

# Food For Thought

## Dishing Up Comfort For Everyone

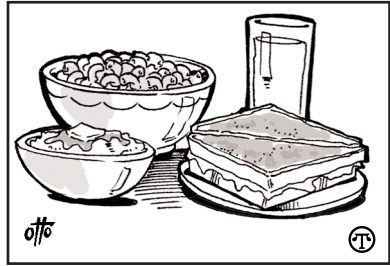
(NAPSA)—Eating comfort food has become an increasingly popular American pastime. Whether purchased from store shelves, made at home or eaten at a restaurant, feel-good foods like mashed potatoes and gravy, creamy macaroni and cheese and hearty casseroles have become a prevalent part of the American diet.

But for those who are lactose intolerant, comfort foods—many of which contain milk or other dairy products—provide no comfort at all.

According to the LACTAID “Craving Comfort Survey,” the majority of Americans dish up dairy when looking for a comforting meal. An overwhelming 70 percent of respondents said that their favorite comfort foods contain cheese, cream or milk.

“Milk and cheese are some of the most important ingredients in many of the classic comfort-food recipes,” says Ira Freehof, creator of The Comfort Diner in New York City. “From mac n’ cheese to mashed potatoes, tuna melts to grilled cheese, dairy is an essential ingredient in these favorite feel-good meals.”

For the estimated 30 million to 50 million Americans who are lactose intolerant, consuming comfort food can be problematic. Lactose intolerance, one of the most common—but easily treatable—digestive disorders, is a condition that refers to the inability to digest lactose, the sugar found in dairy products. Fortunately, lactose intolerance symptoms can be



**Certain dietary supplements can help lactose intolerant people enjoy favorite comfort foods, even if they contain dairy.**

easily and effectively managed so that everyone can indulge in their cravings for dairy-based recipes.

When cooking at home, lactose-free milk can replace regular milk in any recipe to avoid the uncomfortable side effects of lactose intolerance. And for those who don't make their own comfort foods—like the 44 percent of Americans who choose to buy their favorites already packaged—LACTAID dietary supplements can be taken with the first bite of dairy to alleviate symptoms before they start.

Many people relate to the notion of rewarding themselves with indulgent comfort foods. Now, everyone can enjoy his or her favorite treat, even if it contains dairy. Whether it is apple pie a la mode, macaroni and cheese or fettuccine alfredo that one craves, just a little education, understanding and solutions found in the dairy case or in the over-the-counter medicine aisle can ensure that no one misses out on comfort foods.