



Cows produce milk for the same reason that humans do—to nourish their young—but calves on dairy farms are taken away from their mothers when they are just 1 day old. They are fed milk replacers so that their mothers' milk can be sold to humans. Female cows are artificially inseminated shortly after their first birthdays. After giving birth, they lactate for 10 months and are then inseminated again, continuing the cycle. Some spend their entire lives standing on concrete floors; others are confined to massive, crowded lots, where they are forced to live amid their own feces. Cows have a natural lifespan of about 20 years and can produce milk for eight or nine years. However, the stress caused by the conditions on factory farms leads to disease, lameness, and reproductive problems that render cows worthless to the dairy industry by the time that they're 4 or 5 years old, at which time they are sent to be slaughtered. Normally, these animals would produce only enough milk to meet the needs of their calves, but genetic manipulation—and, in many cases, antibiotics and hormones—are used to cause each cow to produce massive amounts of milk each year.

THE VEAL CONNECTION

If we consume milk, we're subsidising the veal industry, which has recently become "fashionable" in Dhaka. While female calves are slaughtered or kept alive to produce milk, male calves are often taken away from their mothers when they are as young as 1 day old to be chained in tiny stalls for three to 18 weeks and raised for veal.

HUMAN BODIES FIGHT COW'S MILK

Cow's milk is the number one cause of food allergies among infants and children, according

to the American Gastroenterological Association. Most people begin to produce less lactase, the enzyme that helps with the digestion of milk, when they are as young as 2 years old. This reduction can lead to lactose intolerance, which can cause bloating, gas, cramps, vomiting, headaches, rashes, and even trigger asthma.

CALCIUM AND PROTEIN MYTHS

Although American women consume tremendous amounts of calcium, their rates of osteoporosis are among the highest in the world. Conversely, Chinese people consume half as much calcium (most of it from plant sources) and have a very low incidence of the bone disease. Some thirty-three medical studies indicate that rather than preventing the disease, milk may actually increase women's risk of getting osteoporosis. A Harvard Nurses' Study of more than 77,000 women aged 34 to 59 found that those who consumed two or more glasses of milk per day had higher risks of broken hips and arms than those who drank one glass or less per day. T. Colin Campbell, professor of nutritional biochemistry at Cornell University, said, "The association between the intake of animal protein and fracture rates appears to be as strong as that between cigarette smoking and lung cancer."

Milk, like eggs, meat and all other animal products, contains no essential nutrients that can't be got from plants. In fact, in some cases, plant based products contain higher amount and quality of nutrients minus all the antibiotic and hormones that come with dairy milk. So next time you see that famous "got milk?" billboard again, whisper to yourself "yep, got plant based milk!"

Photo: Collected

CORRIGENDUM

Volume #17, Anniversary Supplements 2018, Segment 5, Page 30, Star Lifestyle, dated February 24, 2018 ran the article, "My Vegan Victory." Rubaiya Ahmad's article mentioned, "I became a vegetarian at the age of eight, following one Qurbani Eid" which should have said, "I became a vege-

tarian eight years ago, following one Qurbani Eid." The online version of this article has also been updated.

We sincerely regret any inconvenience caused. *Link: <http://www.thedailystar.net/supplements/now-lifestyle/my-vegan-victory-1539037>*



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