

How to reintroduce cow's milk into your child's diet - advice for children diagnosed with cow's milk allergy

Nutrition & Dietetics

Information for Patients

Produced: April 2026

Review: April 2029

Leaflet number: 1737 Version: 1

This information is only to be used under guidance of a dietitian or doctor.

Cow's milk protein allergy

Most children will outgrow their cow's milk allergy. This includes children who have immediate (IgE) milk allergy. This plan shows you how to safely reintroduce small amounts of cow's milk into your child's diet. In the first stage you give a small amount of milk protein in a biscuit. The cooking process and flour mixture of the biscuit lowers the risk of an allergic reaction. By slowly increasing milk in your child's diet, their body will learn to tolerate more milk over time. It will help expand their diet. Many children can start milk reintroduction at home. If your Dietitian/ Doctor suggest home introduction, you should follow the plan below. Some children however are severely allergic to milk and will need to continue on a strict milk free diet.

Important information about the reintroduction plan:

- Do not increase to the next stage unless your child is regularly tolerating the previous stage.
- Try to give the dose every day and **only** stop if your child has symptoms.
- If you miss several days (for example because your child is unwell) give a smaller dose when you restart.
- Do not increase to a higher dose if your child is unwell.
- If your child begins to show symptoms (like a rash, eczema flare, tummy ache, vomiting, diarrhoea / loose stools, loss of appetite, throat tingle) reduce the dose to a lower level that is tolerated. For immediate allergic reactions, follow your 'Allergy Action' plan if given to you by the doctor for treatment of allergic symptoms. For example giving a dose of antihistamine.
- For children who only get gastrointestinal symptoms you may be advised to stop and retry in another few months.
- If your child's eczema is flaring, continue the same dose of milk until it settles. Use your creams, as prescribed.

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Home milk reintroduction

Stage 1: Give biscuit that contains whole milk as an ingredient

Week 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • small crumb of biscuit for 2 to 3 days. • large crumb of biscuit for 2 to 3 days. • 1/16 biscuit for 2 to 3 days.
Week 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1/8 biscuit for 3 to 4 days. • 1/4 biscuit for 3 to 4 days.
Week 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1/2 biscuit for 3 to 4 days. • 1 whole biscuit for 3 to 4 days.

Suitable biscuits: Heinz Biscotti (younger infants), Malted milk, home made biscuits containing 1 ml milk per biscuit.

If your child has been diagnosed with a mild form of non-IgE allergy, you may be asked to build up to 1 biscuit over a week.

Stage 2: Begin giving other baked foods with milk as an ingredient

Once your child is tolerating a whole biscuit, you can begin to offer other baked foods that contain milk. This has to be milk that is mixed with flour and cooked at high temperatures (like cakes, biscuits, scotch pancakes, croissants, breads). It can also be products that use ordinary butter, ghee and margarine as an ingredient (like shortbread). For more ideas on foods that contain milk as an ingredient, see separate lists.

- When trying a new food, make sure to give a **reduced amount** first. For example 1/4 of the portion. You can then build it up into the diet.
- If a certain food causes symptoms, try a smaller amount or leave it out of the diet. Retry in a few weeks. If the symptoms continue, you may need to leave it out for a few months.
- If your child gets symptoms often with stage 2, go back to stage 1 (1 biscuit per day) for longer.
- Once tolerating a few items from the list, try to include more than 1 item daily.

Stage 3: Start to include foods with higher levels of heated milk, then cheese

Only begin to try foods from this stage if your child is freely and regularly eating foods from stages 1 and 2 without symptoms. Or if your dietitian has told you to do so. These foods have more milk protein.

- Give small amounts to begin with. For example 1 teaspoon (tsp) heated milk in food, or 2 strands of heated cheese. Try to give more each time it is offered. Then begin 1 lick of yogurt.
- Each food is different. Do not think if your child is eating 1 product your child will tolerate all foods. Start each new food in small amounts first and increase weekly unless your child has symptoms.
- If symptoms happen on small traces of these foods, stay on full portions of stage 2 foods for another 2 to 3 months. Eat daily if possible.
- It is much better to have a daily 'dose' of a milk containing food and build up the amount every week rather than give it only 1 or 2 times per week in larger amounts.

Stage 4: Start fresh milk products

Your child should try these foods if they are regularly eating foods from stage 3 or as advised by your dietitian. Start with small doses. For example a teaspoon of ice cream.

- If trying fresh cow's milk, start by trying 1 teaspoon on breakfast cereal or added to milk alternative. Increase each week (or as per your dietitians advice).
- If your child dislikes the taste of milk, mix it with a milk alternative or milkshake powder.
- If your child does get symptoms, continue to only allow all foods from stage 3. You can try again in 2 to 3 months until full tolerance is achieved.

Examples of foods to try (always check labels):

Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3A	Stage 4
<p>Biscuits that list milk as an ingredient. Examples are: Malted milk or Heinz mini Biscotti (for younger children).</p> <p>For homemade biscuit recipes, add 1ml milk per biscuit. Or 1 teaspoon milk per 5 biscuits (see below).</p> <p>Homemade Biscuit</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 tablespoon (tbsp) flour (or wheat free alternative) • 1 tsp coco powder (optional) • 1 ½ tsp sugar or pureed fruit • 1 tsp margarine (dairy free) • 1 tsp milk <p>Combine all ingredients together in a bowl. Roll into 5 small balls and flatten each on a greased baking tray. Bake in the oven at 200 C for 12 minutes.</p>	<p>Bread containing milk (like Warburtons milk roll, croissants, home made banana scones or soda bread (see separate recipe leaflet)</p> <p>Frozen mini Yorkshire puddings.</p> <p>Biscuits and cakes that contain milk (like waffles, fairy cakes, muffins, scones, scotch pancakes, flapjacks, Trifle sponges, ice cream wafers, Brownies, Sponge and pastry flan cases, Nutrigrain breakfast bars, McVities and Belvita breakfast biscuits, Shortbread, Butter Crunch biscuits, Jaffa cakes).</p> <p>Homemade recipes of the above that contain milk as an ingredient.</p> <p>Small amount of cow's milk added to ready made flour mixes (like bread, pastry, scone, cake mixes). Start with 10ml of cow's milk in the recipe.</p> <p>Butter and ghee recipes using butter and ghee. Margarine can be used in heated recipes.</p>	<p>Cow's milk as a heated ingredient (like custard, custard tart, rice pudding, white sauce, cream soups, porridge, yogurt in cooking, mashed potato topping (cottage, shepherds, fish pie), milk added to gravy and casseroles (see recipes).</p> <p>Homemade batters like pancakes, Yorkshire pudding.</p> <p>Cheese as a heated ingredient like pizza, cheese straw, cheese scone, in jacket potato.</p> <p>Foods containing both heated milk and cheese: like lasagna or oven baked pasta dish.</p> <p>Stage 3B</p> <p>Chocolate and chocolate covered items like button, chip, or biscuit</p> <p>Uncooked Cheese e.g. slice of cheese, Babybel, grated cheese, cheese flavoured crisps/snacks</p> <p>Fermented unheated desserts like Yogurt, fromage frais)</p>	<p>Fresh cow's milk, milk shakes.**</p> <p>**Your dietitian will discuss when to introduce fresh milk.</p> <p>Uncooked non-yoghurt desserts like cheesecake, mousse, cream cakes, ice cream.</p>

Milk Ladder

Remember to try any new food in a small amount to begin with!

Stage 4

Uncooked desserts (like cheesecake, mousse, ice cream, cream cakes)

Fresh cow's milk or milkshake

Stage 3B

Fermented unheated desserts (like Yogurt, fromage frais)

Uncooked Cheese (like cheese slices, Babybel, grated cheese, cream cheese)

Chocolate (like chocolate in biscuits and then chocolate button)

Stage 3A

Products containing heated milk and cheese (like pasta bake, lasagna)

Heated cheese (like pizza, cheese straw, cheese scone, on a jacket potato)

Homemade batters (like pancakes, Yorkshire pudding)

Heated milk (like white sauce, soup made with milk, porridge, yogurt in a curry, mashed potato topping (cottage/ shepherds /fish pie)

Stage 2

Bread, biscuits and cake: home-made or shop bought (like Irish soda bread, waffles, fairy cakes, scotch pancakes, frozen mini Yorkshire puddings, flour mixes with cow's milk added, butter or ghee)

Stage 1

Biscuits (like Malted milk or Heinz Biscotti. For homemade biscuit recipes, add 1ml milk per biscuit (or 1 teaspoon milk per 5 biscuits)

Contact details:

If you are under the Leicester Royal Infirmary Allergy team, please contact **0116 258 5400**.

If you are under the GP/Community Dietitians, please contact your GP or Leicestershire Nutrition and Dietetic Service at **0116 222 7141**.

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