



Patient & Family Guide
2022

Low Lactose Eating Guide



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Lactose is the natural sugar found in milk. Some people have trouble digesting lactose. This is called "**lactose intolerance**". Symptoms of lactose intolerance include bloating, gas, cramping, and diarrhea (loose, watery poop).

Most people with lactose intolerance are able to have some milk and milk products.

Follow these steps to learn how much milk or milk products your body can handle. This is called your tolerance level.

Use the “Lactose content of milk and milk products” on page 3 to choose foods with different amounts of lactose.

1. Starting out, follow a lactose-free diet:

- › Avoid all milk and milk products for 2 weeks.
- › This includes milk, cheese, butter, yogurt, ice cream, pudding, cream soups, and cream sauces.

2. After 2 weeks, if your symptoms are better, follow a low lactose diet:

- › Add in low lactose milk and milk products one at a time (in small amounts).
- › If you tolerate the low lactose products, try foods with moderate amounts of lactose. See chart on page 3.
- › Most people are able to digest foods with low and moderate amounts of lactose in small amounts, when taken with other foods.
- › If these foods cause symptoms, you may wish to try taking lactase enzyme pills (such as Lactaid® or Lacteeze®) when you eat these foods. Taking these pills helps your body digest lactose.

3. You may be able to tolerate high lactose foods in small amounts as part of a meal:

- › Add new foods **one at a time**.
- › If you have any symptoms, try a smaller serving size.
- › If you cannot tolerate milk or milk products, you may need a calcium and vitamin D supplement.
- › Talk with your dietitian or primary health care provider about this.

Lactose content of milk and milk products

Low lactose (less than 1 gram per serving)	Moderate lactose (1 to 3 grams per serving)	High lactose (more than 3 grams per serving)
<p>Lactaid® or Lacteeze® milk:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> › 1/2 to 1 cup (125 to 250 ml) <p>Cream:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> › light, half and half, whipping, or sour: 1 tbsp (15 ml) <p>Cheese:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Grated Parmesan: 1 to 2 tbsp (15 to 30 ml) › Camembert, Limburger: 2 to 3 oz (60 to 90 g) › Cheddar, Edam, Gouda, mozzarella, Swiss: 1 1/2 oz (50 g) › Cream cheese: 2 tbsp (30 g) <p>Butter or margarine:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> › 1 tsp (5 ml) 	<p>Milk (whole, 2%, 1%, skim):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> › 1 to 2 oz (30 to 60 ml) for tea or coffee <p>Cheese:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Ricotta, feta, blue: 1 oz (30 g) › Processed cheese slices: 1 to 2 slices › Cottage cheese: 1/2 cup (125 ml) <p>Sherbet:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> › 1/2 cup (125 ml) <p>Yogurt*:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> › 1/2 cup (125 ml) 	<p>Milk (whole, 2%, 1%, skim, buttermilk, goat):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> › 1/2 cup (125 ml) <p>Evaporated and sweetened condensed milk:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> › 1/2 cup (125 ml) <p>Cream soup:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> › 1/2 cup (125 ml) <p>Custard, pudding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> › 1/2 cup (125 ml) <p>Ice cream, ice milk, frozen yogurt:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> › 1/2 cup (125 ml) <p>Sour cream:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> › 1/2 cup (125 ml) <p>Skim milk powder:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> › any amount

*Yogurt has lactose, but it is often well tolerated. This is because the lactose is already broken down by the bacterial cultures used to make it. Choose yogurt that says "lactose free" or says "live bacterial culture" on the label or in the ingredients.

Tips:

- Eat only **small amounts** of foods with lactose at one time. Spread out these foods during the day.
- Eat foods with lactose as **part of a meal** instead of alone.
- **Check food labels** for the following ingredients, which have lactose:
 - › Milk
 - › Milk solids
 - › Whey
 - › Curds
 - › Cheese flavours
 - › Nonfat milk powder
 - › Nonfat milk solids
 - › Sweet or sour cream
 - › Buttermilk
 - › Malted milk

- **Limit regular milk to 1/2 cup (125 ml) at a time.**
 - › Drink it with meals.
- If you are still not able to tolerate milk, you may want to try a lactose-free alternative, such as:
 - › Lactaid® or Lacteeze® milk.
 - › A non-dairy milk alternative like soy, almond, or rice milk . Check the label and choose products that have added calcium and vitamin D.
- You can also try an enzyme supplement, such as Lactaid® or Lacteeze® pills, to help you digest lactose in your meals.
- You can add Lactaid® drops to regular liquid milk to break down the lactose before you drink it.
- Talk with your dietitian or pharmacist for more information about these products.

It can be hard to make changes to your eating habits. If you have any questions, please ask to talk with a dietitian. We are here to help you.

Dietitian: _____

Phone: _____

