

# A Guide to Managing MILK ALLERGY



Cow's milk allergy (usually just called "milk allergy") is a very common food allergy. A milk allergy is an immune system reaction to milk protein. It can cause a severe allergic reaction called anaphylaxis [anna-fih-LACK-sis]. If allergic to milk, remove milk from the diet to prevent allergic reactions. This includes all milk products, as well as lactose-free versions of milk products. Milk allergy is different than lactose intolerance (an inability to digest the milk sugar known as lactose).

## What Are Symptoms of an Allergic Reaction to Milk?

Symptoms of anaphylaxis may include hives, vomiting, or trouble breathing. The treatment for anaphylaxis is injectable epinephrine.

### Common signs and symptoms of anaphylaxis in children, teens, and adults:

- Skin rash, itching, hives
- Swelling of the lips, tongue, or throat
- Shortness of breath, trouble breathing, wheezing (whistling sound during breathing)
- Stomach pain, vomiting, or diarrhea
- Uterine cramps
- Feeling like something awful is about to happen

### Common signs and symptoms of anaphylaxis in infants and toddlers:

- Skin rash, itching, hives
- Swelling of the lips, tongue, or throat; ear pulling, scratching or putting fingers in ears; tongue thrusting or pulling
- Coughing, wheezing, hoarse cry, noisy breathing, chest or neck tugging, nostril flaring
- Stomach pain, vomiting, diarrhea, spitting up, hiccups
- Arching back, bringing knees to the chest
- Rubbing eyes, itchy or red eyes

### Other signs and symptoms of a milk allergy may include:

- Blood in stools, especially in infants
- Loose stools
- Upset stomach, stomach cramps
- Failure to thrive (slow to grow or gain weight)

## How Can I Prevent Milk Allergy Reactions?

Milk can be found in almost any type of food. Foods that contain milk include ice creams, frozen desserts, cakes, pies, cookies, cream sauces, pasta dishes, casseroles, mashed potatoes, breaded meats, and much more. But there are ways you can successfully manage your milk allergy. This can be done by:

- Working with your doctor
- Reading labels
- Being aware of cross-contact (when foods come into contact with each other and may transfer an allergen into a food that shouldn't have it)
- Clearly communicating with people who prepare your food or provide care or accommodations

### Reading Labels

By law, food companies must label their products clearly if they contain milk. When reading labels for milk, look for milk to be labeled either in parentheses after an ingredient in the ingredient list or in a statement under the ingredient list. Sometimes it will be in **bold**.

For example:

- Whey (milk)
- Contains: Milk

Some food companies put advisory statements on their labels. They may say "may contain milk" or "made in a facility with milk." These labels can be confusing and may not tell you the actual risk of the product. Ask your doctor if it is OK to eat products with advisory labels.



If a food item does not have a label, you can't read it, or you have any doubts, don't eat it. Always read the entire label every time. Food companies may change their recipes.

Some foods and products do not have to follow the allergy label law and may contain hidden milk:

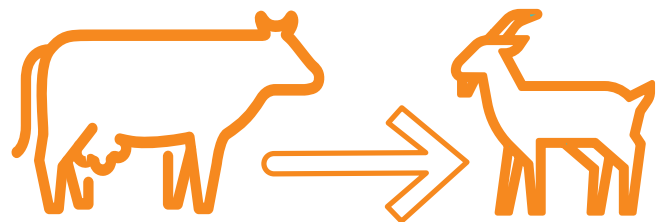
- Arts and crafts supplies
- Prescription and over-the-counter drugs
- Cosmetics and personal care items (such as, makeup, lotions, and soaps)
- Alcohol
- Toys
- Pet food
- Food served in restaurants, cafeterias, or by other food service providers

Most states in the U.S. do not have regulations regarding food allergies and restaurants. Ingredients in restaurant foods may vary. Cross-contact is also more likely. Look for places that have food allergy policies and allergy menus. Give the staff a chef card that alerts them to your allergy and lists milk.

Some foods may be labeled with terms that may imply that the food is free of milk. But they may contain milk ingredients and be unsafe for milk allergy. Always read the ingredient labels even on foods with these terms:

- Non-dairy
- Dairy-free, milk-free
- Vegan
- Animal-free dairy/milk
- Plant-based
- Kosher/kosher dairy

**Goat's and sheep's milk** – If you are allergic to cow's milk, there is a very high chance you will react to milk from other mammals, such as goats or sheep.



## Cooking and Baking

You can find a lot of milk substitutes made from legumes, seeds, nuts, and grains. These include rice, hemp, soy, sunflower, oat, coconut, almond, and cashew milks.

You can usually use any of these as a one-for-one replacement for milk in recipes. For example, if a recipe calls for one cup of milk, you can use one cup of soy milk. Unsweetened and unflavored versions tend to work best in recipes.

When cooking, you can substitute non-dairy margarine or oils in equal amounts for butter.

Milk-free yogurt, sour cream, ice cream, and cream cheese products are available at many grocery stores. Be sure to check the labels to make sure they don't contain milk ingredients.



Kids with Food Allergies has many resources to help you manage food allergies. Search our Safe Eats® Allergy-Friendly Recipes Collection of almost 1,500 member-submitted recipes at: [kidswithfoodallergies.org/recipes](http://kidswithfoodallergies.org/recipes)

## Preventing Cross-Contact

Cross-contact occurs when a food allergen comes in contact with food or an item not intended to contain that allergen.

If you have both “safe” and “unsafe” versions of similar items (like cow’s milk and soy milk) in your home, take steps to make sure they are easily marked. If the containers look the same, create a system for your family to prevent accidents. It may be helpful to use colored stickers or to store the food with the allergen on a different shelf. When you’re cooking, use separate utensils and kitchenware. For example, don’t use the same knife to cut cow’s milk cheese as you use to cut a sandwich made without milk ingredients.



Nutrients provided by mammal milk include protein, calcium, vitamin D, vitamin A, vitamin B12, riboflavin, and phosphorus. Make sure your milk-free diet includes foods with these nutrients.



## Can I Eat Baked Milk or Eggs?

About 70% of children with a milk allergy can eat baked or extensively heated milk. Talk with your doctor about whether or not you can have baked milk before you attempt to introduce it. There is a chance for a severe allergic reaction.

People with a milk allergy can eat eggs even though they are sold in the dairy aisle in stores. Eggs are not dairy. Dairy products are only made with milk.



Sign up for KFA’s community to stay up to date on milk allergy news: [kidswithfoodallergies.org/join](http://kidswithfoodallergies.org/join)



# MILK INGREDIENT LIST



**Milk can appear on food labels under many different names. To avoid milk in foods and other products, it helps to learn the different names of milk. If you see these ingredients on a label or menu, it means it contains milk protein and is not safe for someone with milk allergy. If the product is regulated by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), the word “milk” must appear on the label.**

## Contains Milk

**Milk** – acidophilus milk, buttermilk, buttermilk blend, buttermilk solids, cultured milk, condensed milk, dried milk, dry milk solids (DMS), evaporated milk, fat-free milk, fully cream milk powder, goat’s milk, Lactaid® milk, lactose free milk, lactose, lactic acid starter culture, low fat milk, malted milk, milk derivative, milk powder, milk protein, milk solids, milk solid pastes, nonfat dry milk, nonfat milk, nonfat milk solids, pasteurized milk, powdered milk, sheep’s milk, skim milk, skim milk powder, sour milk, sour milk solids, sweet cream buttermilk powder, sweetened condensed milk, sweetened condensed skim milk, whole milk, 1% milk, 2% milk, non-dairy products

**Animal-free dairy** – animal-free dairy protein, non-animal whey protein, animal-free milk

**Butter** – artificial butter, artificial butter flavor, butter, butter extract, butter fat, butter flavored oil, butter solids, dairy butter, natural butter, natural butter flavor, whipped butter

**Casein and caseinates** – ammonium caseinate, calcium caseinate, hydrolyzed casein, iron caseinate, magnesium caseinate, potassium caseinate, sodium caseinate, zinc caseinate

**Cheese** – cheese (all types and in all forms), cheese flavor (artificial and natural), cheese food, cottage cheese, cream cheese, imitation

cheese, cheese dip, vegetarian cheeses with casein

**Cream** – whipped cream, whipping cream, heavy cream, cream cheese

**Curds**

**Custard**

**Dairy product solids**

**Galactose**

**Ghee**

**Half & Half**

**Hydrolysates** – casein hydrolysate, milk protein hydrolysate, protein hydrolysate, whey hydrolysate, whey protein hydrolysate

**Ice cream, ice milk, sherbet**

**Lactalbumin, lactalbumin phosphate**

**Lactate solids**

**Lactitol monohydrate**

**Lactoglobulin**

**Lactose**

**Lactulose**

**Milk fat, anhydrous milk fat**

**Nougat** (can contain milk chocolate)

**Pudding**

**Quark**

**RECALDENT™**

**Rennet, rennet casein**

**SIMPLESSE®** (fat replacer)

**Sour cream, sour cream solids, imitation sour cream**

**Whey** – acid whey, cured whey, delactosed whey, demineralized whey, hydrolyzed whey, powdered whey, reduced mineral whey, sweet dairy whey, whey, whey protein, whey protein concentrate, whey powder, whey solids

**Yogurt** (regular or frozen)

**Yogurt powder**

## Milk is Sometimes Found in

**Flavoring, natural flavoring**

**Caramel flavoring**

**High protein flour**

**Lactose**

**Nisin preparation or preservative**

**“Non-dairy” products** (may contain casein) such as non-dairy creamer

**“Plant-based” foods**

**Rice cheese**

**Soy cheese**

**Vegan foods** – a new animal-free milk protein may be found in vegan ice creams or other products

## Should Be Safe

These milk derivatives should be safe for most people with a milk allergy but talk with your doctor before eating.

**Lactoferrin**

**Tagatose (Naturlose®)**



For more information and other resources, please visit: [kidswithfoodallergies.org/milk](https://kidswithfoodallergies.org/milk)

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# MILK ALLERGY Chef Cards

Take all food allergies seriously. • Read all ingredient labels.

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When you eat out, use these chef cards to let the restaurant staff know how to help you avoid allergic reactions to milk.

**I have a milk allergy!  
I must avoid all foods that contain milk.**

**Contains Milk**

Animal-free dairy, animal-free milk, non-animal whey protein	Dairy product solids	Lactose
Butter	Galactose	Lactulose
Casein & caseinates	Ghee	Milk, milk fat
Cheese	Half & Half	Nougat
Cream, whipped cream	Hydrolysates	Pudding
Curds	Ice cream, ice milk, sherbet	Quark
Custard	Lactalbumin	RECALDENT™
	Lactate solids	Rennet
	Lactitol monohydrate	SIMPLESSE®
	Lactoglobulin	Whey
		Yogurt

**Milk is Sometimes Found in**

Flavoring, natural flavoring	"Non-dairy" products
Caramel flavoring	"Plant-based" foods
High protein flour	Rice cheese, soy cheese
Lactose	Vegan foods
Nisin preparation or preservative	

Please check all foods for the ingredients on this card, including cooking oils, marinades, sauces, and seasonings. Use separate and clean utensils, equipment, surfaces, and gloves.

**KFA** Kids with Food Allergies For more detailed information and a list of resources, please visit: [kidswithfoodallergies.org/milk](http://kidswithfoodallergies.org/milk)  
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**CHEF: FOOD ALLERGY ALERT**

**I have food allergies!**  
In order for me to avoid an allergic reaction, I **must avoid** all food that contain:

<input type="checkbox"/> Milk	<input type="checkbox"/> Egg	Other Allergens: _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Peanut	<input type="checkbox"/> Tree Nuts	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Wheat	<input type="checkbox"/> Gluten	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Sesame	<input type="checkbox"/> Soy	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Fish	<input type="checkbox"/> Shellfish	_____

**Before preparing my food, please take these steps to help keep me safe. I appreciate you!**

- Read labels to look for the allergens listed on the front of this card. Please check all foods including cooking oils, marinades, sauces and seasonings.
- Please use separate and clean utensils, equipment and surfaces to prepare my meal.
- Wash hands with soapy water and change gloves.

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