

Gluten-Free Doesn't Mean Dairy-Free

People with celiac disease must adhere to a strict, 100% gluten-free diet. Most of them, however, can safely consume dairy products. Oftentimes those suffering from celiac disease and non-celiac gluten sensitivity mistakenly believe that they should avoid dairy. Experts caution against cutting dairy out of the diet as dairy foods provide 75% of the calcium in the American diet as well as 8 other essential nutrients.



In some cases, people with celiac disease who have damage to the intestinal lining do have a temporary intolerance to lactose. It is recommended that they choose lactose-free options. In addition, to protect the nutritional health of the individual and minimize long-term nutritional complications, dairy foods such as yogurt, natural cheeses and foods containing low amounts of lactose should be slowly re-introduced to the diet in small amounts. Including two to three servings per day of dairy foods in the diet of celiac patients is an important way to help prevent deficiencies of calcium and vitamin D, and to reduce the risk of osteoporosis and calorie-protein malnutrition.

Enjoy Dairy Again With These Tips:



SIP IT

Start with a small amount of milk daily and increase slowly over several days or weeks to find the amount that works with your tolerance.



STIR IT

Mix milk with other food, such as soup or cereal; blend with fruit; or drink with meals. Solid foods help slow digestion and allow the body more time to digest lactose.

TRY IT

Opt for lactose-free milk and milk products, like Lactaid. These real milk products have lower amounts of or zero lactose and provide the same nutrients as regular dairy foods.



SLICE IT

Top sandwiches or crackers with natural cheese such as Cheddar, Colby, Queso Blanco, Monterey Jack, mozzarella and Swiss. These hard cheeses have little to no lactose, which makes it easier to digest without discomfort.



SPOON IT

Enjoy yogurt. Traditional yogurt and Greek-style yogurt contain live and active cultures (healthy bacteria) which help digest lactose.

Did You Know:

Dairy Is Naturally Gluten-Free

Milk and dairy foods are naturally gluten-free and are extremely versatile as parts of meals, ingredients in recipes, and snacks. Dairy foods like milk, cream, yogurt and cheese can add flavor to gluten-free products like pasta, rice, granola, cereal and breads. Single-serve dairy foods like string cheese, pudding, yogurt and yogurt smoothies make nutritious, gluten-free "snacks on the go." Some dairy foods like cheese spreads or ice creams may have flavorings or additives that contain gluten, so it is important to read the ingredient list on nutrition labels carefully.

