

Contact Information

Name:

If you have any queries or problems,
please phone:



Lactose Free Diet

Information for Patients, Families and Carers

What is Lactose Intolerance?

Lactose is the sugar (carbohydrate) which is found in milk and most products which contain milk.

Lactose intolerance happens when your body cannot digest and absorb this sugar allowing it to pass into a part of your stomach called the large bowel. This causes symptoms such as bloating, diarrhoea and nausea.

This often happens after a stomach upset (diarrhoeal illness) and can be managed by avoiding foods containing lactose for a short time. Most people only need to restrict their diet for 6-8 weeks until the lining of the bowel recovers.

Ingredients List

If the ingredients of food and drink include any of the following then they contain lactose:

- Milk Powder (skimmed and full cream)
- Dried Milk
- Milk Protein (whey, casein, caseinate, hydrolysed casein)
- Milk solids, non-fat milk solids
- Cheese, cheese powder
- Cream
- Yoghurt
- Buttermilk, butterfat, milk fat, animal fat
- Whey powder, whey solids, hydrolysed whey protein, hydrolysed whey sugar
- Butter, margarine and ghee
- Condensed and evaporated milk
- Sauces and desserts made from milk (e.g. custard, milk pudding, white sauce)

Check food labels to make sure the products do not contain lactose or any of the other ingredients listed above. Please remember to check labels regularly as manufacturers often change their recipes.

Calcium

Calcium is important for strong bones and teeth. During childhood and adolescence, bones grow at their fastest rate. During this time, calcium is stored in bones as they get bigger and stronger. Bones reach their maximum strength (peak bone mass) by mid to late twenties. This means that during childhood there is a once in a lifetime opportunity to build strong bones.

After peak bone mass is achieved, the body still requires daily calcium to prevent bone loss known as osteoporosis. A good daily calcium intake at every age will help achieve a good peak bone mass and help to prevent osteoporosis.

How Much Calcium?

Examples of how to meet daily calcium requirements:

Age	Calcium Requirement	Provided By:
Under 6 months	525mg	Breast milk or 700ml (minimum) milk free formula
6 months - 1 year	525mg	Breast milk or 500ml (minimum) milk free formula + 125g pot soya yoghurt/dessert
1-3 years	350mg	200ml soya/oat milk + 125g pot soya yoghurt/dessert
4-6 years	450mg	300ml soya/oat milk + 125g pot soya yoghurt/dessert
7-10 years	550mg	250ml soya/oat milk + 2x125g pot soya yoghurt/dessert
Boys 11-18 years	1000mg	500-600ml soya/oat milk + 2-3x125g pot soya yoghurt/dessert
Girls 11-18 years	800mg	500-600ml soya/oat milk + 1-2x125g pot soya yoghurt/dessert

Milk Substitutes:

All milk substitutes should contain 120mg calcium per 100ml. Please check that your milk substitute has enough calcium.

Examples of milk substitutes:

Product	Examples	Calcium Counter - per 100ml
Fortified Soya Milk/ Drink	Alpro Soya, Alpro Growing Up Soya, Supermarket brands	120mg
Fortified Oat Milk/ Drink	Alpro Oat, Oatly, Provitamil Oat Drink	120mg
Fortified Coconut Milk/ Drink	Alpro Coconut Original, KoKo, Supermarket brands	120mg

- Almond, hazelnut and cashew milk alternatives are also available in supermarkets

Please note:

- Organic milk substitutes **do not** usually contain calcium. Please check the label for calcium content
- Rice milk is **not** suitable for children under 5 years

Other Sources of Lactose:

Lactose is not only found in food - it may be used in some tablets and medicines such as:

- Tablets, liquids and cough medicines—check with your pharmacist
- Vitamins and mineral supplements including some calcium supplements
- Toothpastes or mouthwashes may also have lactose added
- Powdered or tablet artificial sweeteners may contain lactose

Often, this level of restriction is not necessary but if you still have symptoms then it is worth some consideration.

Food Ingredients which do not Contain Lactose:

Some food ingredients sound as though they contain lactose but they actually do not. You don't need to avoid:

- Lactic acid E270
- Stearoyl lactylates
- Sodium lactate E325
- Glucona-delta-lactone
- Potassium lactate E325
- Calcium lactate E327
- Cocoa butter

Enzyme Replacement

Commercially available lactase enzyme replacements are an option to help maintain the least restrictive lactose free diet

Lactose in Food

	Foods Allowed	Foods to Avoid / Check Food Label
Bread and Cereals	<p>Bread, breakfast cereals, rice and pasta, oats, wheat, rye.</p> <p>However, please check labels on bread and breakfast cereal packets.</p>	<p>Yoghurt coated muesli bars, milk bread, chocolate coated cereals.</p>
Fruit and Vegetables	<p>Fresh, frozen, tinned or dried fruit and vegetables</p>	<p>Instant mashed potato and vegetables with added milk, white or cheese sauces, vegetables cooked in butter</p>
Meat and Protein Foods	<p>Meat, fish, chicken, turkey, pulses</p> <p>E.g. lentils, chickpeas, eggs</p>	<p>Processed and prepacked meats and fish</p> <p>E.g. sausages, burgers, hot dogs, fish pastes, meat pastes, pies, fish in sauce, fish cakes</p>
Milk and Milk Products	<p>Use a calcium enriched soya/oat/coconut milk for cereals, custards and sauces.</p> <p>Try calcium enriched soya/oat/coconut yoghurt or desserts</p>	<p>Milk (cow, sheep, goat etc.), milk powder, yoghurt, ice-cream, milk desserts, cheese, cream</p>
Fats and Oils	<p>Check the label on margarines for milk free varieties.</p> <p>Margarines you can use include soya margarine</p>	<p>Butter, ordinary margarine, low fat spread</p>
Miscellaneous	<p>Check ingredient labels on packaged foods</p>	<p>Other foods that may contain lactose include: Biscuits (especially cheese flavoured or chocolate coated), cakes, cake mixes, creamed soups, mayonnaise, milk chocolate, milk flavouring (e.g. Ovaltine), flavoured crisps, cheese and snacks. Some powdered artificial sweeteners also contain lactose.</p>

Note: this is not a complete list but gives some guidance as a starting point