

Hidden Lactose

Reading the ingredient listing on food labels will alert you to whether a food product contains milk or milk products. Items that may include lactose:

- Bread and other baked goods
- Doughnuts
- Processed breakfast cereals
- Instant potatoes, soups, and breakfast drinks
- Margarine
- Lunch meats (kosher meats do not contain lactose)
- Salad dressings
- Candies and other snacks
- Dips
- Chocolate
- Mixes for pancakes, waffles, biscuits, cookies, cakes, etc.
- Some nondairy products (powdered coffee creamer and whipped topping)
- Many vitamin and mineral supplements
- Many medications
- Frozen French fries
- Hot dogs, sausages
- Liquid and powdered milk-based meal replacements
- Powdered eggs

Resources for People with Lactose Intolerance

Dairy-Free Cookbook, by Jane Zukin. Prima Publishing Co., Rocklin, CA 1998.

The Milk Sugar Dilemma: Living with Lactose Intolerance, by Sherlyn Skinner and Richard A. Martens. East Lansing, MI: Medi-Ed Press, 1987

National Digestive Diseases Information Clearinghouse (NDDIC)
<http://digestive.niddk.nih.gov/ddiseases/pubs/lactoseintolerance/>

LactoseIntolerant.org
The Ultimate Lactose Intolerant Informational Website

Obtain “Lactose-Free Shopping,” free from University of Nevada Cooperative Extension.

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**AN APPLE
A DAY**

Lactose Intolerance: Learning to Live With It

Fact Sheet 99-17 (replaces 92-12)
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University of Nevada
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What is lactose?

Lactose is a type of sugar found in milk and milk products. It is also called “milk sugar.” Lactose gives milk its pleasant, sweet taste.

Unfortunately, some people are unable to digest lactose and get sick after eating foods containing lactose.

Why does lactose make me sick?

The body needs a substance, known as lactase, to break down lactose. Sometimes the digestive system is unable to make enough of this substance to properly break down lactose.

This condition, known as lactose intolerance, occurs in about 70 percent of the world’s population. As many as 30 to 50 million Americans have some degree of lactose intolerance. It is most common in African Americans, Asians, Native Americans and people of Mediterranean origin.

Problems caused by lactose intolerance range from mild stomach upset, swelling, and gas, to nausea, stomach cramps and diarrhea. Symptoms may last as long as 10 to 12 hours. The severity of symptoms depends on how sensitive you are to lactose and how much lactose you eat.

Will I always experience symptoms when I eat something with lactose?

Not necessarily. Some people can tolerate small amounts of dairy products eaten throughout the day. However, drinking a large glass of milk or eating a lot of cheese may cause some of the symptoms described. To test your body’s ability to tolerate lactose, try consuming small glasses of milk (4 ounces) or small amounts of milk products several times a day and note if you feel any discomfort. If gas, bloating, diarrhea, or other symptoms occur, limit those foods. Remember, foods acceptable for some people may not be well-tolerated by others.

Are there any dairy products that have less lactose?

Products such as Lactaid® milk, cheese and cottage cheese contain lactase, the substance needed to break down lactose. These products are usually 70 to 90% lactose-reduced. Many people with lactose intolerance are able to eat these foods without side effects. You can also take tablets of lactase to help improve the digestion of lactose-containing foods. Lactase is also available in drop-form for addition to foods. Examples are Lactaid®, Lactrase®, and Dairy Ease®.

How can I get the calcium my body needs if I can’t drink a lot of milk?

Calcium is important for maintaining strong bones. Most of our dietary calcium comes from milk and milk products, so those who are lactose intolerant are often not meeting their calcium needs. Eating milk and milk products treated with lactase as well as other calcium-containing foods will help. However, without milk products, calcium supplements may be necessary. Ask your doctor or registered dietitian about the need for additional calcium.

How much calcium does my body need?

The amount of calcium needed varies with age. Some research recommends that post-menopausal women need to increase their calcium intake to 1,500 milligrams (mg) per day or 1,200 mg if on hormonal therapy.

DIETARY REFERENCE INTAKE		
CATEGORY	AGE	CALCIUM milligrams (mg/day)
Children	1-3	500 mg
	4-8	800 mg
Adolescents	9-18	1300 mg
Adults	19-50	1000 mg
Adults	51+	1200 mg
Pregnant &	up to 18	1300 mg
Lactating	19-50	1000 mg

CALCIUM-CONTAINING FOODS*

DAIRY PRODUCTS	Calcium Content milligrams(mg)
Lactaid milk, 1 cup	300 mg
Skim milk, 1 cup	300 mg
Cheddar cheese, 1 oz.	205 mg
Cottage cheese, ½ cup	65 mg
Ice Cream/ice milk, 1 cup	175 mg
Yogurt (nonfat plain), 1 cup	490 mg
VEGETABLES (cooked)	Calcium Content
Broccoli, 1 cup	90 mg
Chinese cabbage (bok choy) 1 cup	160 mg
Collard greens, 1 cup	225 mg
Dandelion greens, 1 cup	150 mg
Kale, 1 cup	90 mg
Mustard greens, 1 cup	105 mg
Turnip greens, 1 cup	200 mg
FISH/SEAFOOD(cooked)	
Salmon with bones (canned), 3 oz.	200 mg
Sardines, 2	90 mg
LEGUMES (cooked)	
Great Northern beans, 1 cup	120 mg
Navy Beans 1 cup	130 mg
Pinto beans, 1 cup	80 mg
NUTS AND SEEDS	
Almonds, ½ cup	195 mg
Filberts (hazelnuts), ½ cup	130 mg
Sesame kernels, ½ cup	85 mg
Sunflower kernels, ½ cup	80 mg
OTHER	
Health Valley Soy Moo®	
Molasses, blackstrap, 2 tablespoons	345 mg
Tofu (processed with calcium salts), ½ cup	435 mg
Corn tortilla, lime-processed	40 mg

* Calcium content data from product Nutrition Facts labels and from the USDA National Nutrient Database at <http://www.nal.usda.gov/fnic/foodcomp/search>. (Values vary with methods of processing and preparation.)