

# KNOW THE FACTS ABOUT LACTOSE INTOLERANCE



## Common Questions

### HOW DO I KNOW IF I'M LACTOSE INTOLERANT?

During digestion, the enzyme lactase breaks down lactose (the natural sugar found in milk) for energy. Each person produces a different level of lactase and people with lower levels may experience an upset stomach when they consume more lactose than their body can digest.

### AM I ALLERGIC TO MILK AND OTHER DAIRY FOODS?

No — being lactose intolerant is not the same as having a milk allergy. A milk allergy is caused by a reaction to the protein in milk. This is different from lactose intolerance, which occurs when your body has a hard time digesting the natural sugar (lactose) in milk. If you have a milk allergy you must avoid all dairy foods.

### CAN I BECOME MORE SENSITIVE TO LACTOSE AS I GROW OLDER?

Your body makes an enzyme called lactase to help digest the lactose in milk. As you grow older, your body may produce less of this enzyme than when you were younger, but it's different for everyone and you may not experience any problems.

### DO ALL DAIRY FOODS HAVE THE SAME AMOUNT OF LACTOSE?

No — dairy foods have different amounts of lactose, so choose dairy foods that you enjoy and are right for you!

**THE BOTTOM LINE** — Dairy foods are delicious and nutritious. Here are some **tips for enjoying them:**



Try lactose-free milk and dairy foods. They are real dairy products, just without the lactose. Choose from a variety of flavors and to enjoy as part of a meal or snack.



Eat yogurt with “live, active cultures” to help digest lactose. Try drinkable yogurts and even kefir.



Add naturally-aged cheeses like Cheddar, Colby or Swiss to your meal or snack — they are naturally low in lactose!

### WHY CHOOSE DAIRY?

It's a nutrient powerhouse! An 8-oz glass of milk alone has 13 nutrients, including:



Calcium



Potassium



Protein



Vitamin D

### CHOOSE THE RIGHT DAIRY FOODS FOR YOU

No Lactose

High Lactose



**Lactose-free Milk**  
Milk with lactose broken down



**Cheese**  
Hard cheeses have low or no lactose



**Greek Yogurt**  
Some varieties have less lactose than regular yogurt



**Plain Yogurt**  
Has live cultures that help your body break down lactose



**Kefir**  
Has live cultures that help your body break down lactose



**Milk**  
Try smaller portions to build up your tolerance



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