



Team USA Athletes Call on Olympic Committee to Stop Promoting Milk

By
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Last week Team USA cycling silver medalist Dotsie Bausch publicly called out the United States Olympic and Paralympic Committee for continuing to promote milk despite the growing body of evidence linking dairy to a range of health issues.

Bausch penned an [open letter](#) that ran as a full-page ad in three newspapers serving regions where Olympic facilities are located, including *The Gazette* in Colorado Springs, Colorado, where the USOPC is headquartered. The letter admonished the committee for failing to take seriously an [October 2020 letter](#) in which she and eight other Olympic athletes requested an investigation into the USOPC's partnership with Milk Life, a campaign sponsored by a dairy industry association known as America's Milk Companies.

In that letter, the athletes argued that the promotion of milk consumption to athletes "inhibits Team USA athletes' ability to achieve competitive excellence." The detailed letter—which was signed by nine Olympic athletes, including Bausch, gold medalist and World Cup champion Alex Morgan, and gold medalist Heather Mitts—cited research linking dairy consumption to a range of health issues. These issues included elevated LDL ("bad") cholesterol; higher risk for [certain types of cancer](#); and [increased mucus production and rates of asthma](#), which is the [most common chronic medical condition among Olympic athletes](#). They also pointed to the fact that roughly 36 percent of Americans are [unable to properly absorb lactose](#), a rate that is higher among communities of color.

Bausch says USOPC leadership dismissed their concerns, which prompted her to write the follow-up letter.

In an interview with Forks Over Knives, Bausch noted that this is not the first time the USOPC has embraced products contrary to their mission. "At the 2012 Olympic Games, there was a McDonald's inside the athletes' village," she said. "Tobacco was a sponsor in the 1980 Olympic Games in Lake Placid, and that's not that long ago. But that sounds kind of insane now, and I think this dairy sponsorship will sound insane as well in some years. We have to crack open that can of knowledge and truth and understand what [milk] is doing in the human body. It's certainly not promoting athletic superiority for Team USA."

Bausch has been a vocal proponent of the athletic benefits of a plant-based diet since making the switch back in 2009. She appeared in the 2019 documentary [The Game Changers](#).