



## Lactose Intolerance



### Overview

This is a digestive disorder. With it, your body can't fully digest lactose. That's a sugar found in dairy milk and milk products. To break down lactose, your small intestine makes an enzyme called "lactase." But if you are lactose intolerant, you don't make enough lactase. Consuming milk and dairy can cause unpleasant problems.

### Causes

What causes this disorder? Well, there are a few ways it can happen. It can be linked to the genes you inherited from your parents. It can be caused by problems like celiac disease, Crohn's disease or an overgrowth of bacteria in your intestines. It can develop when your body makes less lactase as you grow older. It can also develop after an injury or surgery on the small intestine. Ask your doctor for a full list of causes and risk factors.

### Symptoms

What are the signs of lactose intolerance? After you eat or drink something containing lactose, you may feel bloated. You may have gas, abdominal cramps, and diarrhea. And, you may have nausea and vomiting.

### Managing lactose intolerance

There is no cure for lactose intolerance. You can manage it by limiting or avoiding milk and dairy products. Choose products labeled as lactose-reduced or lactose-free. You may benefit from enzyme tablets or liquid drops designed to help you digest lactose. Your doctor will create a care plan that's right for you.