



# Dairy-Free Diet

## PATIENT HANDOUT

Your practitioner may have recommended you follow a dairy-free diet to identify if dairy or lactose is contributing to your digestive symptoms or other health conditions.

Depending on what your current symptoms are and the underlying health factors that are causing these symptoms, particular dairy products may be reintroduced to your diet after a period of time. Your Practitioner can assess your tolerance and the suitability of certain foods for reintroduction, and will provide further guidance around this.

## There are two different types of dairy intolerance, what is the difference?

Milk is made up of carbohydrates (lactose), fats and proteins (whey and casein).<sup>4</sup> People can be intolerant to the carbohydrate portion (lactose intolerance) or to one or both forms of protein, however, casein can be particularly difficult to digest (casein/dairy intolerance). An intolerance to dairy appears to be primarily due to the casein A1 fraction of milk,<sup>5</sup> for some, but not all people. For those with a dairy intolerance, consumption of A2 dairy may be a suitable alternative, however your practitioner will discuss dairy alternatives with you. A2 dairy includes A2 cow, goat, sheep, and camel products.

### Lactose intolerance

**LACTOSE INTOLERANCE** refers to a reduced ability to digest lactose, a sugar found naturally in milk. To break down lactose, the body utilises an enzyme located in the small intestine called lactase.<sup>1</sup>

Symptoms of lactose intolerance occur one hour to several days after the consumption of dairy and may include abdominal pain, gas, cramping, bloating, diarrhoea or constipation.<sup>1,2</sup>

Lactose intolerance can be classified as either primary lactose intolerance, which is an inherited condition, or secondary lactose intolerance as the result of another condition such as:

- Gastroenteritis
- Parasitic infection
- Coeliac disease<sup>3</sup>

### Casein intolerance (dairy allergy)

**CASEIN INTOLERANCE** refers to a reduced ability to digest casein, a protein found naturally in dairy.

An intolerance to dairy is different to an intolerance to lactose, as people who are intolerant to cow's milk can also be intolerant to milk from other animals such as goats and sheep.<sup>4</sup>

Symptoms of casein intolerance vary and range from mild reactions to anaphylaxis. Some people experience symptoms immediately, while in others, the symptoms can take time to develop.<sup>4</sup> Symptoms include hives, itchy skin, red rashes and eczema, wheezing or persistent cough, asthma, vomiting, and diarrhoea.<sup>4</sup>

## What about other forms of milk and dairy?

Goat, camel and sheep's products contain lactose but in lower levels than cow products. People with mild lactose intolerance are often able to tolerate small amounts of these products.

Those with intolerances to the proteins in cow's milk may be able to tolerate camel, sheep and goat products due to it containing mostly A2 casein protein. However, those with true anaphylaxis to cow's milk and dairy are not recommended to consume any dairy products.<sup>2</sup>



## Is there low or no lactose containing dairy?

Hard and matured cheeses such as cheddar, Edam, Swiss, mozzarella, brie, and feta contain no lactose and are tolerated by people with lactose intolerance.<sup>4</sup> Similarly, butter and cream contain very low levels of lactose and are well tolerated.<sup>3</sup>

Yoghurt is usually well tolerated because the lactose content decreases each day as the bacteria use lactose for energy.<sup>3</sup>

Fresh cheeses such as cottage cheese and ricotta have very low levels of lactose and are usually well tolerated in small amounts.<sup>3</sup>

Lactose-free milk is also an option.<sup>3</sup>

# What you can and can't eat?

## What foods may contain hidden dairy?

Many processed foods may contain hidden dairy and include:

- ⚠ Biscuits/cakes
- ⚠ Chocolate
- ⚠ Muesli bars
- ⚠ Breakfast cereals
- ⚠ Pancake/pikelets
- ⚠ Bread/burger buns
- ⚠ Soups
- ⚠ Scrambled eggs
- ⚠ Crumbed/battered foods
- ⚠ Custard
- ⚠ Quiche
- ⚠ Cheese sauce

 **Always read the label – what should you look out for?**

### INGREDIENTS CONTAINING LACTOSE

- ⚠ Butter
- ⚠ Whey
- ⚠ Margarine
- ⚠ Milk solids
- ⚠ Cheese
- ⚠ Non-fat milk products
- ⚠ Yoghurt
- ⚠ Skim milk powder

### INGREDIENTS CONTAINING MILK PROTEINS

- ⚠ Lactoglobulin
- ⚠ Casein
- ⚠ Lactalbumin
- ⚠ Sodium caseinate

Dairy foods	Alternatives/Substitutes
 <b>MILK</b>	Oat, rice, coconut milk/cream, almond, soy (organic and non-GMO), hemp seed and nut milks. Medium-chain triglyceride (MCT), ketogenic powders. Lactose-free milk if advised by your practitioner.
 <b>YOGHURT &amp; KEFIR</b>	Coconut yoghurt, soy yoghurt. Coconut water kefir. A2 yoghurt may be suitable. Lactose-free yoghurts if advised by your practitioner.
 <b>CHEESE</b>	Vegan cheese, soy cheese, cashew cheese. Consider – sheep and goats cheese/feta if tolerable.
 <b>ICE CREAM</b>	Non-dairy gelati, fruit sorbet, coconut/almond/soy ice-cream.
 <b>CHOCOLATE BARS &amp; BLOCKS</b>	Vegan chocolate, some dark chocolate, dairy-free carob.
 <b>BUTTER &amp; MARGARINE</b>	Olive oil, flaxseed oil, ghee, coconut butter/oil, nut butters or spreads, avocado, tahini, hommus.
 <b>DIPS &amp; CREAM CHEESE</b>	Hommus, cashew cheese, guacamole, bean spreads.
 <b>DESSERTS</b>	Chia pudding, avocado-based chocolate mousse, keto-based non-dairy desserts.



## Home made almond milk



### INGREDIENTS

- 1/2 cup raw almonds\* (soaked overnight)
- 500 mL filtered water
- 1 whole pitted date (optional for sweetened version)
- 1 tsp vanilla extract (optional)

### METHOD

- Combine soaked almonds, water and optional extras in a high-speed blender.
- Blend until smooth and creamy.
- Using a nut milk bag or cheese cloth, strain liquid into a mixing bowl. Squeeze the bag/cheese cloth until all of the liquid is extracted. The pulp can be put aside and used for protein balls or baking.
- Transfer the milk to a bottle or jar with a lid and refrigerate for up to 4 to 5 days. Shake well before use.

\*Almonds can be substituted for other nuts e.g. cashews, hazelnuts etc.

## Tips for dairy-free eating

You can find dairy alternatives and the above suggestions in the health food section of your local supermarket or at your local health food shop.

- ✓ Read all labels.
- ✓ Notify restaurants of your dietary requirements when booking.
- ✓ Soy cheese sometimes contains casein. Read the label.
- ✓ Mayonnaise and salad dressings are traditionally made without dairy products but many commercially prepared products now contain some dairy. Read the label.
- ✓ Variety is the spice of life and the key to a healthy diet. Try not to rely on one type of substitute for dairy. For example, if you are currently using a lot of soy products, consider rotating with almond or coconut-based products to get a wide variety of nutrients.



References available on our website via:  
<https://bit.ly/DFDietHO> or scan QR code

