

# Milk-free trial and re-challenge information for breastfed children with suspected non-IgE CMPA

## Information for patients

Department of Nutrition & Dietetics – Royal Hospital for Children and Young People



Your child has a suspected non-IgE cow's milk protein allergy (CMPA). 'Non-IgE' means that the symptoms usually appear after a few hours or up to a few days after eating or drinking anything containing cow's milk protein.

### Confirming/Excluding CMPA whilst breastfeeding:

When your child has symptoms that may suggest CMPA, your health visitor may advise a milk-free trial.

If you are breastfeeding, a milk-free trial is usually for a period of 4-6 weeks and involves removing cow's milk and all milk products from your diet.

This includes cow's milk, yoghurt, cheese, cream, and butter and any manufactured or processed food which contains milk.

If milk is present in a food product it must by law include it in the ingredient list. The word milk will be in **bold**, *italics*, underlined, or highlighted.

### Getting all you need on a milk-free diet:

It is vital to ensure you get all the nutrients you need being milk-free. Taking cow's milk out of your diet means you are missing out on often the major source of calcium in the diet.

When you are breastfeeding, your calcium requirements are even higher than when you are not breastfeeding. You require 10ug of Vitamin D, and 1250mg calcium daily and we recommend that you take a supplement to provide this.

To replace calcium in your diet we encourage you to choose a calcium enriched plant-based milk e.g. soya, oat, coconut, and nut-based milk that contain 120mg calcium per 100mls and a calcium enriched plant-based yoghurt.

Any other cow's milk products will also need to be replaced by a plant-based option i.e., butter, cream, cheese, yoghurt.

Please avoid lactofree milk/products as these still contain cow's milk protein. Please also avoid sheep/goat/buffalo/camel milk as the protein found in these milks is very similar to cow's milk and can result in the same symptoms as CMPA.

### After the 4–6-week trial:

Once you have completed the trial, it is important to reintroduce milk back into your diet. If there has been no change to symptoms during this trial, it is highly unlikely that it your child has CMPA. If there has been some improvement, it is still vital to confirm CMPA by reintroducing milk back into your diet. This is done over the course of 5 days.

1. **DO NOT** start the re-challenge if your child is unwell: e.g. any respiratory or breathing problems (this includes a common cold) any tummy, bowel or teething symptoms, if your child has atopic dermatitis/eczema – any current flare-up of the skin.

2. **DO NOT** stop any medication that your child may be on e.g. reflux medicine, laxatives.
3. Please wait 7 days after any immunisations before starting the re-challenge.

The goal is to include milk and milk products at the same quantities that you would usually eat.

- Start off with 1 portion on day one e.g. 1 portion = 150ml cows' milk or 1 pot of yoghurt or cheese in a sandwich.
- Build up to 3 portions by day 5.

The aim is to see if symptoms return once milk is included back into your child's diet. You are often looking for the symptoms your child had that you felt might be a sign of CMPA. e.g., rash, vomiting, loose stools, blood in stools, unsettledness.

If the symptoms you are noticing are non-specific e.g., unsettledness, please continue with the introduction for a further 5 days to ensure the symptoms are happening more than once (reproducible). As we all know, children can be unsettled for so many reasons, so by continuing to include milk in your diet for a further few days, it ensures we are not restricting your diet unnecessarily.

If the symptoms return, STOP the reintroduction, return to your full milk exclusion diet and inform your doctor or dietitian. Your child's symptoms should settle again within a few days and the diagnosis of cow's milk protein allergy is now confirmed. If no symptoms occur, you can continue to drink cow's milk and eat cow's milk containing products, e.g. cheese and yogurt. Your child does not have cow's milk protein allergy.

