

### Lactose Intolerance

Lactose is the name for the main sugar found naturally in milk. Lactose is also in milk products, such as cream, cheese, yogurt puddings, custard pies and ice cream. In order to be absorbed, an enzyme called lactase is needed to break lactose into smaller parts. About 30-50 million people in the United States have difficulty breaking lactose into the smaller parts. This condition is called lactose intolerance, often caused when the production of lactase is blocked by infections of the intestines, medications, radiation treatments or diarrhea.

Symptoms of lactose intolerance can occur when there is not enough lactase enzymes present to break down the lactose. Common symptoms are diarrhea, gas, bloating, cramps or nausea. These gastrointestinal discomforts can be noticed 30 minutes to two hours after eating or drinking items that have lactose in it. Even if you never had a problem digesting milk products, you can develop this problem when you are HIV-infected. If you suspect that you are lactose intolerant, try not having any milk products for two to three days. If you still feel bloated, have cramps, gas or diarrhea after the test period; lactose intolerance is probably not your main problem.

The amount of lactose varies in different products and individuals can often tolerate different amounts of lactose. Moderation is the key. Sometimes just having less than your usual amount can reduce the symptoms. For example, a 16-ounce glass of fluid milk may cause symptoms, while an 8 ounce cup presents no problems. For some, having fluid milk by itself will be a problem while having milk in cereal or with a meal is well tolerated. Aged-cheese is often less of a problem, as is yogurt with "live cultures," which has lactose in it, but it is already broken down. Choose low-lactose foods such as aged cheese as a calcium-rich milk alternative.

#### Lactose in Foods

<u>Milk - 8 oz.</u>	<u>Yogurt, plain - 8 oz.</u>	<u>Ice Cream/ice milk - 8 oz.</u>	<u>Sour Cream - 4 oz.</u>	<u>Processed Cheese - 1 oz.</u>
12-13 grams	12-13 grams	6-7 grams	4-5 grams	2-3 grams

Milk products are a great source of calcium, riboflavin and protein, and these nutrients are important to people with HIV. A low dietary intake of calcium can cause or lead to a reduction in bone density. Loss of bone density has been a recently recognized metabolic complication of HIV infection. To ensure adequate calcium intake, try lactose-reduced milk such as Lactaid or the store brand of lactose free or reduced lactose milk or yogurt with cultures. Milk labeled Sweet Acidophilus or soymilk is another option. Choose one that is fortified with calcium and vitamin D. Lactase enzyme preparations such as Dairy-Ease or other generic versions are available in tablets, capsules, or drops. These products may be taken when you eat foods containing lactose or added to regular milk to help break down the lactose. These products can be found in the supermarket or drug store. Read food labels and look for milk and lactose among the contents as well as any of the following items, which will contain varying amounts of lactose.

#### Foods Containing Lactose

Casein	Yogurt	Cookies	Pancakes
Whey or Curds	Margarine	Candies	Processed breakfast cereals
Dry milk solids	Instant potatoes	Snacks	Powdered coffee creamer
Nonfat dry milk powder	Instant soups	Pie crusts	Powdered whipped toppings
Half and half	Biscuits	Protein bars	Salad dressings
Cheese	Bread & baked goods		Instant breakfast drinks

Lactose is used as the base for more than 20 percent of prescription drugs and about 6 percent of over-the-counter medicines. Lactose is in many types of birth control pills and some tablets for stomach acid and gas. Read all the ingredients of every medication you are taking and discuss with your doctor how to cope with your intolerance to lactose.

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#### For more information or to sign up for a nutrition class call:

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