



## More say: 'Yogurt, it's Greek to me'

### What can you tell me about Greek yogurt?

Greek yogurt is new enough in the American dairy case that it's not yet listed in the U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Nutrient Database — the standard database that contains foods' "Nutrient Facts" information and more. But Greek yogurt has been enjoyed by consumers worldwide for generations.

The first thing you'll notice when you open a container of Greek yogurt is how thick it is. Greek yogurt goes through a special straining process that removes much of the yogurt's watery whey. The result is a product that's much thicker and richer than regular yogurt.

It's also more filling, because ounce for ounce, it has a lot more protein. The highest-protein yogurt (plain, nonfat) in the USDA's nutrient database contains less than 10 grams of protein in a six-ounce container; Greek yogurt averages anywhere from 14 to 18 grams of protein in six ounces, depending on the brand. Studies show that consuming protein, as compared to carbohydrate and fat, promotes stronger feelings of fullness and tends to suppress food intake at the next meal.

Greek yogurt also tends to have a lower sugar content than regular yogurt. A six-ounce container of plain nonfat yogurt usually contains about 12 grams of sugar; Nutrition Facts labels on several brands of Greek yogurt indicate that sugar content ranges from about 7 to 9 grams per six-ounce container. Nearly any yogurt flavored with fruit, vanilla, honey or other

flavorings likely contains more sugar — compare Nutrition Facts labels to understand what you're eating.

Unfortunately, when whey is removed during the process to make Greek yogurt, some calcium can also be lost. Six ounces of regular yogurt normally contains about 35 percent of the Daily Value for calcium; Greek yogurt may contain only 20 percent. Again, check the Nutrition Facts label if yogurt is one of your primary sources of calcium — you don't want to shortchange yourself.

Plain Greek yogurt is often recommended as a replacement for sour cream in sauces and dips — one cup of plain nonfat Greek yogurt has about 135 calories, compared with 170 calories for a cup of fat-free sour cream, or 440 calories in a cup of regular sour cream. Just like regular yogurt, Greek yogurt comes in full-fat, reduced fat, and fat-free varieties.

Greek yogurt is also usually much more expensive than regular yogurt, so be prepared for some sticker shock. Some people swear by it, saying it's worth every penny. Others make their own close approximation by thickening regular yogurt: Just pour the yogurt into a strainer or a colander lined with a paper coffee filter, paper towels or cheesecloth. Cover and refrigerate for several hours; the longer you let the yogurt drain, the thicker it becomes.

*Chow Line is a service of Ohio State University Extension and the Ohio Agricultural Research and Development Center. Send questions to Chow Line, c/o Martha Filipic, 2021 Coffey Road, Columbus, OH, 43210-1044, or [filipic.3@cfaes.osu.edu](mailto:filipic.3@cfaes.osu.edu).*



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**Editor:**

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