

# 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.



### TALK TO YOUR DOCTOR

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

### It's A Matter Of Degree

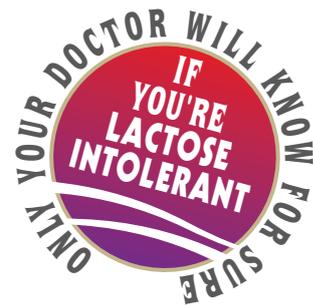
Lactose intolerance is not an "all-or-nothing" condition. Find the portion size that is right for you.

- Most 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.

## 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 lactose, the natural sugar in milk. 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.

### TRY IT

Opt for lactose-free milk and milk products. They are real milk products, just without the lactose. They taste great and provide the same nutrients as regular dairy foods.

### SIP IT

Start with a small amount of milk daily and increase slowly over several days or weeks to tolerance.

### STIR IT

Mix milk with other foods, such as soups and cereal; blend with fruit or drink milk with meals. Solid foods help slow digestion and allow the body more time to digest lactose.

### SLICE IT OR SHRED IT

When milk is made into cheese, most of the lactose is removed. Top sandwiches or crackers with natural cheeses such as Cheddar, Colby, Monterey Jack, mozzarella and Swiss. These cheeses are low in lactose. Shred your favorite natural cheese onto veggies, pastas and salads. It's an easy way to get dairy that is low in lactose.

### SPOON IT

Enjoy easy-to-digest yogurt. The live and active cultures in yogurt help to digest lactose.

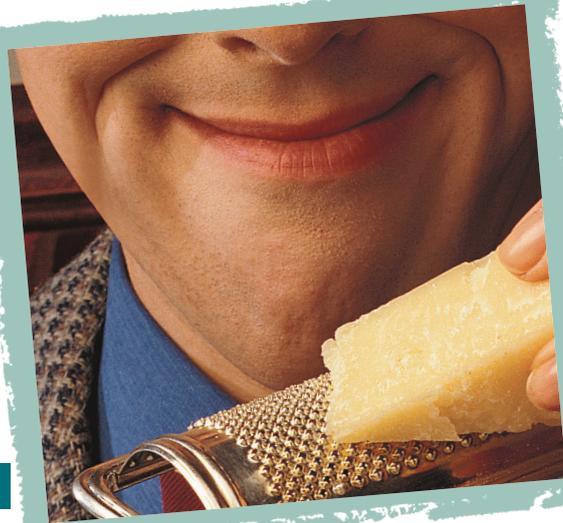
### MAKE IT EASY.

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

The dairy food group (milk, cheese, and yogurt) is a source of essential nutrients in the U.S. diet that are important for good health, including calcium, potassium, phosphorus, magnesium, zinc, protein, vitamin A, vitamin D, vitamin B<sub>12</sub> and riboflavin.



### WHAT HAPPENS WHEN DAIRY FOODS ARE LACKING?

Milk, cheese, and yogurt provide a unique nutrient package. The 2010 Dietary Guidelines for Americans says, "Moderate evidence shows that intake of milk and milk products is linked to improved bone health, especially in children and adolescents. Moderate evidence also indicates that intake of milk and milk products is associated with a reduced risk of cardiovascular disease and type 2 diabetes and with lower blood pressure in adults."



## 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 people 9 years and older to enjoy three daily servings of low-fat, or fat-free milk or milk products.

### ADVICE FROM THE EXPERTS

Health and nutrition authorities recommend individuals with lactose intolerance try to keep dairy in the diet.

- The 2010 Dietary Guidelines for Americans identifies strategies for those who are lactose intolerant to help obtain the important nutrients provided by milk and milk products, such as trying lactose-free milk or drinking smaller amounts of milk at a time.<sup>1</sup>
- A National Institutes of Health expert panel on lactose intolerance says that many individuals with lactose intolerance can manage their condition by consuming small amounts of milk and eating yogurt, natural cheeses, and lactose-free foods.<sup>2</sup>
- The National Medical Association (NMA) — the nation's largest group of African American physicians — recommends that people with lactose intolerance make efforts to keep dairy foods in their diets to help meet nutrient recommendations.<sup>3</sup>
- 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.<sup>4</sup>



<sup>1</sup> DHHS/USDA, Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 2010, 7th (edition).

<sup>2</sup> NIH Statement, Lactose Intolerance and Health, 2011.

<sup>3</sup> Wooten, WJ and Price, W. The role of dairy and dairy nutrients in the diet of African Americans. JNMA, 96(12) Supplement, 2004.

<sup>4</sup> American Academy of Pediatrics, Lactose intolerance in infants, children, and adolescents. Pediatrics. 2006; 118 (3):1279-1286.

This brochure was reviewed by the



AMERICAN ACADEMY OF  
FAMILY PHYSICIANS  
STRONG MEDICINE FOR AMERICA

**eat right.** Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics



NHMA  
National  
Hispanic  
Medical  
Association



National Medical Association

American Academy  
of Pediatrics



DEDICATED TO THE HEALTH OF ALL CHILDREN™



NATIONAL DAIRY COUNCIL®