
Chocolate Milk for Recovery?

There is a lot of talk around the sports world the last 10 years or so about athletes using low-fat or non-fat chocolate milk as a recovery drink.

Coaches are often met with skeptical stares from parents and exuberant acceptance from athletes. But there are many sports programs and nutritionists who have been advocating chocolate milk as a post-exercise recovery drink in place of conventional sports drinks.

As a recovery drink we mean something you drink in the 30 minutes right after a hard workout or competition to help an athlete recover.

Here are some opinions about chocolate milk as a recovery drink:

"Not only does chocolate milk taste good, but two recent studies from The University of Texas at Austin show that it's also the ideal post-workout recovery drink."

"We don't yet understand exactly what mechanism is causing low-fat chocolate milk to give athletes these advantages — that will take more research," said Ivy, "but there's something in the naturally-occurring protein and carbohydrate mix that offers significant benefits."

[Chocolate Milk Gives Athletes Leg-up After Exercise, Says University of Texas at Austin Study](#)

"When it's time to choose a liquid chug after a long, tough workout, there's a slew of options out there. Water? Gatorade, POWERade, or All Sport? Endurox R4? Physiologist Joel Stager, director of the Human Performance laboratory at Indiana University, has even one more potential workout recovery drink to add to the list: chocolate milk. His latest study, published in this month's International Journal of Sport Nutrition and Exercise Metabolism, names this kids' favorite an optimal post-exercise recovery aid."

"Compared to plain milk, water, or most sports drinks, it has double the carbohydrate and protein content, perfect for replenishing tired muscles. Its high water content replaces fluids lost as sweat, preventing dehydration. Plus it packs a nutritional bonus of calcium, and includes just a little sodium and sugar -- additives that help recovering athletes retain water and regain energy. "

[Got Milk? Try Chocolate After Your Workout](#)

"The combination of carbohydrates and protein in low-fat chocolate milk appears to be "just right" for refueling weary muscles, says William Lunn, PhD, an exercise scientist at the University of Connecticut."

"Additionally, drinking fat-free chocolate milk led to a higher concentration of glycogen, or muscle fuel, in muscles 30 and 60 minutes after exercise, compared with the sports drink. Replenishing glycogen after exercise helps future performance, Lunn says."

"While the studies were small, there's no reason not to reach for fat-free chocolate milk after your next workout, says sports nutritionist Nancy Clark, MS, RD, of Healthworks Fitness Center in Chestnut Hill, Mass."

[Chocolate Milk Refuels Muscles After Workout](#)

A final cautionary note - as with everything else in life - indulge in moderation. Too much of even a good thing can be damaging. So if you are struggling with recovery after workouts, or competitions give some low-fat chocolate milk a try in that most important first 30 minutes recovery time after your workout ends and see if it works for you.