

THE LOWDOWN ON LACTOSE INTOLERANCE

Making The Most

Of Milk

The facts about lactose intolerance may surprise you. For starters, it's not as widespread as many people think. And, it does not require avoidance of dairy foods. In fact, research shows that people who have trouble digesting lactose can enjoy dairy foods daily.



It's A Matter Of Degree

Lactose intolerance is not an "all-or-nothing" condition. Find the portion size that is right for you.

- Those who have been diagnosed with lactose intolerance still produce lactase at a low level and can digest some of milk's natural sugar. Most can enjoy at least one 8 oz. glass of milk with a meal without any problems.
- Sometimes an intolerance to milk is only temporary, brought on by certain medications or by illnesses such as the flu. Talk to your doctor if you suddenly develop symptoms.
- Today, doctors say people with low lactase levels have "maldigestion." Only a small fraction of people with lactose maldigestion have intolerance symptoms when they eat dairy foods.

GET A MEDICAL DIAGNOSIS

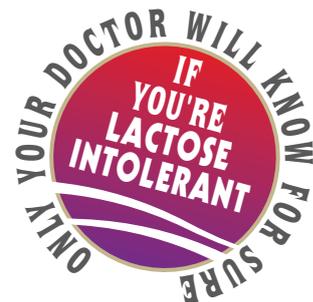
If you think you may be lactose intolerant, talk to your doctor. Avoid self-diagnosis. There may be another cause for your symptoms.

LET'S LOOK

AT THE FACTS

Lactose intolerance is one type of food sensitivity — it's not an allergy. It is the result of not having enough lactase, an enzyme that digests the natural sugar in milk, lactose. The amount of lactase a person has is genetic. People who have low levels of the lactase enzyme may experience intolerance symptoms such as gas, bloating, or diarrhea if they consume more lactose than their system can handle at one time. Not everyone diagnosed with lactose intolerance will experience symptoms.

Studies have identified simple strategies to make dairy foods easier to digest. If testing shows you're lactose intolerant, use the tips on the other side to help manage your symptoms.



A few lifestyle changes may be all it takes. In fact, you can likely still drink milk. The best way to find out how much you can have without symptoms is to start with small portions at meals. Then, gradually increase your portion size to find your comfort level.

MILK, CHEESE AND YOGURT... provide many important nutrients for good health. They're especially rich in calcium — the bone-building mineral that comes up short in the diets of many Americans, particularly women.



Tips For Tolerance

Most degrees of lactose intolerance are easy to manage. Try these tips to help you enjoy dairy foods.

START SMALL.

Try small portions of milk and milk products. This allows whatever lactase is there to do its job of digesting the lactose before it starts causing problems.

WORK IT IN.

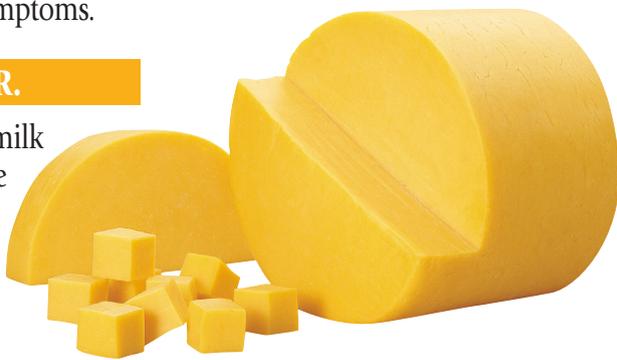
Start with a smaller portion and slowly increase the serving size of the dairy foods you eat. When you notice symptoms, that may signal your limit for the amount of lactose you can handle at one sitting.

PAIR THE DAIRY.

Drink milk with other foods, not on an empty stomach. Solid foods slow digestion and allow the body more time to digest the lactose, which helps prevent symptoms.

OLDER IS WISER.

That's true with cheese! When milk is made into cheese, most of the lactose is removed. Aged hard cheeses, such as Cheddar, Colby, Swiss and Parmesan, are particularly low in lactose.



GET A LITTLE "CULTURE."

Look for cultured milk products such as yogurt with live, active cultures, which contain "friendly" bacteria that help digest lactose.



REDUCE IT.

Look for lactose-free milk in the dairy case. It has all the nutrients of regular milk.

MAKE IT EASY.

Look for lactase enzyme pills at your drugstore. Take them with your first sip or bite of dairy foods. These can help you digest lactose easily.

GO TO THE PROS.

These tips may not apply to everyone. Follow the advice of your doctor and see a registered dietitian.

For more information about nutrition education materials, contact your local DAIRY COUNCIL®. Call 1-800-426-8271 for the Dairy Council office nearest you.



It's the Whole Package

Milk, cheese and yogurt are important sources of essential nutrients and together provide calcium, potassium, phosphorus, protein, vitamins A, B₁₂, riboflavin and niacin. Milk and some yogurts also provide vitamin D, which helps the body absorb calcium.

BE CALCIUM CONSCIOUS

Calcium

Calcium is one of milk's most important nutrients. Because it's a mineral so essential to health, don't let lactose intolerance keep you from consuming enough of it. To get enough calcium and other nutrients, the Dietary Guidelines encourages children and adults to enjoy three daily servings of low-fat, or fat-free milk, cheese, or yogurt each day.

ADVICE FROM THE EXPERTS

- For individuals who are lactose intolerant, the 2005 Dietary Guidelines states that milk alternatives within the milk food group, such as yogurt and lactose-free milk, are the most reliable and easiest way to derive the health benefits associated with milk and milk products.¹
- According to the 2004 Consensus Report by the National Medical Association, African Americans should get three to four servings of low-fat dairy foods a day to reduce the risk of chronic diseases. Lactose-free milk is an alternative option for those who have difficulty digesting dairy foods.²
- In their 2006 report, the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) recommends children with lactose intolerance still consume dairy foods in order to get enough calcium, vitamin D, protein and other nutrients essential for bone health and overall growth.³



¹ DHHS/USDA, Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 2005, 6th Edition.

² Wooten, WJ and Price, W. The role of dairy and dairy nutrients in the diet of African Americans. JNMA, 96(12) Supplement, 2004.

³ American Academy of Pediatrics, Lactose intolerance in infants, children, and adolescents. Pediatrics. 2006; 118 (3):1279-1286.

This brochure was reviewed by the



American Dietetic Association



American Academy of Pediatrics
DEDICATED TO THE HEALTH OF ALL CHILDREN™



WHAT HAPPENS WHEN DAIRY FOODS ARE LACKING?

Milk, cheese, and yogurt provide a unique nutrient package. Studies show dairy foods, when consumed as part of a healthy diet, contribute to better bone health, improve overall diet quality and may help reduce the risk of osteoporosis, hypertension, obesity, kidney stones and colon cancer.

