Low-Lactose Food Choices

What is lactose?
Lactose is a natural sugar found in milk and dairy-based ingredients and products. Some children feel sick after eating foods that have lactose in them and are considered “lactose intolerant.” Symptoms include abdominal pain, excess gas, bloating and diarrhea (or constipation for some). Avoiding foods with lactose may be helpful for your child. Each child differs in how much lactose they can digest before feeling sick.

Use the chart below to help select foods that are low in lactose. In general, your child should avoid foods high in lactose. Foods low in lactose can be eaten sometimes. Lactase enzyme tablets such as Lactaid can sometimes help children digest lactose. Ask your child’s doctor if lactase enzymes may help your child.

How do I read food labels?
Read the ingredient list on packaged foods. Even foods that you think wouldn’t contain milk or daily can contain lactose. This includes breads, lunch meats, frosting, packaged sauces, gravies, salad dressings, baked goods, snack bars, candy and cream soups. Look for these words on labels that mean the food contains lactose:

• Milk solids or nonfat milk solids
• Whey
• Lactose
• Margarine
• Sweet or sour cream
• Buttermilk
• Malted milk
• Sweetened condensed milk

Helpful hints
• Use small portions of foods that are moderate or high in lactose.
• Kosher foods marked “pareve” or “parve” are milk free.
• Soy, rice, coconut, oat, and almond milks, lactose-reduced milk, or Acidophilus milk are often well tolerated by people who are lactose intolerant. These products are good substitutes for regular milk.
• Choose lactose-free or dairy free margarine and butter products available in stores.
• Lactase enzyme (such as Lactaid) tablets, capsules or drops may help your child digest foods with lactose in them. Follow the instructions on the package for information on how much enzyme to take.
• Ask your pharmacist or the manufacturer if medications or vitamins that your child takes contain lactose. If they do, ask for another type.
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How can I make sure my child gets enough calcium?
Ask your child’s doctor or dietitian if you are concerned about your child getting enough calcium in their diet. They can provide you with information on how much calcium your child needs, and a list of non-dairy foods that contain calcium.

Dairy products

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lactose free</th>
<th>Low lactose</th>
<th>Moderate lactose</th>
<th>High lactose</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(no lactose per serving)</td>
<td>(0-4 grams per serving)</td>
<td>(5-9 grams per serving)</td>
<td>(10-30 grams per serving)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Lactose-free milk (1 cup) including: whole, 2% and non-fat</td>
<td>• Lactose-reduced milk (1 cup)</td>
<td>• Yogurt, low-fat (½ cup)</td>
<td>• Milk (1 cup) including: whole, low-fat, non-fat, goat’s milk, buttermilk, evaporated milk (undiluted), sweetened, condensed milk (undiluted), chocolate milk, chocolate drink mixes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Lactose-free and dairy free margarines</td>
<td>• Cottage cheese, 1% milk fat (½ cup)</td>
<td>• Half and half (½ cup)</td>
<td>• Milkshakes (fast-food restaurant)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Nondairy whipped topping</td>
<td>• Sour cream (½ cup)</td>
<td>• Velveeta Cheese (1 ounce)</td>
<td>• Powdered milk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Nondairy creamers</td>
<td>• Cheese (1 ounce): American, bleu, cheddar, cream cheese, parmesan, brie, gouda, Swiss, provolone, colby, ricotta or mozzarella</td>
<td>• Ice cream (½ cup)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Yogurts and ice creams made from non-dairy milk substitutes</td>
<td>• Butter and margarine (1 teaspoon)</td>
<td>• Ice milk (½ cup)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Cream cheese (1 ounce)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Whipping cream (½ cup)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Non-dairy drinks

• Milk substitutes such as soy, nut or rice milks
• 100% fruit juice, tea, fruit drinks
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**Protein foods**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Beans, peas and lentils (plain)</td>
<td>•</td>
<td>• Breaded or battered meat, fish, or poultry</td>
<td>• Creamed meat, fish or poultry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Peanut butter, all nuts and seeds</td>
<td>•</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Meat, fish, poultry, tofu, eggs – cooked, plain or canned without milk or milk products</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Vegetables and fruits**

- Fresh fruits and vegetables
- Vegetable juice or soup
- Canned fruits and vegetables, plain
- Tomato paste or sauce without cheese
- Tomato and spaghetti sauce with cheese
- Breaded vegetables
- Creamed vegetables and creamed vegetable soups
- Scalloped or butter-added vegetables (packaged)
- Instant potatoes
- Cheesy vegetables

**Grains**

- Rice, rye, cornmeal, barley or pasta (plain)
- Hot or cold cereal (plain)
- Rice cakes, graham crackers
- Cereals, crackers and bread (read labels carefully)
- English muffin, bagel, or bread prepared without milk or milk products
- Plain popcorn, pretzels, chips
- Ranch or cheese flavored chips and snacks
- Biscuits, muffins, rolls, donuts, pancakes and waffles (if made with milk products)
## Fats and sweets

<table>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Oils, shortening, lard, real mayonnaise</td>
<td>• Butter and margarine (1 teaspoon)</td>
<td>• Caramel, toffee, butterscotch</td>
<td>• Milk chocolate candy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Olives</td>
<td>• Sherbet, orange (½ cup)</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Cakes and frosting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Sugar and sugar substitutes</td>
<td>• Animal crackers</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Gravies and cream sauces</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Angel food cake, fruit roll ups</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

## Sample menu

### Breakfast
Orange juice, banana, toast with jelly, oatmeal made with water

### Lunch
Vegetable and noodle soup, pear, crackers with peanut butter, lactose-free milk

### Dinner
Salad, baked chicken breast, baked potato, dinner roll, angel food cake with berries, lactose-free milk

### Snacks
Dried fruit, popcorn, animal crackers, vegetable sticks, lactose-free milk

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**To Learn More**
- Nutrition 206-987-4758
- Ask your child’s healthcare provider
- www.seattlechildrens.org

**Free Interpreter Services**
- In the hospital, ask your child’s nurse.
- From outside the hospital, call the toll-free Family Interpreting Line 1-866-583-1527. Tell the interpreter the name or extension you need.