

## Lactose-Restricted Diet

This diet restricts foods containing lactose, which is the sugar found in milk. The inability to digest lactose comes from a shortage of the intestinal enzyme known as lactase. Lactose intolerance produces symptoms of nausea, abdominal cramps and bloating, intestinal gas, and diarrhea. These symptoms can appear from 15-30 minutes after lactose consumption up to several hours later. This is different than milk allergy, in which the immune system reacts to the proteins in milk as if they were dangerous invaders. Unlike dairy allergy, lactose intolerance will not lead to anaphylaxis.

Lactose intolerance is common in the world population, particularly in people with an Asian, African or Native American heritage.

Lactose intolerance can also be a temporary condition resulting from an illness of the gastrointestinal tract, such as a "stomach flu," a parasite infection, celiac disease, and inflammatory bowel disease, or the intake of certain medications.

The severity of lactose intolerance varies among people. Some people can tolerate small amounts of dairy products without problems, particularly dairy products with lower lactose levels. You can roughly determine your tolerance level to lactose by using the following chart:

Food	Serving Size	GMS. Lactose
Milk/buttermilk	1 cup	10-11
Evaporated milk (diluted)	1 cup	12
Condensed milk, sweetened (diluted)	1 cup	15
Half & half	1 cup	10
Whipping cream	1 cup	6
Sour cream	1 cup	8
Ice cream	1/2 cup	9
Ice milk	1/2 cup	6
Sherbet	1/2 cup	2
Yogurt, low-fat	1 cup	5
Cheese, American	1 ounce	2
Cheese, aged (Cheddar, Swiss)	1 ounce	1
Cream cheese	1 ounce	1
Parmesan cheese	1 ounce	1
Cottage cheese	1/2 cup	2-3
Butter, margarine	1 teaspoon	Trace

There is no cure for lactose intolerance. The best treatment option is avoidance of foods which contain lactose. If one wishes to ingest lactose containing foods, lactase enzyme tablets (Lactaid) can sometimes be effective if used prior to ingestion of these meals.