



The Beacon

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Med-Cert Medical Management Resources

“Guiding your way to better health management”

Are You Lactose Intolerant?

Lactose intolerance means the body cannot easily digest lactose, a type of natural sugar found in milk and dairy products. This is not the same thing as a food allergy to milk.

When lactose moves through the large intestine (colon) without being properly digested, it can cause uncomfortable symptoms such as gas, belly pain, and bloating. Some people who have lactose intolerance cannot digest any milk products. Others can eat or drink small amounts of milk products or certain types of milk products without problems.

A big challenge for people who are lactose-intolerant is learning how to eat to avoid discomfort and to get enough calcium for healthy bones.

Lactose intolerance occurs when the small intestine does not make enough of an enzyme called lactase. Your body needs lactase to break down, or digest, lactose.

Lactose intolerance most commonly runs in families, and symptoms usually develop during the teen or adult years. Most people with this type of lactose intolerance can eat some milk or dairy products without problems.

Sometimes the small intestine stops making lactase after a short-term illness such as the stomach flu or as part of a lifelong disease such as cystic fibrosis.

Or the small intestine sometimes stops making lactase after surgery to remove a part of the small intestine. In these cases, the problem can be either permanent or temporary.

Some premature babies have temporary lactose intolerance because they are not yet able to make lactase. After a baby begins to make lactase, the condition typically goes away.

Symptoms

Symptoms of lactose intolerance can be mild to severe, depending on how much lactase your body makes. Symptoms usually begin 30 minutes to 2 hours after you eat or drink milk products. If you have lactose intolerance, your symptoms may include:

- Bloating.
- Pain or cramps.
- Gurgling or rumbling sounds in your belly.
- Gas.
- Loose stools or diarrhea.
- Throwing up.

If you feel sick after drinking a glass of milk one time, you probably do not have lactose intolerance. But if you feel sick every time you have milk, ice cream, or another dairy product, you may have lactose intolerance.

Symptoms of the most common type of lactose intolerance—adult lactose intolerance—often start during the teen or adult years and continue for life. Symptoms of acquired lactose

intolerance last as long as the small intestine does not make lactase.

In rare cases, newborns are lactose-intolerant. Symptoms in newborns include severe foamy diarrhea, diaper rash, vomiting, dehydration, weakness and irritability, and slow weight gain.

Lactose intolerance is not the same thing as a food allergy to milk. Symptoms of a milk allergy are usually more severe than those from lactose intolerance. People who have a milk allergy cannot eat or drink any milk products.

If you think you might have lactose intolerance, talk it over with your doctor. Your doctor can make sure that your symptoms are caused by lactose intolerance and not by another problem. Other conditions can cause symptoms similar to those of lactose intolerance, including irritable bowel syndrome, inflammatory bowel disease, overuse of laxatives, and problems digesting foods that contain fructose and sorbitol.

Med-Cert provides:

Utilization Management, Maternity Management, Large Case and Wellness Disease Management, Transplant Coordination and Stop Loss Assessments

For information on any of our services, please call 866-261-5657 (toll free). We are on the Internet. Visit us at:

www.medcertinc.com

How to Keep Produce Fresh Longer

To prolong shelf life, manufacturers rinse salad greens with chlorinated water to kill bacteria. Storage bags often are puffed with a cushion of nitrogen gas to prevent bruising and browning. Some products, such as fresh slaw mix and fresh-cut vegetables and fruit, are vacuum-packed or rinsed with citric acid. All of these methods are safe.

Before purchasing, make sure that packaged produce feels cold. If bagged salad greens are piled too high, those on top may not be properly chilled and may spoil more quickly at home.

To prolong freshness at home...

Keep fresh produce cold. The best temperature range for most fruits and vegetables is 34°F to 40°F.

Always store produce in airtight containers or plastic bags. Prevent bruising by packing loosely in refrigerator produce bins.

February is International Prenatal Infection Prevention Month

Approximately 1 in 4 pregnant women carry Group B Strep, the leading cause of sepsis and meningitis in newborns according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC.) GBS can also infect babies during pregnancy and the first few months of life. For more information visit: www.groupbstrepinternational.org or call 909-620-5557

Quote of the day:

You cannot depend on your eyes when your imagination is out of focus.

-Mark Twain

DON'T FORGET TO PRECERTIFY

Med-Cert's Toll-free Precert Telephone Number is (800)-356-7126 and should be reflected on your health insurance ID cards.

It is ultimately the responsibility of the employee/participant/member to make sure precertification has been done. Many plans will reduce your benefit amount if you fail to precertify.

Group Health Plans vary from one employer to the next so it is important for you to know what your health plan requires. Call the customer service representative for your health plan if you have questions.

Below is a list of some of the common Standard Precertification Notification Requirements.

- *Inpatient Hospital Stays*
- *Inpatient Treatment for Mental and Emotional Conditions or Substance Abuse*
- *Inpatient Rehabilitation Therapy*
- *Skilled Nursing Care*
- *Outpatient Stays over 12 hours*
- *Outpatient Surgeries*
- *Physical Therapy after first 6 visits*
- *Speech Therapy after first 6 visits*
- *Home Health Care*
- *Hospice Care*
- *Maternity – on confirmation of pregnancy (or at least 2 months prior to delivery) and again on admission for delivery*
- *Outpatient Procedures – refer to your Employee Benefit Plan booklet as some plans require precertification for outpatient procedures*

Did you know??

Nails and corneas are the only two tissues in the body that do not receive oxygen from blood....

Recipe Corner



Photo: Con Poulos

Beef, Vegetable and Almond Stir-Fry

Ingredients

- 1/2 C Rice
- 3/4 lb flank steak, sliced 1/4" thick
- 3 tsp reduced-sodium soy sauce
- 2 tsp toasted sesame oil
- 1 tbsp. grated fresh ginger
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 2 med carrots, thinly sliced
- 1 med onion, chopped
- 1 med red bell pepper, thinly sliced
- 8 oz snow peas
- 3 tbsp. sliced almonds
- 2 tbsp. hoisin sauce

Directions

1. Cook rice per package directions.
2. Prepare steak while rice cooks. Toss steak with 2 teaspoons of the soy sauce. Heat 1 teaspoon of the oil in nonstick frying pan or cast-iron skillet over medium-high heat. Add ginger and garlic. Cook, stirring, 30 seconds. Add steak and cook, stirring occasionally, 2 to 3 minutes. Transfer to a plate.
3. Return pan to heat, and add remaining 1 teaspoon oil, carrots, onion, and pepper. Cook, stirring occasionally, until it starts to soften, about 3 minutes. Stir in snow peas and almonds. Cook, stirring occasionally, 2 minutes.
4. Add reserved beef and juices, hoisin sauce, and remaining 1 teaspoon soy sauce. Cook, stirring, 1 minute. Serve over rice.



This newsletter is brought to you courtesy of Med-Cert Inc. Our sources for this edition are Web MD, Prevention Magazine.