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## **WORKING DAIRY INTO THE DIETS OF LACTOSE INTOLERANT**

*Experts say eliminating dairy entirely robs you of nutrients, there are other options*

(COLUMBUS, Ohio) -- June is National Dairy Month and experts are using the observance to remind everyone - even those who are lactose intolerant - to make dairy a daily part of your diet. It's estimated there may be as many as 30 million Americans who are lactose intolerant, but dietitians say that doesn't mean they have to ditch dairy all together.

"Dairy is a powerhouse of nutrients, and lactose intolerance is not a reason to avoid dairy any more," said Cecilia Pozo Fileti, a registered dietician. "By avoiding all dairy, we run the risk of bone health problems, weight management problems, and potentially cardiovascular disease as well," she said.

Experts say many people who are lactose intolerant are self-diagnosed, and may be able to eat more dairy than they think. They suggest talking to your health care provider to get an official diagnosis. Keeping a food journal can help pinpoint problem foods, or you can get what's known as a hydrogen breath test that will calibrate your intolerance exactly.

"Even if you are diagnosed with lactose intolerance," said Pozo Fileti, "the answer is not the avoidance of dairy, but the inclusion of dairy in a managed way."

That's what Anaraquel Sanguinetti is doing with her 14-year-old daughter Celine. Both are self-diagnosed lactose intolerant, but Anaraquel is committed to providing her growing daughter with the nutrients she needs, especially at this stage of her life.

"It's trial and error most of the time," said Anaraquel. "So far we've found she can eat things like cheese and sour cream, so we know our limits and stay with what works."

If you or someone in your family is lactose intolerant, the American Dairy Association offers these 5 tips for working dairy back into your diets:

1. Choose lactose free milk and dairy products, which are made from real milk, just without the lactose. They provide the same great nutrients as regular dairy foods.
2. Mix milk with other foods such as cereal or soups. This helps give your body more time to digest lactose.
3. Eating easy-to-digest yogurt with "live active cultures" will also help digest lactose.
4. Add naturally aged cheeses like cheddar, colby or swiss to salads and sandwiches. These cheeses are naturally low in lactose.
5. Try small amounts of milk or other dairy foods daily, and slowly increase the amount over several days or weeks.

“Dairy has nine essential nutrients,” said Pozo Fileti, “including protein, calcium, vitamin D, riboflavin and potassium. These are nutrients that are core to quality health, and you can’t find them in such abundance in any other place like.”

If you think you are lactose intolerant, talk with your healthcare provider. Symptoms include stomach aches, bloating or gassiness, often occurring shortly after eating dairy. However, these symptoms can have many different causes. It’s also important to distinguish between lactose intolerance and a food allergy, which can be much more dangerous.

Broadcast quality b-roll and sots, still images, web elements and other multimedia are available at <http://bit.ly/L6rCJ1>

Courtesy: American Dairy Association Mideast

*American Dairy Association Mideast is a farmer-funded organization responsible for increasing demand for dairy products on behalf of dairy farmers in Ohio. For more information, visit [www.drink-milk.com](http://www.drink-milk.com) and [www.ohiodairyfarmers.com](http://www.ohiodairyfarmers.com)*