

What is a cow's milk protein allergy (CMPA)?

Your baby has an allergy to proteins that are found in cow's milk.

This is called a Cow's Milk Protein Allergy (CMPA) or Cow's Milk Colitis. Cow's milk proteins (CMPs) are harmful to your baby. They may cause symptoms like:

- colic or irritability
- runny nose
- cough or wheezing
- diarrhea
- bloody stool (pooh)
- vomiting
- swollen lips/eyelids
- rash

To prevent your baby from having these symptoms again, you will need to avoid all CMPs from your diet while breastfeeding.

I haven't changed my diet yet, is it safe to breastfeed?

CMPs from the food you eat will end up in your breast milk. How long they stay in your milk depends on many things. Your doctor or dietitian may ask you to pump and dump your breast milk for 24 hours after starting a CMP free diet.

Will my baby outgrow a CMPA?

About 1 out of 2 babies who have a CMPA will outgrow their allergy by 1 year of age. In babies who still have a CMPA at one year of age,



8 out of 10 of these babies will outgrow their allergy by 3 years of age.

What foods should I avoid while breastfeeding?

You need to avoid milk and other dairy products in your diet. You will also need to avoid soy and soy bean products. Babies with a CMPA are at a higher risk for having or developing a soy allergy.

What can I have instead of milk and milk products to get enough protein?

Protein is an important part of a healthy diet while you are breastfeeding. Eating enough protein will help you stay healthy, maintain and repair your muscles, and make a healthy milk supply for breastfeeding.

Whole milk, cheese, yogurt, and other milk products provide many nutrients and are a good source of protein, you must avoid these while breastfeeding.

You can drink milk alternatives such as rice, almond, or alternative milks but they have much less protein than cow or soy milk

Example: 1 cup skim milk = 9 grams protein
1 cup almond milk = 1 gram protein

Other sources of protein that are safe for you to eat are: meat, chicken or turkey, fish, eggs, and legumes (except soybeans).

Most of us get more than enough protein in our diet from these sources, however if you are unsure about your protein intake ask your dietitian.

You may need to add 1 to 2 extra servings of higher protein foods if you do not get enough protein from your diet. The following servings count as 1 serving of protein:

- 2 eggs
- 3 oz of beef or pork
- 3 oz of chicken or turkey



- 1/4 cup nuts (no soy nuts)
- 3oz of fish
- 3/4 cup of legumes
- 1/4 cup of hummus
- 2 tbsp peanut butter

(without added CMP or soy)

How do I get enough calcium?

Calcium is an important mineral that is needed for maintaining healthy bones, nails, and muscles. If there is not enough of this mineral in your diet, your body will use the calcium from your bones to make breast milk. To get enough calcium in your diet choose:

❓ Milk alternatives (like rice or almond milk) that are enriched with calcium and other nutrients.

Remember, soy milk is not a good choice since your baby may be at higher risk for developing an allergy to soy.

❓ Other sources of calcium such as broccoli, green leafy vegetables, dates, scallops, oysters, and salmon or sardines with bones

❓ Juices that are fortified with calcium. Be sure to check the ingredient list for milk products.

You may need a calcium supplement to ensure you are getting enough calcium while breastfeeding. Breastfeeding mothers need between 1000 to 1300 mg of calcium. Ask your dietitian if you need extra calcium and how much you should be taking. You may need a calcium supplement like Calcium Carbonate.



Calcium Carbonate is a supplement that you can take with food.

As always, you will need to check the label for CMP and soy ingredients that may be added for packaging, taste or colour. Your body can only absorb 500 mg of calcium at a time. If you are taking more than that in a supplement, it is best to take half in the morning and the rest in the evening in order to give your body a chance to absorb the most from your supplement.

What about Vitamin D?

Continue to give your baby vitamin D supplements as they do not usually contain CMPs. Check the ingredients on the label to be sure. Vitamin D is also safe for you to take and it may help your body absorb more calcium.

The CMP free diet seems like a lot of work, is it worth it?

Following a CMP free diet may take some getting used to, but it is well worth it!

Experts agree that breast milk is best for your baby's health and development. It also may reduce the risk that your baby will develop other allergies.