

Dairy Free Dieting

A dairy free diet contains no milk, cheese, butter, cream cheese, cottage cheese, sour cream, ice cream, whey, casein, or foods that contain **any** of these ingredients. Also it removes any Goat products, Bison and Sheep's milk products.

Why do people follow this diet?

There is a substantial difference between a lactose intolerance condition and a dairy allergy. Many people who suffer from one condition, often have the other without knowing it as the symptoms are completely different.

People who react to lactose are called "lactose-intolerant." They lack adequate amounts of an enzyme (called lactase) needed to digest milk sugar. Unlike people who are allergic to dairy products, most lactose-intolerant people can consume dairy products that naturally contain only traces of lactose (such as hard cheese) or those that have been treated to break down lactose (e.g., Lactaid™ milk). Many lactose-intolerant people can also eat yogurt without suffering, despite the high amount of lactose found in yogurt. The ability of many lactose-intolerant people to consume yogurt without getting sick used to baffle scientists. Now, we know that the bacteria in most yogurt products (except frozen yogurt) consume most of the lactose as soon as the yogurt moves from the stomach to the intestines. These bacteria are so efficient that they often break down the lactose before the lactose-intolerant person has a chance to react to it.

Milk allergy is an **immune system response to the presence of milk protein in the body**. The body perceives the protein as "foreign" and proceeds to mount an attack against it, which results in the symptoms of an allergic reaction. Cow's milk is the most common cause of food allergy in infants and young children.

What are the symptoms?

The symptoms of lactose intolerance occur within a few hours of ingestion of milk or milk products and include bloating, abdominal pain, gas, and diarrhea. The severity of lactose intolerance varies greatly among individuals. Lactose-intolerant people who experience these symptoms even when they eat only dairy products that contain very little lactose may require a diet free of all dairy products to avoid these symptoms.

Milk *allergy* symptoms may include any of the common symptoms of food allergies, including skin rashes or hives, gastrointestinal distress, breathing problems, or many other possible symptoms. Auto-immune disorders such as Rheumatic conditions, inflammatory bowel disorders and others are being shown to be directly related to dairy protein allergies. Anaphylaxis, a life-threatening allergic reaction, is only rarely triggered by consumption of dairy products, even in people who are allergic to dairy. Most importantly, an allergic dairy reaction or symptom can occur up to a week to ten days after ingesting the dairy item, thus eliminating and "cause and effect" that may otherwise be apparent.

Key Points to remember about Dairy Allergies...

- Casein and Whey proteins (dairy proteins) are proteins specific to a foreign species and are not found naturally in humans. Therefore it makes sense that our immune systems would recognize this protein as being foreign and would create antibodies against it, much the same way as it creates antibodies to vaccines and flu shots.
- Dairy allergy symptoms are often very different than lactose intolerant symptoms and can also be quite delayed in their onset from the time of ingestion. Therefore you don't get the immediate cause and effect response that many with lactose intolerant symptoms have. For example, something you eat on a Monday, may not cause symptoms in you until Thursday or Friday, thereby making it impossible for you to recognize the reaction.
- **It only takes a few molecules** of allergic protein to create hundreds of thousands or even millions of antibodies to it. The antibodies can then stay in the system for weeks to months. Therefore, simply reducing the amount or frequency of intake of dairy protein items is often not sufficient to decrease the number of circulating antibodies to dairy protein in the system and hence the allergic symptoms to that allergy. It usually takes a **complete elimination** of the allergic protein for an extended period of time in order to see improvements.
- Much the same way as a vaccine can create antibodies that will stay in your system for months and offer protection against the virus; a dairy protein antibody reaction will stay in your system for several weeks. It takes several weeks free and clear of ALL dairy protein in order for the number of circulating antibodies to begin to decrease, and then the symptoms of the dairy allergy to begin to resolve.
- Many of the Dairy Free Diets online and in the literature suggest an elimination of 1-2 weeks is sufficient to diagnose the problem. **Most cases actually require at least 4-6 weeks.**
- You must be patient on this program, it can take up to 4-6 weeks before symptoms **may start** to improve.

What do I need to avoid?

To avoid milk and milk products ask about ingredients at restaurants and others' homes, read food labels, and become familiar with the technical or scientific terms for milk. **The following list is not complete.** Consult with a healthcare professional if you are planning to omit milk from your diet or your child's diet. Many Americans receive the majority of their calcium intake from dairy products. Therefore, when switching to a dairy-free diet, taking calcium supplements is often advisable.

- Baked goods such as pancakes, biscuits, muffins, cakes, crackers, baking mixes (read labels for dairy product ingredients)
- Au gratin foods
- **Butter**
- Buttermilk
- **Caseinate**
- Candy (especially creams and chocolate)
- **Casein**
- **Cheese**
- Cheese sauces
- Chocolate milk and drinks
- Coffeemate
- Cold cuts (such as bologna)
- Cottage cheese
- **Cream**
- Creamed or scalloped foods
- Curds
- Dry cereals containing milk powder, such as some granolas
- Dry milk powder
- **Dry milk solids**
- Evaporated milk
- Fondues
- Grated cheese
- Gravies (some)
- Ice cream
- Malted milk
- **Margarine** (most)
- Meat loaf and patties (some)
- **Milk**: whole, skim, 1%, and 2%
- Milk shakes
- Milk sherbets
- Nondairy creamers (most)
- Non-kosher luncheon meats (some)
- Ovaltine
- Puddings (most)
- Sausage (some)
- Sodium caseinate
- Wieners (some)
- **Whey**
- White sauces
- Yogurt
- **Gelatin Containing Foods** (Jello, Gummie candies)

Critical Assumptions for this diet treatment to work...

You need to assume everything has Dairy protein added to it, until you can prove otherwise by reading and researching the ingredients list on everything buy, cook and eat. This is a critical step in the success of the Dairy Elimination Diet, as dairy can be hidden in many foods you would otherwise not suspect.

“Dairy Free” on a label doesn’t necessarily mean “Dairy Protein Free”... It usually means Lactose Free... Dairy allergies aren’t dependant on Lactose.

Best bets

Milk substitutes:

- [Soy milk](#)
- [Rice milk](#)
- [Almond milk](#)
- [Coconut Milk](#)
- [Hemp Milk](#)
- Other grain beverages and dairy substitutes

Nondairy products:

- [Nondairy ice cream](#) (Coconut, Soy, Rice)
- Nondairy chocolate (Dark Chocolate)
- Nondairy cheese (Daiya Brand)
- Nondairy yogurt (Coconut, Almond, Soy, or homemade)
- Other milk-free or nondairy products

Good Books, Websites and Resources...

The No Milk Page

www.nomilk.com

Food Allergy Network

www.foodallergy.org

Nondairy Milk Recipes—Leave the Cow’s Milk for the Calves

www.veganmania.com/pages/non_dairy_milk_recipes.htm

Go Dairy Free

www.godairyfree.com

Dairy Free Tips...

Milk alternatives...

- Most grocery stores now carry an array of soy, almond, coconut, hemp and rice milks. These are fine (except if you may have a soy intolerance along with your suspected dairy issue). These milks come in a variety of flavours. Some taste better than others and you may want to try small sizes of each until you find some you enjoy.
- Almond and coconut milks are available at the natural health food section of most grocery stores and are a great alternative to regular milks. They come in plain, vanilla, and chocolate varieties. Also, they come in sweetened and unsweetened varieties. The sweetened Chocolate tastes almost identical to regular chocolate milk and is a great alternative for kids. It also makes great hot chocolate. The Vanilla works extremely well in cereals and hot drinks. The plain works extremely well in baking and cooking (Baked goods, mashed potatoes, etc.) Soy milk will tend to curdle a little when heated and cooked whereas Almond doesn't and is therefore preferable for many of these applications.
- For cream sauces, chowders and such; you can try Coconut milks. They are quite a bit sweeter but the taste can be altered very easily using a little **thai fish sauce** to cut the sweetness. You can make wonderful cream sauces and chowders with Coconut milk.

Important: You won't get these recipes and experiments right the first time or two you try them, so don't give up that easily. Persist and you will ultimately find alternatives that you'll actually crave

Cheese Alternatives...

Unfortunately for most of us, this is where the "dairy free world" lets us down. There are not many good tasting and "functional" alternatives for cheese. Many don't taste as they should and many don't cook or melt as they should. That said, here are some "options"...

- The best replacement available to date is a brand called DAIYA Cheese. It is hard to find but is worth the effort to try and find. It is the closest to regular cheese with respect to taste and texture that I have found. It's found in Mozzarella and Cheddar varieties. This product is free of Dairy and Soy so it will suit everybody.
- "Tofutti" brand cream cheese and sour creams. This brand is available at many grocery stores locally and various health food stores. This brand also makes some nice tasting "ice cream" treats (ice cream bars, etc.)
- There are several varieties of block and slice style soy and rice based cheeses available at the Natural Health food section of the Superstore and various health food stores. Some taste better than others and it will take some experimentation to identify ones that suit your tastes and needs. They generally work ok in sandwiches and other non-cooked versions.

- **Important: remember to read the label on ALL foods regardless of whether or not you think it is dairy protein free. Some of the Soy cheeses, yogurts and such actually have casein and or whey in them and cannot be eaten on this diet.**

Yogurts and Ice creams...

- There are some soy yogurts and puddings on the market that taste ok. Some of the others that don't can easily be "doctored" to taste quite good by adding fruit, fruit juices, cocoa, etc.
- Try adding some chocolate soy or almond milk to a plain soy yogurt and blending it, if you get the proportions correct and it can taste a little like a chocolate cheesecake mousse !
- There are several dairy free ice cream alternatives that taste quite like the real thing, although once again, you will have to sift through some different brands and types to find ones that suit your cravings. Some superstores sell a coconut milk ice cream that is extremely rich and satisfying. Many of the soy ice cream alternatives taste just like the real thing as well. Open your mind and try some!

Butter

You need to stay away from butter and most margarines as well. Even if they appear to be "dairy free", many have Whey in them. Olive oil can be used as a substitute for many things butter and margarine are used for during cooking. For breads, you can try some olive oil spiced dipping mixtures. Olive oil and balsamic vinegar poured onto a plate and dipped bread tastes great for dinner rolls. A "fancier" recipe for special occasions, try the recipe below, it's fabulous...

<http://www.recipezaar.com/Carrabbas-Bread-Dipping-Spice-53876>

The best butter replacement to use would be one called **Becel Vegan** and is found in most grocery stores along with the other margarine's. It actually cooks and tastes much better than regular margarine's, and has none of the nasty stuff in it that regular margarine's have. It's not trans-hydrogenated and is made from plant oils.

The keys in finding suitable and enjoyable options with the things mentioned above are as follows...

- **"Test" many different products so purchase smaller sizes of each until you find the one that suits you, so you don't have to throw away much if you need to throw away any**
- **Understand and accept that you won't enjoy all of them. This is ok, don't get discouraged !! Just move on to the next and so on.**
- **If you purchase and try something that doesn't suit, before throwing it out think of easy ways to make that enjoyable (ie. Add fruit or if honey if not sweet enough, add hot sauce if not spicy enough, add water if something is too thick, etc.) Make the food work for you, and be enjoyable for you.**
- **Keep trying new things until you have discovered some things you actually enjoy and crave. Make it your project to make this diet enjoyable while on it, otherwise, you will have difficulty staying on the diet.**