

# Manage Lactose Intolerance

## What is lactose intolerance?

Lactose is the type of sugar naturally found in dairy foods.

You may be lactose intolerant if you have cramps, bloating, gas or diarrhea after you eat dairy foods. You have these symptoms because your body isn't making enough lactase. Lactase is what the body makes to break down lactose.

Being lactose intolerant is different than having a milk allergy.

## Why am I lactose intolerant?

As babies, we all make lactase. After about the age of 2 years old, our body begins to make less lactase. Our bodies make less and less lactase over time especially if dairy foods aren't a regular part of the diet.

You may also become lactose intolerant if you have an injury to your small intestines, have celiac disease or inflammatory bowel disease.

Do you avoid dairy products because you may be lactose intolerant?

Fat-free and low-fat dairy products are an important part of a healthy diet.

In fact, you can usually get all the calcium you need in your diet by eating 3 servings of dairy a day. If you don't have dairy foods in your diet, you may be missing out on important nutrients you need for strong bones and good health.

## Try these tips to keep dairy in your diet:

- Eat dairy foods in small amounts. Begin with 4 oz. of milk or yogurt per day and build up from there.
- Eat dairy foods with other foods.
- Start with small servings of dairy (ex. 1/2 cup over cereal) and slowly increase the amount you eat each day.
- Be consistent. Don't skip dairy for a long time (ex. more than a week) or eat a really big serving of dairy at one time. (i.e. two 8 oz. glasses of milk)
- Choose yogurt with live and active cultures
- Choose aged cheeses like cheddar or Swiss

## You can also:

Buy lactose-free or low-lactose milks.

Take tablets that provide lactase right before you eat a dairy food.

Choose other non-dairy foods that are a good source of calcium too.

- Juices, cereals and soymilks with added calcium
- Green leafy vegetables
- Almonds

## Take a Step Today:

I understand dairy foods are an important part of a healthy diet.

Today I will:

Add yogurt with live and active cultures to my diet.

\_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Why choose yogurt?

Most yogurts contain live and active cultures. The live and active cultures in yogurt can help break down lactose and therefore are healthy for digestion.

Look for:

- The Live & Active Cultures seal
- The words "contains live and active cultures"



## What's New?

Some yogurts contain special live cultures called probiotics that provide an additional health benefit. Probiotics help maintain a balance of friendly bacteria in the digestive system and are important for good health.

