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## Goat milk almost as nutritious as human milk

May 19, 2011, 03:48pm IST

*A new Spanish study has found that goat milk has many nutrients that make it similar to human milk.*

Researchers at the University of Granada Department of Physiology and Institute of Nutrition and Food Technology, coordinated by Prof Margarita Sánchez Campos, have proven that goat milk has nutritional characteristics beneficial to health.

The regular consumption of goat milk by individuals with iron deficiency anemia improves their recovery, since it enhances the nutritional use of iron and enhances the regeneration of hemoglobin.

The researchers found that goat milk has many nutrients –as casein– that make it similar to human milk.

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Goat milk almost as nutritious as human milk  
 (Thinkstock photos/Getty Images)

It contains less casein alpha 1 –as human milk–, which is responsible for most allergies to cow milk. Therefore, goat milk is hypoallergenic.

"For this reason, in some countries it is used as the basis for the development of infant formula in place of cow milk", said the researchers.

Additionally, another benefit is that it contains a significant amount of oligosaccharides with a composition similar to that of human milk. These compounds reach the large intestine undigested and act as prebiotics, i.e they help develop probiotic flora that competes with pathogenic bacterial flora, making it disappear.

Similarly, goat milk contains a lower proportion of lactose than cow milk –about 1 per cent less– and, as it is easier to digest, individuals with intolerance to this milk sugar can tolerate goat milk.

The researchers said that goat milk is rich in calcium and phosphorus, it is highly bioavailable and favors their deposition in the organic matrix of bone, leading to an improvement in bone formation parameters.

It also has more zinc and selenium, which are essential micronutrients contributing to the antioxidant defense and for the prevention of neurodegenerative diseases.

For all these reasons, researchers consider that "goat milk can be considered natural functional food, and its regular consumption should be promoted among the population.

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