

WHEN MILK DOESN'T DO THE BODY GOOD

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We think of milk as one of the healthiest food choices on the grocery shelf, especially for young children who are growing and building strong bones. But, for many people, drinking milk can actually *cause* health problems. In fact, without even knowing it, you could be among the millions of Americans who are lactose intolerant. If you or someone you know suffers from bloating, gas, and diarrhea, pay attention. There are simple solutions to this common problem, and you don't even have to stop drinking milk.

What Is Lactose?

The sugar that makes milk sweet - lactose - is difficult for us to digest. We all need an enzyme called lactase to break it into 2 simple sugars that are absorbed more easily in the intestines. Without lactase, lactose passes intact into the colon where it becomes food for the bacteria that hang out there. As they snack on it, those bacteria release gases that cause pain and bloating. Typically, babies have a lot of lactase available so they can drink breast milk with ease. But as we age, we produce less of the enzyme, leaving us prone to lactose intolerance. And some people, including African, Asian, and Native Americans are often born lactose intolerant.

How Do I Know If I Am Lactose Intolerant?

It's easy. Take a break from milk and other lactose containing products for several days and see if you feel better.

How Do I Know What Contains Lactose?

It's not just in milk. Lactose is used as a bulking agent in pills and as a flavoring product in foods such as hot dogs, cereals, salad dressings and potato chips. Surprisingly, there is not much lactose in dairy products like butter and yogurt, because enzymes in them help digest it. To find out if a product contains lactose, look for whey, curds, milk products, or milk powders in the ingredient list.

What Can I Do To Avoid It?

There are several products that will help you enjoy milk and calcium and their associated health benefits without experiencing unnecessary pain and discomfort.

- If symptoms are mild, try drinking milk in smaller amounts and with a meal, which will aid absorption.
- Try lactose-free cow's milk or soy milk.
- Look for enzyme pills or droplets that you take to help digest the lactase.
- If you decide to go milk free, make sure you are taking a calcium supplement to get the amount you need to prevent osteoporosis.
- <http://www.doctoroz.com/videos/when-milk-doesnt-do-body-good>
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