



**Royal Surrey  
County Hospital**  
NHS Foundation Trust

# **Cows' milk protein free diet for breast feeding mothers**

**Nutrition & Dietetics Department**

**Patient information leaflet**

Some infants cannot tolerate cows' milk protein due to cows' milk protein allergy. Consuming these products via breast milk can result in a variety of symptoms including eczema, wheeze, rash, constipation, diarrhoea, vomiting and gastro-oesophageal reflux. In order to control these symptoms, it has been advised that you avoid all foods containing cow's milk whilst you are breast feeding your baby. This leaflet will give you information to help you manage your diet.

Some doctors also recommend that breast feeding mothers avoid soya protein. Please check with your doctor or dietitian.

## What foods contain cows' milk protein?

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Many foods made from cows' milk are obvious such as:

- Cream
- Butter and ghee
- Crème fraiche
- Fromage frais
- Cheese
- Yoghurt
- Ice-cream

All of these foods contain cows' milk protein and need to be avoided.

If milk is an ingredient in a packaged food, it has to be labelled as containing milk under current EU legislation. It is important to read the list of ingredients – the 'allergy advice' is not always accurate. **When you buy tinned, packet or any other processed foods, the ingredients list should always be checked.**

The list below shows ingredients which are derived from cow's milk protein and therefore should be avoided.

- Milk solids
- Non-fat milk powder
- Milk powder
- Artificial cream
- Cheese powder
- Buttermilk
- Butterfat
- Shortening
- Hydrolysed casein
- Hydrolysed whey
- Hydrolysed whey sugar
- Whey syrup sweetener
- Whey powder
- Casein (curds), caseinates
- Lactose

Lactic Acid is not made from milk and so is allowed.

Medicine and tablets may contain lactose as filler. Check medications with your pharmacist. This is not important unless lactose intolerance is also a problem.

The following table provides guidance on foods which do not contain cows' milk and are therefore allowed and those which need to be avoided or which need to be checked:

Foods allowed	Foods to avoid / foods to check the label
<p><b>Milk and Milk Products</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ soya/rice/oat/nut/hemp, coconut milk</li> <li>■ yoghurts/desserts made from the above milks</li> <li>■ dairy free spread e.g. Pure® or Vitalite dairy free®</li> <li>■ soya or oat cream</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ full-fat, semi-skimmed, skimmed, sterilised, UHT, dried, condensed or evaporated milks</li> <li>■ cheese, cheese spread, cottage cheese</li> <li>■ yoghurt, fromage frais, crème fraîche, dairy ice cream</li> <li>■ goats'/ sheeps' milk, goats' cheese, buffalo mozzarella</li> <li>■ coffee creamers, Coffee-Mate®</li> </ul>
<p><b>Fats and Oils</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ milk free spread see above</li> <li>■ vegetable oil</li> <li>■ lard</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ butter, butter milk, butter fat</li> <li>■ margarines and low fat spreads</li> <li>■ ghee</li> </ul>
<p><b>Meat and Alternatives</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ all fresh &amp; frozen items</li> <li>■ including beef, pork, lamb, chicken, turkey</li> <li>■ lentils, beans, pulses</li> <li>■ Quorn®, Tofu, soya beans</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ sausages, sausage rolls, beef burgers, pies, ready meals, goujons, luncheon meat, hot dogs, tinned meat, processed meat, meat in sauce</li> <li>■ meat in breadcrumbs e.g. chicken nuggets, Kiev's</li> <li>■ pre-packed meats e.g. ham, chicken roll</li> </ul>

Foods allowed	Foods to avoid / foods to check the label
<p><b>Fish</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ all fresh, frozen or tinned fish in oil or brine</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ fish in batter or breadcrumbs e.g. fish fingers, goujons, fish cakes, fish in cream/milk based sauce</li> </ul>
<p><b>Eggs</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ boiled, poached, fried scrambled or omelette made using milk substitute/milk free spread</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ scotch eggs</li> <li>■ quiches</li> <li>■ scrambled egg made with cows' milk</li> </ul>
<p><b>Vegetables</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ all frozen, fresh and dried</li> <li>■ mashed potatoes using milk free margarine/milk substitute</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ vegetables in breadcrumbs, batter or canned in sauce</li> <li>■ vegetables in cream sauce</li> <li>■ potato waffles, potato shapes, potato croquette, instant mash potato</li> <li>■ baked beans</li> <li>■ potato crisps</li> </ul>
<p><b>Fruit and Nuts</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ all fresh, frozen, dried or tinned fruit in juice or syrup</li> <li>■ plain, roasted or salted nuts</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ fruit pies or crumbles</li> <li>■ chocolate or yoghurt coated fruit</li> </ul>
<p><b>Breakfast Cereals</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Weetabix®, cornflakes, Rice</li> <li>■ Krispies®, Cheerios®,</li> <li>■ Most breakfast cereals</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ muesli</li> <li>■ chocolate covered breakfast cereal</li> </ul>

Foods allowed	Foods to avoid / foods to check the label
<p><b>Flours, Grains and Pasta</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ wheat, rye, rice, barley, oats, sago, semolina, cornflour, tapioca, plain popcorn</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ macaroni cheese, lasagne, filled pasta</li> <li>■ tinned spaghetti and pasta shapes in sauce</li> <li>■ savoury rice</li> <li>■ toffee popcorn</li> </ul>
<p><b>Bread</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ wholemeal, granary, white bread</li> <li>■ ciabatta, pittas, crumpets, poppadum</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ milk bread</li> <li>■ naan bread</li> <li>■ butter croissants, brioche</li> <li>■ Bread made in bread makers</li> </ul>
<p><b>Biscuits and Cakes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ home-made biscuits and cakes</li> <li>■ Ryvita®, oat cakes, rice cakes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ manufactured or homemade cakes, biscuits and flapjacks</li> <li>■ doughnuts, pancakes, chocolate coated biscuits, shortbread, cereal bars</li> <li>■ cheese crackers, cheesy snacks, cream crackers</li> </ul>
<p><b>Puddings and Desserts</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ custard, blancmange and rice pudding made with milk substitute</li> <li>■ jelly, sorbet and plain juice ice lollies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ milk puddings</li> <li>■ cheesecake, soufflés, crème brulee, instant custard mixes,</li> <li>■ rice pudding, mousse, Instant Whip®, pies, crumbles</li> <li>■ and sponges, trifle</li> </ul>

Foods allowed	Foods to avoid / foods to check the label
<p><b>Sugar, Preserves &amp; Confectionery</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ sugar, jam, honey, marmalade, treacle</li> <li>■ mincemeat</li> <li>■ mints, plain fruit lollies, marshmallows, wine gums, fruit pastilles</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ lemon curd, chocolate spread</li> <li>■ fudge, toffee, caramel, nougat, soft centred sweets</li> <li>■ dark/milk/white chocolate</li> <li>■ butter icing</li> </ul>
<p><b>Sauces, Soups &amp; Spreads</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ soups made without milk/cream/butter</li> <li>■ homemade gravy, Bisto®</li> <li>■ Marmite®, Oxo®, Bovril®</li> <li>■ mayonnaise, salsa, ketchup, mustard</li> <li>■ peanut butter, tomato based sauces</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ tinned and packet soups, cream of soups</li> <li>■ some gravy powders</li> <li>■ instant sauces, cream or cheese based sauce, seafood sauce</li> <li>■ meat/fish paste</li> <li>■ yoghurt dips, guacamole, horseradish sauce</li> <li>■ salad cream, salad dressing</li> </ul>
<p><b>Drinks</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ water, mineral water</li> <li>■ fruit juice, squash, fizzy drinks</li> <li>■ tea, coffee, cocoa made with milk substitute, fruit/herbal teas</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ ready-made milkshakes</li> <li>■ Bournvita®, Ovaltine®, Horlicks®, drinking chocolate</li> <li>■ milkshake syrup/powder</li> </ul>

## How do I make sure I am getting enough calcium?

Milk is an important source of nutrients, especially calcium, for breast feeding mothers. **Whilst you are breastfeeding, your calcium requirement is approximately 1250mg each day.** When eliminating cow's milk from the diet you need to make sure you are meeting your calcium requirements through other foods and supplementation.

### Supplementation

You are unlikely to meet your requirements for calcium through your diet. So you will need to take a calcium supplement. Below are some examples:

Osteocare Liquid®: 2 tsps twice daily = 600mg calcium, 7.6ug vitamin D

Pregnacare® Breastfeeding 2 tablets a day = 700mg calcium, 10ug vitamin D

These supplements also contain vitamin D which is needed by the body to use the calcium you take in. Vitamin D is also found in oily fish such as mackerel, tuna, salmon, trout and sardines. Your body also manufactures vitamin D from the sunshine on the skin during the spring and summer months in the UK.

The recommendation in the UK is 10ug/day of vitamin D in autumn/winter or all year round if at risk of deficiency. See Vitamin D on NHS choices for more information on people at risk of vitamin D deficiency.

Use the information below to choose food and drink rich in calcium to ensure you are meeting your calcium requirements.

Food	Average portion size	Calcium (mg)
<b>Milk and dairy alternatives</b>		
Non-dairy milks e.g. soya, rice, oat, coconut, nut milk fortified with calcium	200ml/1 glass	240
Soya cheese	30g/1 slice	135
Soya yoghurt	125g	150

Food	Average portion size	Calcium (mg)
<b>Meat and fish alternatives</b>		
Tinned sardines with bones	100g	500
Pilchards	60g	150
Tinned salmon no bones	100g	90
Prawns	60g	90
Baked beans	150g/3 tbsp	70
Kidney beans	80g/2 tbsp	50
Egg	1	32
Sesame	1 tbsp	80
Mixed nuts	60g	40
Plain peanuts	50g	30
Brazil nuts	10g/3 nuts	17
Tofu	60g	300
Chick peas	70g/2 tbsp	32
Hummus	150g	60
<b>Bread, cereals</b>		
White bread	2 slices	130
Wholemeal bread	2 slices	80
Hovis Best of Both®	2 slices	360
Warburtons® sliced white bread	2 slices	160

**Organic milk substitutes are not fortified with calcium and therefore not recommended.**

**A list of cow's milk free foods may be available from your supermarket.** Contact customer services for an up-to-date free from list or look on your supermarket's web-site and ensure you keep your list up-to-date.

## Reference sources

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- Dietary Reference Values for Food and Nutrients for the United Kingdom. Department of Health and Social Subjects no 41. HMSO1991
- Diagnostic Approach and Management of Cows' Milk Protein in Infants and Children: ESPGHAN GI Committee Practical Guidelines. S. Koletzko et al. JPGN. Volume 55, Number 2, August 2012

## Useful websites

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- Allergy UK: [www.allergyuk.org](http://www.allergyuk.org)
- Food Standards Agency: [www.food.gov.uk](http://www.food.gov.uk)
- Vitamin D – NHS choices:  
[www.nhs.uk/Conditions/vitamins-minerals/Pages/Vitamin-D.aspx](http://www.nhs.uk/Conditions/vitamins-minerals/Pages/Vitamin-D.aspx)

## Department disclaimer

This leaflet is produced by the dietetic department at Royal Surrey County Hospital, NHS Foundation Trust. It is not a substitute for dietary advice given to a specific individual by a dietitian. If you need to see a dietitian, ask your GP or consultant for a referral.

Please note that the information in this leaflet was correct at time of writing. The ingredients of manufactured products can change.

If you have any questions about the information in this leaflet please contact the dietetic department at the address below:

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## Dietetic Department contact details

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If you have any questions about the information in this leaflet please contact the Dietetic Department at the address below:

### **Nutrition & Dietetics Department**

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## PALS and Advocacy contact details

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Contact details of independent advocacy services can be provided by our Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) who are located on the right hand side as you enter the main reception area. PALS are also your first point of contact for health related issues, questions or concerns surrounding RSCH patient services.

**Telephone:** 01483 402757

**Email:** [rsc-tr.pals@nhs.net](mailto:rsc-tr.pals@nhs.net)

**Opening hours:** 9.00am–3.00pm, Monday to Friday

If you would like information documents in large print, on tape or in another language or form please contact PALS.

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