

Your Dietitian's Details:

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DOES MY CHILD HAVE COW'S MILK PROTEIN ALLERGY?

Advice for parents and carers attending their GP or Health Visitor with a child who may have delayed symptoms of cow's milk protein allergy



Some children are allergic to the protein in cow's milk. This is called cow's milk protein allergy or CMPA. Symptoms can appear immediately or may be delayed.

If your child has immediate symptoms that can appear within minutes or up to 2 hours later, they should be referred to hospital. Symptoms include swollen lips or tongue and hives (nettle rash). **This leaflet is not for children with immediate symptoms.**

If your child has delayed symptoms, your GP or Health Visitor may advise you. Delayed symptoms can take 48 to 72 hours to appear. These can include diarrhoea, poor weight gain, constipation, colic, vomiting, blood or mucous in stools.

How do I know if my child has a delayed allergy to cow's milk protein?

There are no reliable tests to diagnose delayed CMPA. A trial of a cow's milk free diet is needed. This should be followed by a retriial with cow's milk after 4 weeks. If symptoms return this confirms an allergy to cow's milk protein.

Remember this trial can be done at home unless your child has had an immediate reaction to cow's milk.

An allergy to cow's milk is not the same as lactose intolerance. Products which are lactose free **are not free from cow's milk protein.**



What Next?

Try to keep your child on the cow's milk protein free diet for 4 weeks.

If symptoms do not improve, it is unlikely your child has a cow's milk protein allergy. You should discuss this with your GP or health visitor.

If your child's symptoms get better, they likely have had a cow's milk protein allergy. After 4 weeks you need to re-challenge with normal formula to confirm this.

Slowly introduce normal infant formula

Replace 1fl/oz of your child's special formula with 1fl/oz of normal formula in each bottle on the first day. If your child has no symptoms after each trial, go ahead with the next day's trial.

For example, for a baby on 6 fl oz bottles of special formula:

Day 1	5 fl oz special formula, 1 fl oz normal infant formula
Day 2	4 fl oz special formula, 2 fl oz normal infant formula
Day 3	3 fl oz special formula, 3 fl oz normal infant formula
Day 4	2 fl oz special formula, 4 fl oz normal infant formula
Day 5	1 fl oz special formula, 5 fl oz normal infant formula
Day 6	6 fl oz normal infant formula

If any of your child's previous symptoms return, go back to making up their bottles with just the special formula. Inform your GP or health visitor who will refer you to a paediatric dietitian.

If your child is bottle fed, a special formula (cow's milk protein free) will be prescribed **and tried for 4 weeks.**

- If your child is less than 6 months old they may be prescribed Nutramigen 1 with LGG or Aptamil Pepti 1
- If your child is more than 6 months old they may be prescribed Nutramigen 2 with LGG or Aptamil Pepti 2

Introduce the new formula

These formulas smell and taste different to normal infant formulas. Some babies will accept the special formula feeds straight away.

Others need gradual introduction to help accept the taste better.

On the first day, for each bottle, replace some of your child's normal formula with the special formula.

Example of how to start the special formula for a baby on 4fl oz feeds

Day 1	1 fl oz special formula mixed with 3 fl oz of normal formula
Day 2	2 fl oz special formula mixed with 2 fl oz of normal formula
Day 3	3 fl oz special formula mixed with 1 fl oz of normal formula
Day 4	4 fl oz special formula

Soya formulas should be avoided. These are not recommended for babies under 6 months old. Following introduction of the special formula, infants may have loose, green stools. This is quite normal.

If your child has already started on solids, these should also be milk free. Check labels carefully.

Cow's milk can be present in many forms.

Avoid foods that contain:

Dairy Foods	
Cow's milk, all kinds – evaporated, dried, fresh, UHT, condensed	
Lactose free formula e.g. SMA LF, Enfamil-o-lac	
Lactose free milk, cheese, yoghurts, desserts	
Milk puddings e.g. custard, rice pudding	
Cream – fresh, artificial cream, creme fraiche	
Cheese	Yoghurt, fromage frais
Ice Cream	Margarine, butter, ghee



Foods Containing the Following Ingredients:	
Butter milk, butter oil, butter fat	Milk sugar
Casein (curds), caseinates	Milk solids
Calcium Caseinate	Modified milk
Sodium caseinate	Non-fat milk solids
Hydrolysed Casein	Whey, whey solids
Hydrolysed whey protein	Whey protein
Lactose	Whey powder
Lactoglobulin	Whey sugar
Lactoalbumin	Whey syrup sweetener
Milk protein	

Product ingredients change, so check labels each time before you buy or use them. By law, it should be clearly highlighted on the label if any product contains milk. This should be in **bold**, *italics* or underlined.