

# Dairy Digestive Problems Needn't Spoil Your Holiday Celebration

(NAPSA)—Part of the joy of going home for the holidays is being able to gorge on all the food you've known and loved your whole life. Unless, that is, as you've grown older, even your favorite dishes suddenly seem to "disagree" with you.

Eggnog, rice pudding, macaroni and cheese, and pumpkin pie may make the mouth water. But for the 30 to 50 million Americans who suffer from dairy digestive problems, celebrations that include those delicious dairy foods may result in bloating, cramps, diarrhea and gas.

Fortunately, however, dairy digestive problems can be easily managed. The uncomfortable—and embarrassing—symptoms can be avoided by taking a dairy digestive supplement with your first bite of dairy, or using lactose-free milk and dairy products such as Lactaid supplements or Lactaid milk.

Dairy digestive problems, also known as lactose intolerance, affect an estimated 25 percent of the United States population and have disproportionate consequences for minorities, impacting over 50 percent of the growing Hispanic American population, 75 percent of Native Americans, 80 percent of African Americans, and 90 percent of Asian Americans.

A recent survey revealed that 95 percent of people with dairy digestive problems have heard of lactose intolerance, but only 49 percent of them understand why their bodies have trouble coping with dairy.

The survey included 1,092 people who have difficulty digesting dairy, and was sponsored by Lactaid, makers of lactose-free milk and dietary supplements to aid the digestion of dairy products. When asked, "How do you cope with dairy diges-

## Tips for Consuming Dairy If You're Lactose Intolerant

- Space dairy items several hours apart
- Eat other foods along with milk-based ones
- Choose hard or aged cheese like cheddar or Swiss, which contain less lactose than milk itself
- Opt for yogurt with active cultures (the cultures contain enzymes that help digest lactose on their own)
- Use lactose-free milk or supplements to aid the digestion of dairy products



tive problems?" nearly 75 percent of respondents said they limit or avoid certain dairy foods—a reaction that may not be in their best health interests, according to Raquel Moreno, RD, CDE.

"Dairy products, especially milk, provide a high level of essential nutrients," Moreno said. "Each serving of milk provides at least 10 percent of the recommended daily intake for calcium, 25 percent for vitamin D, and at least 10 percent for protein, potassium, vitamin A, vitamin B12, riboflavin and phosphorous."

"Avoiding dairy foods, which serve as a major source of calcium, can leave individuals at greater risk for osteoporosis, and may also be associated with hypertension, stroke, and colon cancer."

Moreno stressed that lactose intolerance is a common condition, not an illness.

However, if symptoms persist even with the addition of a dairy digestive supplement to the diet, a physician should be consulted, she said.

For more information on dairy digestive problems, ask your doctor or visit [www.lactaid.com](http://www.lactaid.com). You can also learn more and access delicious, lactose-free recipes by calling 1-800-LACTAID.