

My baby might have a cow's milk protein allergy

Information on what to do if my baby is breast fed



Introduction

Your doctor has advised you to exclude cow's milk from your baby's diet for a trial period of 2-4 weeks to see if your baby has an allergy to cow's milk. This information leaflet will guide you on how to do this. If there is no improvement in symptoms during this trial period then it is unlikely your baby has an allergy to cow's milk and you and your baby should return to a normal diet. Please speak to your Health Visitor or GP if you remain concerned about your child's symptoms.

If symptoms do improve, then diagnosis of cow's milk allergy still needs to be confirmed so that your child is not on a restricted diet for any longer than they have to be. The only way to do this is to re-introduce milk into your baby's diet after a 2-4 week milk-free trial period. If their symptoms return the allergy is confirmed.

If cow's milk allergy is confirmed, please inform your GP or health visitor who can arrange a referral to the paediatric dietitians.

If your child has had a severe or immediate reaction (such as lip or facial swelling or wheeze) to milk or any other food, do not re-introduce normal formula or milk containing foods at home and speak to your doctor.

What do I do?

If you are breastfeeding and your baby has not yet started weaning, you should avoid milk in your own diet for 2-4 weeks, as detailed in the table below, and look for any change in your baby's symptoms.

Foods you need to avoid

Table 1

- Milk (cow's, sheep and goat milk) all varieties - fresh, UHT, condensed, evaporated, dried
- Milk solids, modified milk, skimmed milk powder, milk sugar, milk protein, non-fat milk solids
- Butter, margarine, butter milk
- Cheese
- Cream, artificial cream, creme fraiche
- Ice Cream, yoghurt, fromage frais

Milk-free alternatives

Table 2

- Dairy free margarine & spreads e.g. Pure, Vitalite, supermarket own brand
- Dairy free cream e.g. Oatley cream, Soya cream
- Soya or coconut yogurts & desserts e.g. Alpro, Koko, supermarket own brand
- Soya cheese e.g. Pure soya slices, Redwood Cheezly (cheddar style, edam style or melting mozzarella), supermarket own brand
- Soya, oat, rice, coconut, almond or hemp milk*

***opt for a calcium enriched variety and aim for 1 pint (600mls per day) to provide enough calcium for you.**

What if my breastfed baby has started weaning?

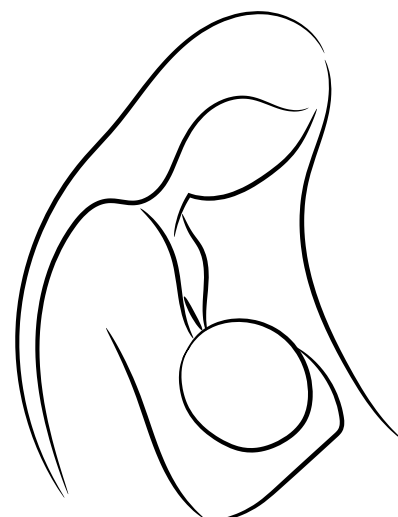
If your baby only showed symptoms of reacting to milk when weaning started, **you do not need to avoid milk** in your own diet, but your baby should avoid any milk in weaning foods. Please see Table 1 for items that should be avoided. Check the labels on all packets or tinned foods before giving them to your baby.

If your child has recently started weaning, continue to expand the range of fruit and vegetables in their diet until the 2-4 week trial has been completed. If your child is already established on a variety of solids, continue to offer these but do not introduce any further foods until trial period complete.

Please note that soya products are only suitable for babies over the age of 6 months.

What if the symptoms are better after the 2-4 week trial?

If the symptoms do improve, the diagnosis still needs to be confirmed so that you and your baby are not on a restricted diet for any longer than you have to be. The only way to do this is to re-introduce milk to your own diet to see if your baby's symptoms return.



How do I re-introduce milk?

1. Ensure your baby is well when reintroducing milk into your own diet or theirs. If you are unsure please discuss with your GP / health visitor.
2. If your baby is still exclusively breast fed then re-introduce milk to your own diet.
3. If your baby is taking solids, then you can re-introduce milk containing solids to their diet.
4. Do not introduce any other new foods during this period.
5. **If your baby shows a return of symptoms at any time during re-introduction then resume a milk free diet and speak to your GP / Health Visitor to arrange a referral to the paediatric dietitians.**
6. Your GP or health visitor will refer you to a paediatric dietitian for dietary assessment and advice.
7. **If your baby has not developed any symptoms during the re-introduction of milk they do not have a milk allergy and you and / or your baby can return to a normal diet.**

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact us.

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