



ARTICLE

LACTOSE INTOLERANCE

WHAT IS LACTOSE INTOLERANCE ?

Children who have this kind of discomfort after consuming dairy products might have lactose intolerance, which is caused by problems digesting lactose, the main sugar in milk and milk products.

Lactose is a sugar found in foods that many children love milk and dairy products, such as frozen yogurt and cheeses. The list of other foods containing lactose is long and includes some breads, cereals, and frozen or canned foods. This process can cause cramps, abdominal pain, gas, and diarrhoea about 30 minutes to 2 hours after consuming any foods or drinks that contain lactose.

WHAT CAUSES LACTOSE INTOLERANCE?

Lactose intolerance happens when the small intestine doesn't make enough of a digestive juice, or enzyme, called lactase. Without enough lactase, the body can't break down or digest lactose.

Lactose intolerance can happen to both children and adults. Some common causes include:

- Digestive diseases or infection
- Injury to the small intestine
- Family history of lactose intolerance.
- A baby being born too early, also called a premature baby.

HOW DO THEY PRESENTED WITH?

Symptoms begin about 30 minutes to 2 hours after having foods or drinks containing lactose. Each child's symptoms may vary. Symptoms may include:

- 🚫 Upset stomach or nausea
- 🚫 Cramps
- 🚫 Bloating
- 🚫 Belly (abdominal) pain
- 🚫 Gas
- 🚫 Loose stool or diarrhoea
- 🚫 Vomiting

TREATMENT OF LACTOSE INTOLERANCE?

- Low lactose diets for infants

If your baby is diagnosed with lactose intolerance, an infant formula product that is low in lactose may be recommended.

- 🚫 Soy formula is not recommended for infants younger than six months old.

If you are breastfeeding your baby, even if you reduce lactose in your own diet, lactose will still be present in your breastmilk.

THE FOLLOWING FOOD AND DIET TIPS CAN HELP.

- cheeses with very small lactose content – brie, camembert, cheddar, colby, edam, fetta, gouda, havarti, mozzarella, parmesan, Swiss and Tilstat
- yoghurt – the bacteria in yoghurt breaks down the lactose so it's usually fine for your child to eat
- calcium-fortified soy products – soy yoghurt, soy milk, soy ice-cream and soy cheese
- lactose-free cow's milk
- butter and cream – these contain only small amounts of lactose and are usually fine to eat
- bread, cereals, fruit, vegetables, meat and other protein foods

- full-fat milk – the fat in full-fat milk gives your child’s body longer to digest lactose.

WATCH OUT FOR THESE FOODS:

- milk ice-cream and milk desserts
- cream cheese, processed cheese and cheese spread
- muesli bars
- instant mashed potato and vegetables with added milk or white sauces.

CHECK THE INGREDIENTS IN THESE FOODS:

- biscuits, cakes and cake mixes
- soups
- mayonnaise
- milk chocolate.

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