

# RETHINK REMOVING DAIRY

## DIGESTIVE DISCOMFORT

Digestive problems leading people to unnecessarily cut out or limit dairy foods from their diet

Digestive problems such as bloating, cramping, gurgling, rumbling, the need to burp, and erratic bowel habits can be caused by any number of factors such as stress, medications, inadequate exercise and food intolerances<sup>1</sup>.

Sometimes we make dietary lifestyle changes such as cutting out or limiting the intake of dairy foods in a quest for symptom relief without consulting our health professional. By doing so, we may miss out on essential nutrients and health benefits that come from eating dairy foods, potentially having a negative impact on our future health.

## DAIRY FOODS FOR HEALTH

### Health benefits of dairy foods

The milk, yoghurt, cheese and/or alternatives food group is one of the five food groups recommended for good health. Not only are they a great source of calcium, they also contain protein, riboflavin, vitamin B12, vitamin A, potassium, iodine and phosphorus. According to the 2013 Australian Dietary Guidelines, consuming dairy foods, including milk, yoghurt and cheese can protect us against heart disease and stroke and can reduce the risk of hypertension and some cancers. Dairy foods may also help reduce the risk of type 2 diabetes and may contribute to stronger bones<sup>2</sup>.

### Dairy foods in Australian diets

Approximately 9 out of 10 Australian adults are consuming less than the recommended intake of the milk, yoghurt, cheese and/or alternatives food group<sup>3</sup> and over 50 per cent of people are failing to get enough calcium in their diet<sup>4</sup>.

## RECLAIM THE DAIRY YOU LOVE

### 21-day milk-drinking intervention<sup>5</sup>

If you have cut out dairy foods completely from your diet due to digestive problems, try a 21-day milk-drinking intervention to build up your tolerance.

### How to do the 21-day milk-drinking intervention



#### WEEK 1

**1/2 CUP** of milk  
twice a day  
with meals



#### WEEK 2

**2/3 CUP** of milk  
twice a day  
with meals



#### WEEK 3

**1 CUP** of milk  
twice a day  
with meals

People who complete this intervention see an improvement in symptoms and go on to enjoy milk and other dairy foods such as yoghurt and cheese as part of their everyday meals and snacks.

## GET BALANCE BACK IN YOUR LIFE

### 'Do Dairy Differently'

If you are limiting your intake of dairy foods because you feel it may be causing you digestive discomfort, there are many ways you can 'do dairy differently' to ensure you don't miss out on the health benefits of dairy foods.

### How to 'Do Dairy Differently'



Spread your intake of dairy foods over the day



Have dairy foods with meals



Have smaller amounts of dairy at a time

## WHAT ABOUT LACTOSE INTOLERANCE?

### How is lactose intolerance diagnosed?

It's important to discuss any digestive problems with your GP so they can advise on any tests that may be required to confirm lactose intolerance. Remember, digestive problems can be caused by a number of different factors, so avoid self-diagnosing lactose intolerance and eliminating dairy foods from your diet, as there could be other medical issues or lifestyle factors causing similar symptoms.

### People with lactose intolerance can still enjoy dairy foods

For people with lactose intolerance, the Australian Dietary Guidelines recommend:



Up to 250ml of milk may be well tolerated if it's consumed with other foods or throughout the day



Most hard cheeses are virtually lactose-free



Yoghurt contains 'good' bacteria that help to digest lactose



Lactose-free milks are available and contain similar nutrients to regular milk

1 Bolin, TD and The Gut Foundation. Understanding Gas and Bloating. Randwick, NSW: Digestive Diseases Research, 2011.  
2 National Health and Medical Research Council. Australian Dietary Guidelines, Canberra: Commonwealth of Australia, 2013.  
3 Australian Bureau of Statistics. 4364.0.55.012 - Australian Health Survey: Consumption of Food Groups from the Australian Dietary Guidelines, 2011-12. 2016. Available from: <http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@nsf/Lookup/by%20Subject/4364.0.55.012~2011-12>.  
4 Australian Bureau of Statistics. 4364.0.55.007 - Australian Health Survey: Nutrition First Results - Foods and Nutrients, 2011-12. 2015. Available from: <http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@nsf/Lookup/by%20Subject/4364.0.55.007~2011-12~Main%20Features~Calcium~714>.  
5 O'Connor L, Eaton T, Savaiano D. Improving Milk Intake in Milk-Averse Lactose Digesters and Maldigesters. Journal of Nutrition Education and Behavior. 2015;47(4):325-330.e1.

