

# LACTOSE ON FOOD LABELS: A SIMPLE GROCERY SHOPPING CHECKLIST

## When to Use This Checklist

This guide is for people with lactose intolerance who are trialing a short-term reduction of lactose to help manage symptoms and make grocery shopping easier.

**It is not meant for milk allergy, long-term restriction, or diagnosis.**

### Ingredients That Often Contain Lactose

- Milk
- Whey
- Milk solids
- Nonfat dry milk
- Milk powder
- Curds
- Cream
- Cheese (varies by type)

### Foods That Commonly Contain Hidden Lactose

- Breads and baked goods
- Processed meats (sausages, deli meat)
- Instant soups or mixes
- Salad dressings
- Chips and flavored snacks
- Medications or supplements

### Foods Often Better Tolerated

These options are commonly easier to tolerate for people with lactose intolerance:

- Lactose-free dairy products
- Hard cheeses (cheddar, parmesan, swiss)
- Yogurt with live cultures
- Plant-based milk alternatives

## Helpful Label-Reading Tips

- ✓ Check ingredient lists, not just the front of the package
- ✓ “Dairy-free” does not always mean lactose-free for processed foods
- ✓ Small amounts may be tolerated depending on your threshold
- ✓ Lactose content can vary by product and brand

## Important Notes

- Lactose intolerance causes discomfort but does **not damage the gut**
- Tolerance varies, complete avoidance is **not always** necessary
- If symptoms are severe or occur quickly after dairy, discuss milk allergy with a provider