from dairy foods daily lost 70 percent more weight than people eating less dairy. There are a lot of studies that have looked at the benefit of calcium for weight loss. Not all of these mechanisms have yet been identified, but there are certain substances in foods that contain calcium that may help the body to lose weight.

The key to eating Ice Cream is moderation. Forego the temptation to eat right out of the container. Too much of a good thing is not a good thing. You must stay within your calorie budget.

To avoid any confusion there are five main things to look for on the label of an ice cream treat. It's not all about fat grams! Per ½ cup serving (the standard serving for scoop ice cream), your best bets will have:

4 grams of fat or less

Around 120 calories

3 grams or less of saturated fat

No more than 10 milligrams cholesterol per serving

15 grams of sugar or less per serving. (Many ice creams have almost double this amount. Watch out for frozen yogurts they may be fat-free but really high in sugar!)

10% Calcium (100mg) more is better (Remember the calcium is the key to not feeling guilty when enjoying a ½ cup serving of your favorite ice cream.)
Ice cream that has been fortified with vitamin D is a big bonus and makes that ice cream even more nutrient rich.

For more information, contact a registered dietitian at www.eatrightwv.org.