



Milk may not find many takers in children or adults, but if you can get past the smell you will realise the goodness of this power drink, which is replete with nutrients that work wonders for the body

by Aanandika Sood

How often have you heard your mother repeat the following words? “Drink it, milk is good for you!”

I just saw an advertisement which had Alexander, Rani Laxmi Bai and an Albert Einstein wrinkling their nose at the sight of pure white milk. While I have nothing against products which add colour and change the taste, it made me wonder why children are generally averse to milk. So I thought about sharing with you some of the many ways in which milk and milk products are beneficial for our health.

Milk is often called nature’s wellness drink. Milk is the primary source of nutrition for the babies of all mammals. The early milk from mammals — and we humans are also mammals — is called colostrum. Colostrum is rich in antibodies that safeguard a newborn’s health and give essential nutrition.

Long ago it was discovered that humans, as they grew older, found it difficult to digest lactose — a kind of sugar found in milk. Hence the human race developed ways to transform milk into products that are easy to digest and contain the benefits of milk. These include curd, cheese, butter and ice cream among other dairy products that eventually gained populace all over the world.



As time moved on, some genetic changes occurred in the human body and over thousands of years, a genetic mutation allowed the human population to become more tolerant of lactose, enabling them to enjoy milk in their adulthood as well.

Gradually animals were domesticated to meet the need for milk. These animals, as you might know, are called dairy animals and include cows, goats, sheep, yak and even camels. Do you know that today cows contribute about 90 per cent of the world’s milk requirement?

Now let us look at the components of this energy drink and see why your



mother has been saying that it is good for your health.

Milk contains nine essential nutrients that are a must for healthy growth. These are:

■ **Calcium:** Important for building bones and teeth.

■ **Proteins:** This source of energy helps repair muscles and tissue.

■ **Vitamin D:** As a popular commercial tell us, it is important for bone health.

■ **Vitamin B12:** Essential for red blood cells and nerve tissue.

■ **Vitamin A:** Strengthens our immune system and is important for good vision and healthy skin.

■ **Vitamin B2:** Riboflavin, as this vitamin is commonly called, is important for converting food into energy in our bodies.

■ **Vitamin B3:** Also called Niacin, it is important for metabolising sugar and fatty acids in the human body.

■ **Potassium:** It helps maintain healthy blood pressure.

■ **Phosphorous:** Helps generate energy and strengthen the bones.

So now you can see that milk is naturally nutrient rich and has all the good stuff that we need for our body’s growth and well being.

A nice warm glass of milk with some sugar and honey is said to be the perfect cure for insomnia.

Do you remember reading an article which was dedicated to the goodness of *dahi* or curd? Curd is a derivative of milk with a dose of healthy bacteria, which is easy to digest, very tasty and is used in various ways in different cuisines all over the country from Kashmir to Kanyakumari.

Milk is very good for your teeth. Besides containing calcium for your teeth and bones, milk also lowers the acidity level in your mouth, combating formation of plaque and cavities.

So next time you are offered a glass of milk do give a thought to your health and body before wrinkling your nose.

SOMEONE ELSE TO TAKE HER PLACE

by Reeja Radhakrishnan

Continuing where we left off last week... Inanna, the goddess from the Heavens, is allowed to leave the Underworld but she must find someone else to take her place in the dark realms.

As Inanna ascended from the Underworld with the *galla*, the demons, in tow she found Ninshubur waiting outside. Still dressed in her mourning attire of a single piece of coarse garment, she threw herself at her mistress’ feet, weeping.

“Ah... maybe she can take your place,” hissed the *galla* in Inanna’s ear.

“Not she, my faithful companion,” replied Inanna, “Can’t you see how she has mourned for me? For me she sought the help of the gods and always kept my counsel. She is too precious for me to give up.”

“Then walk on, let us see who can take your place,” said the *galla* as the group made their way to the holy cities where the gods dwelt. First they came upon the shrine of Umma, which was the seat of Shara, the son of Inanna. He too was dressed in soiled sack cloth, mourning his mother. On seeing her accompanied by the macabre apparitions, he fell at her feet and wept.

“Your son Shara! We’ll take him instead. He looks like he’ll be glad to give up his life for you,” whispered the *galla* in Inanna’s ear. “You dare not!” she screamed, “My dear son Shara, he sings me hymns, smoothens my hair and cuts my nails. I will never allow you to take him.”

“Proceed then, so we may find another,” said the *galla* and they continued on their journey. Soon they reached Badtibira where at the shrine they saw Lulal, another son of Inanna. Lulal, like his brother Shara, was grieving for his mother, attired similarly in tattered, dirty sack cloth. When he saw Inanna, he rushed to her and threw himself in

the dust at her feet.

“Oh! Yet another child of yours who weeps at your plight! Shall we take this one?” asked the *galla*.

“No!” cried Inanna, “not my dear son Lulal! He is a leader among men. He is my right arm and my left arm. I shall never give him up.”

“Then let’s walk to your city of Uruk, Inanna. We’ll go with you to the big apple tree there,” said the *galla*.

As they came to the city of Uruk, they saw Dumuzi, Inanna’s shepherd husband, who was clad in royal finery and seated on his magnificent throne by the

big apple tree. He did not notice them and continued to play his reed pipe. Evidently, he did not miss his wife or mourn her passing.

If you remember, Inanna was not too impressed with this shepherd husband of hers in the first place. It was her brother, the Sun god Utu, who had chosen this groom for her.

On seeing him, Inanna was enraged. Uttering curses, she looked upon him darkly and thundered, “Seize him! This man Dumuzi, my husband who revels in playing king! He

shall take my place!”

The *galla* sprang upon Dumuzi. They emptied the milk out of his seven churns (he was a shepherd, remember?) and broke his reed pipe. They beat him up and wounded him with axes. Dumuzi screamed in pain and called out to his brother-in-law Utu for help.

“Oh Utu, the great god of Justice! Save me, the husband of your sister! Turn my feet into the feet of a snake, turn my hands into snake hands, so I can get away from the clutches of these evil demons who will drag me to hell!”

Utu in his mercy transformed Dumuzi into a serpent and he was able to wriggle free from the *galla* and escape. On the advice of his sister Geshtinanna, Dumuzi hid in the home of a friend. But unfortunately for him, the friend betrayed him when the *galla* bribed him with the water gift and the grain gift.

But as the *galla* closed in on him. Once again he invoked Utu, who turned him into a gazelle so that he could flee as fast he could.

No place is safe, thought Dumuzi and hid among the sheepfold in Geshtinanna’s dwelling. But the *galla* came for him there too and this time there was no escape.

Geshtinanna wept inconsolably at the passing of Dumuzi. When Inanna saw the sister’s grief, she was moved with pity. “Please, Inanna, I would gladly take my brother’s place... I would, I would,” cried Geshtinanna.

“So be it,” said Inanna in her compassion. “Half a year Dumuzi will spend in the Underworld and the remaining of the year you shall take his place.”

Thus this is what it came to be — Dumuzi would die in spring, when grain is harvested and when he rose in autumn, his sister Geshtinanna would take his place.

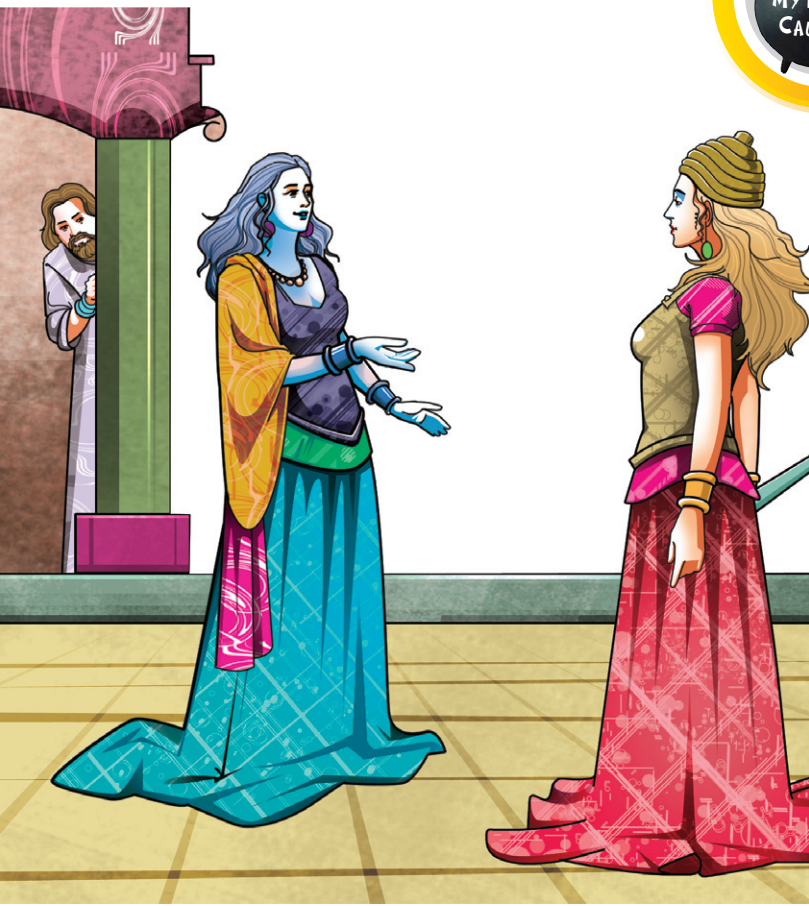
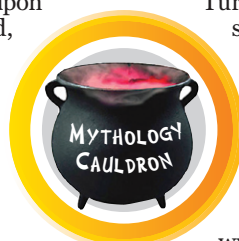
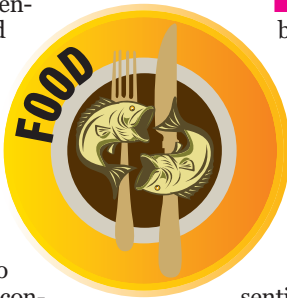


ILLUSTRATION | TAPAS RANJAN

‘REVERT’ DOES NOT MEAN ‘REPLY’

In earlier columns I discussed the appropriate title to be used in a salutation and the clichés to be avoided in professional letters. A reader from Chennai has sent in this query: *I am a regular reader of your column. I received a mail from one of my team mates who says that the verb ‘revert’ should not be used to mean ‘reply’. Please clarify.* (Anuradha)

I have heard many Indians use the word ‘revert’ or ‘revert back’ to mean ‘reply’. About a year ago, an American friend of mine showed me a business letter in which she found the term ‘revert’ used in the context and said that it sounded strange to her. I too have come across the following sentences in many formal letters I received from Indian friends.

■ *Please revert to me soon with all the details.*

■ *I’ll revert back to you within two days.*

■ *Please revert to us with your updated CV.*

■ *He hasn’t yet reverted to our letter.*

This is typical Indian English. The word ‘revert’ should not be used in place of ‘reply’, like in the examples above. According to Cambridge Advanced Learner’s Dictionary, the phrasal verb **revert to something** means ‘to return to doing, using, being or referring to something, usually something bad or less satisfactory’. Look at these examples:

■ *Why do you always revert to your promotion and increment?*

■ *I don’t like the teacher as he reverts to our poor performance in the examinations every time we meet him.*

The phrasal verb **revert to somebody** means ‘to become the property of someone’ as in the examples below:

■ *After John’s father’s death, the house reverted to John and the hotel reverted to Mary.*

■ *He thinks all his father’s property will be reverted to him.*

What is the difference between ‘revert’ and ‘revert back’? Is the phrase ‘revert back’ not redundant? Both ‘revert’ and ‘revert back’ are used in British English. Here are some authentic examples of how they are

used by native speakers of English.

■ *The time taken to **revert** to the relaxed state is directly related to the fitness of the body.*

■ *Anti- Candida therapy is not a life-long cure — the problem can come back if you **revert** to your old eating habits.*

■ *First, the pressure on teachers involved in innovation to **revert back** to traditional content and methods is strong.*

■ *His skin now looks reasonably*

English BLUES

DR ALBERT P’ RAYAN
CHENNAI



is an ELT resource person and associate professor at KCG College of Technology, Chennai

*healthy, but I would like to know if there is any chance that the pink pigment will **revert back** to its former black colour.*

The above examples are from British National Corpus.

The idiom ‘every nook and corner’, widely used in different parts of India, will sound strange to native speakers of English. The correct idiom is ‘every nook and cranny’. Look at these examples:

■ *The full survey will ensure every nook and cranny is inspected.*

■ *Scores of supply vessels, tugs and survey ships filled every nook and cranny and even spilled over into the fish docks.*

Fill your house with stacks of books, in all the crannies and all the nooks. — Dr Seuss

ENGLISH BLUES

A book containing a selection of Dr Rayan’s columns is available
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VEDIC MATH

Using Digital Roots to Check Calculations

As we saw, the digital root of a number is obtained by adding the digits of the number till we get a single digit. Using the digital root we can check many of our calculations. Before going to the next step let us do a small exercise on finding the digital root of a few numbers.

| Number | Digital root |
|----------------|--------------|
| 839 | 2 |
| 16258 | 4 |
| 12697 | 7 |
| 5698723 | 4 |
| 2546 | 8 |

In the above examples only the numbers in bold are considered for finding the digital root as the 9s were left out. So we need to practise finding the digital roots just by looking at the numbers.

Next let us see how we can check addition. In order to check whether the addition we did is correct,

- First do the addition as usual.
- Then find the digital root of the given numbers to be added.
- Then add the digital roots.
- Find the digital root of the answer we got.
- Compare the digital root of the answer with the sum of the digital roots of the given numbers.
- If they are same then our answer is correct

Example:

Add **4562** and **8756** and check the answer.

1. $4562 + 8755 = 13317$
2. Digital root of 4562 is 8.
3. Digital root of 8755 is 7.
4. Digital root of 13317 (answer) is **6**
5. Sum of the digital roots 8 and 7 = $1+5 = 6$
6. Since the sum of the digital roots of the added numbers is equal to the digital root of the answer the calculation we did is correct.



KUMUDHA KRISHNAN
Vedic Math exponent
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The same method can be followed to check our subtraction. The only difference is that we have to subtract the digital roots of the numbers to be subtracted and compare it with the digital root of the answer.

Example:

Subtract **5412** from **9879** and check the answer.

1. $9879 - 5412 = 4467$
2. Digital root of 9879 is 6
3. Digital root of 5412 is 3
4. Digital root of 4467 (answer) is **3**
5. Difference of first two digital roots: $6 - 3 = 3$

6. Since the difference of the digital roots equals the digital root of the answer the calculation is correct. But sometimes, in subtraction problems the digital root of the bigger number may be smaller than the digital root of the number to be subtracted.

Example: 5879 – 2145

- The answer is 3734
- Digital root of 5879 is 2
- Digital root of 2145 is 3
- We cannot subtract 3 from 2
- So we add a 9 to 2 and make it 11. Just as we cast out 9 when finding the digital root, which does not alter the sum, now we can add a 9 to make our subtraction comfortable and that does not affect our calculation.
- Subtract 3 from 11, which is possible, and you get **8**
- Digital root of 3734 (answer) is also **8**
- So our answer is correct.