

ALL ABOUT YOGURT

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You may have noticed that when navigating the yogurt aisle that there are a TON of options to choose from. Most people consider yogurt to be a part of a healthy diet. However, with the growing amount of options at the grocery store, picking the right yogurt for you can be challenging. Let's first talk about what yogurt is. Yogurt is a food produced by bacterial fermentation of milk using what are known as "yogurt cultures". It is through the fermentation of lactose in milk that "probiotics" are created which are beneficial bacteria. These beneficial bacteria have been associated with everything from improved gut health, immunity, skin conditions, and even mental health. The question is, which yogurts are nutritionally superior?

Type	Things to Know
Traditional Yogurt	Be aware of sugar content. Some have ~22-26 grams of sugar per serving (which is more than some ice creams) and less protein than other yogurt. For example, Yoplait Original® has around 18 grams of sugar and only 6 grams of protein. If weight management is your concern, you may consider a yogurt with more protein and less sugar.
"Light Yogurt"	While these yogurts are lower in sugar and calories most of them do have artificial sweeteners which you do want to limit your intake of. For example Dannon Light and Fit® yogurt uses sucralose which is an artificial sweetener but also allows for this yogurt to be lower in Calories (70 kcal per container).
Greek Yogurt	Greek Yogurt is an excellent choice for a snack due to its increased protein content. Don't like the texture? Try Yoplait Greek Whips®. This one has more of a light and fluffy texture rather than the thick and creamy texture usually associated with Greek yogurt. You do still want to make sure to pay attention of sugar content as some Greek yogurts can still have as much sugar as traditional yogurts or ice cream while others use artificial sweeteners to keep Calories lower. Some light yogurt brands are now becoming more conscious of using more natural ingredients such as Oikos Triple Zero® which uses stevia leaf and chicory root extract as a sweetener keeping a nutrition content of 15 grams of protein and 6 grams of sugar.

Non-Dairy Yogurt	<p>With more and more people avoiding dairy in their diet, non-dairy-plant based yogurts have become a popular option. Most non-dairy yogurts do not contain nearly as much protein as their dairy counterparts. One exception to this is a newer yogurt that has come out “Vega Protein Yogurt®”. With 13 grams of protein and only 7 grams of sugar, this cashew and pea protein based yogurt offers comparable nutrition to dairy based yogurts with the same great taste.</p>
Bulgarian Yogurt	<p>Bulgarian yogurt is similar to Greek yogurt in that it is simply made by adding probiotics to milk. Bulgarian yogurt tends to be a little thinner than Greek yogurt with a slightly lower protein content. It is made with a very specific strain of probiotic called “lactobacillus bulgaricus”. This strain has been found to be beneficial to support digestive health, support the immune system.</p> <p>Milen Minev is a personal trainer from Bulgaria and owns a training studio in Buckhead called New Edge Fitness and makes his own Bulgarian yogurt from scratch for his clients using organic whole milk. When asked the difference between Greek yogurt and Bulgarian yogurt, he had this to say; “the difference between the regular yogurt and the Bulgarian yogurt is the bacteria species used to turn the milk into yogurt. The Bulgarian yogurt is made using a bacteria called Lactobacillus Bulgaricus (named after my country Bulgaria), found on plants that grow in certain mountain regions in Bulgaria. Lactobacillus Bulgaricus gives the Bulgarian yogurt the specific taste, aroma and consistency. All yogurt is good for the humans. But once people try the authentic Bulgarian Yogurt - there's no switching back to regular! It's just that good, absolutely amazing taste. 😊”</p>

In conclusion, things to consider when picking your yogurt:

- Look for yogurts with less than 9 grams of sugar per serving. If you want to add flavor to your yogurt, you are better off to add your own fresh fruit toppings or a teaspoon of honey as desired.
- Look for yogurts with at least 8-10 grams of protein per serving.
- It is also worth mentioning that many people who suffer from lactose intolerance are still often able to eat yogurt due to its lower lactose content as well as the presence of probiotics which allow the gut to better process the yogurt.

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