

## **Milk and Infertility – Can Dairy Make You Infertile?**

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<https://natural-fertility-prescription.com/milk-and-infertility/>

Have you ever stopped and wondered if milk and infertility are linked? There is something fundamentally odd about humans consuming dairy. Just think about it. We are the only species on the planet that drink another mammal's breast milk! Breast milk, be it human or cow's is designed for the young one of that species for a limited period of time, before they can eat solid food, period. In this article, we will examine the link between milk and infertility and why this beloved, popular food can be so detrimental to your fertility.

### **Stats on Lactose Intolerance**

We stop producing the enzyme lactase as small children (between ages 2-5). This enzyme helps break down lactose, the major sugar found in dairy products. That's why lactose intolerance is very common in all parts of the world. **Lactose Intolerance Affects**<sup>[1]</sup>:– 65% of adults worldwide<sup>[2]</sup>– 30 to 50 million Americans– 50 to 80% of Hispanics– 60 to 80% of African-Americans– 80 to 100% of Native Americans– 95% of Asians– and only 2% of individuals with northern European origin

### **What Happens When You're Lactose Intolerant?**

When you eat dairy and you are lactose intolerant, your gut becomes inflamed. With inflammation, mucus production increases in the digestive system. The mucus prevents other nutrients from being absorbed. Excessive mucus production can also occur in the nose, lungs and reproductive system. For this reason, sniffly nose and asthma-like reactions are common in people who are intolerant to dairy. Since mucus production increases, mucus in the reproductive system can be excessive. Unfortunately, this can make the sperm's journey through the uterus and the fallopian tubes to the egg difficult.

### **Milk and Infertility: Is Dairy Good or Bad for Fertility?**

#### **Can Dairy Affect Fertility?**

One study found that a [major source of animal-derived estrogens](#) in the human diet are milk and dairy products, which account for **60-70% of the estrogens consumed**<sup>[3]</sup>. Humans consume milk from the cows in the second half of pregnancy when the estrogen levels are high. Due to genetic modification of the dairy cows (such as Holstein), it is quite possible that the milk consumed today is not the same as it was 100 years ago. These cows are fed a combination of grass and concentrates (grain/protein mixes and various by-products) allowing them to lactate during the second half of pregnancy. Studies have found more concentrated pesticides in cheese than in non-organically grown fruit and vegetables. Excess estrogen and pesticide exposure have been linked to PCOS and Endometriosis. The first line of naturopathic treatment for PCOS and [Endometriosis](#) is to minimize the intake of animal products. Animal products have a high content of hormones, pesticides and herbicides which are known endocrine

disruptors. They play havoc with your hormones and this can lead to anovulation. In some cases, milk and infertility have been linked in males.

### What About Calcium?

We usually associate dairy and drinking milk with calcium, and never think about what else we may be consuming along with the calcium. Although it contains calcium, there are plenty of hormones also contained in cow's milk including:

- thyroid-stimulating hormone
- estrogens
- progesterone
- insulin
- corticosteroids
- ...and many more!

Do you think an excess consumption of all these hormones results in a link between milk and infertility? You bet! With all these hormones, you may have hormonal imbalance. Contrary to most people think, milk is just one of the many sources of calcium in your diet. While dairy can be a good source of vitamin D, protein, calcium and potassium, these nutrients may also be obtained from other dietary sources through a well-planned, well-balanced diet. You can get calcium from seeds (chia, poppy, sesame and others), beans and lentils, almonds, dark leafy greens and plenty of others.

### Milk Addiction?

If you think you are addicted to cheese and milk — guess what? You are! Milk contains natural morphine, codeine and other opiates. The feel-good chemicals are in the milk so that the calf gets addicted to milk and bonds with the mother in order to survive. Morphine = Pleasure, so the calf associates pleasure with drinking milk and comes back for more. The same chemicals make it into your cheese, which is why so many people love eating cheese. In Switzerland, it was reported that people in this cheese-loving country consume an average of 20kg of cheese per year!

### What to Do If You're Addicted to Dairy? 7 Tips

Look, I am not saying 'never' to eat dairy again. Although, if you are intolerant to it, you would be doing yourself a world of good. It is hard to avoid it, as it is in everything from pizza and creamy pasta sauces to cheesecakes, yogurts and ice creams. All I am saying is because of the association between milk and infertility, give it a miss while you are trying to get pregnant. To help you get over dairy, here are a few tips:

#### 1. Cold Shoulder.

As a general rule, avoid dairy unless it is organic and you are not intolerant to it. This helps you avoid any effect of milk and infertility. Also, if you suffer from PCOS and endometriosis, avoid it altogether.

## **2. Go 21 Days Without Dairy.**

Like all addictions, it will take some time to overcome it. It takes 21 days for the brain to break or acquire a habit. To stop craving cheese or milk, go without them for 21 days. But beware, like all opiates, it only takes one bite to become hooked again.

## **3. Crowd out Approach.**

If you find it hard to avoid dairy, try to eliminate dairy gradually. You can start with the foods you're least attached to then crowd out and eat more substitutes.

## **4. Minimize Animal Product Intake.**

Minimize your intake of animal products and increase the intake of organic vegetables and fiber from fruit, grains, nuts and seeds. You can get all the calcium you need from sesame seeds (Tahini), spinach, Chinese cabbage, broccoli, seaweed Kelp and Dandelion leaves.

## **5. Use Non-Dairy Substitutes.**

Replace cow's milk, butter and ice cream for non-dairy alternatives. For those of you who have grown to love milk and other dairy products, giving it up may be a challenge. To help curb your milk cravings, you can milk substitutes—they may not taste exactly like milk, but they are healthier substitutes for you to try:

- almond milk
- coconut milk
- cashew milk
- macadamia milk
- rice milk
- hemp milk
- quinoa milk

Turmeric Latte is also a wonderful substitute for you to try. [View the turmeric latte recipe here.](#)

## **6. Prepare Your Own Food.**

Processed and fast food often contain hidden dairy ingredients. Sadly, this makes it hard for you to avoid dairy if you eat out often or don't prepare your food. By preparing your own food, you'll be able to substitute dairy and integrate healthier substitutes into your diet.

## **7. Get Support.**

If you are serious about quitting dairy, it would help to look for an accountability partner to assist you.

## **Milk and Dairy May Affect Your Fertility**

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While dairy is a significant part of our lives, it may not be good for everyone. It can cause inflammation in the gut and lead to poor nutrient absorption. It can adversely affect your cervical mucus production, contribute to hormonal imbalances and anovulation. If you're trying to conceive, it would be best to avoid dairy to help balance your hormones and improve your chances of conceiving. However, if you do eat dairy, or find it hard to give up dairy, make sure you consume full-fat organic dairy. **Low-fat dairy may increase the risk of anovulatory infertility**<sup>[4]</sup>. Also, if you suspect you're intolerant to dairy, have an IgG immunoglobulin test. What are your thoughts on milk and infertility? Do you eat a lot of dairy? Would you find it hard to give it up? I'd love to hear your thoughts!

### References

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