

Response from Kalra S, Arora S, Kapoor N. (*J Pak Med Assoc.* 2023;73:1544-5)

Use of Dairy Products in People Living with Diabetes

Sanjay Kalra^{1,2}, Saurabh Arora³, Nitin Kapoor^{4,5}

Madam, We thank Kumar PP¹ for their insightful comments on the paper titled Use of Dairy Products in people living with diabetes.²

Dairy products are a heterogenous group of food stuffs, as mentioned by Kumar et al. Person- centred diabetes care expects that the health care professional be aware of the variety of local dairy products, their cost, caloric and nutrient value, and seasonal availability. One should also be aware of the ways in which dairy foods can be prepared, cooked and consumed.³

The same word may have different connotations for different people. For example, buttermilk or lassi may be thick or dilute, sweetened or salted. Cheese may be processed and salted, or fresh cottage cheese and unsalted. Butter may be salted, unsalted, preserved or freshly churned from milk. Milk can be sourced from cows, buffaloes, goats, camels or other mammals, and can be consumed full cream, toned or double toned. These distinctions are important, as they impact glycemic levels and management. These subtle, and not-so-subtle differences, explain the varying findings of research on dairy products and risk of diabetes, or glycaemic control.

¹Department of Endocrinology, Bharti Hospital, Karnal, India; ²University Center for Research & Development, Chandigarh University, Mohali, India; ³Department of Endocrinology, Dayanand Medical College, Ludhiana, Punjab, India; ⁴Department of Endocrinology, Diabetes and Metabolism, Christian Medical College, Vellore, India; ⁵Non communicable disease unit, Baker Heart and Diabetes Institute, Melbourne, Victoria, Australia

Correspondence: Sanjay Kalra. e-mail: brideknl@gmail.com
ORCID ID: 0000-0003-1308-121X

Dairy product consumption should be viewed as part of a wider dietary landscape. Persons who take sufficient amounts of meat, chicken, fish and eggs are able to achieve adequate protein intake from these sources.⁴ Many people, however, do not consume these foodstuffs, because of economical, religious or cultural reasons. Milk and milk products become the main source of proteins in such individuals.

The Paleolithic vegan diets, which eschew milk as well as other animal sourced foods, may be deficient in calcium as well.⁵ Dairy product usage contributes to calcium sufficiency, as promotes bone as well as muscle health. One way of promoting a balanced diet in the South Asian region is the Traditional Indian Ocean Diet (TRIO Diet), which is based on locally available foodstuffs.⁶

We therefore concur with the balanced viewpoint of Kumar PP and hope that this conversation initiates enhanced focus on healthy nutrition for persons living with diabetes

References

1. Kumar PP. Letter to editor, *J Pak Med Assoc.* 2023; 74: 193.
2. Kalra S, Arora S, Kapoor N. Use of Dairy Products in people living with diabetes. *J Pak Medic Assoc.* 2023;73:1544-5.
3. Kalra B, Choubey N, Kapoor N, Kalra S. Culinary Counselling in Chronic Care: The Pentad of Cs & Ps. *J Pak Medic Assoc.* 2023;73: 428-9.
4. Moughan PJ. Population protein intakes and food sustainability indices: the metrics matter. *Global Food Security.* 2021; 29:100548.
5. Gupta L, Khandelwal D, Lal PR, Kalra S, Dutta D. Palaeolithic diet in diabetes and endocrinopathies—a Vegan’s perspective. *European Endocrinology.* 2019;15:77-82.
6. Kalra S, Traditional Indian Ocean Diet Working Group. The Traditional Indian Ocean Diet. *Indian Journal of Clinical Practice.* 2023;33:40-3.