

# The Wellness Family

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## The Case Against Casein

The purpose of food is to provide our body with the fuel it needs to do what we require in a day, however, so much of what we consume is pre-packaged and overly processed, leading to a lack of actual nutrition. One of the key factors in living a wellness lifestyle is making wiser dietary decisions; and eliminating casein from your diet may be something for you to consider.

### **What is Casein?**

Casein is a protein found in milk and dairy products, but is also used as a binding agent in many other foods. Technically it is a phosphoprotein that accounts for nearly 80% of the proteins in cow's milk and cheese.

### **Why Eat Casein-Free?**

Eating casein-free, when combined with a gluten-free diet, has reportedly had very positive results for those who have an autistic spectrum disorder, such as: autism, Asperger's syndrome, atypical autism and pervasive developmental disorder.

Additionally, many people that have assumed they are allergic to milk may actually be suffering from a casein allergy. The problem with a lack of awareness as to the true allergy is that casein is found in more than just dairy products. This "binding agent" has technical uses as well as edible and has been used in paints (including fingernail polish), other cosmetics and even glue (or industrial adhesives).

### **The Problem with Casein**

Whether or not you or someone in your household battles with allergies, a digestive disorder or has an allergy to milk or dairy products, everyone in your home can benefit from eating casein free, or at least reducing their daily intake of dairy.

A clinical study by FitzGerald and Bundesanstalt, in 2000, determined that there is a "natural opiate" embedded in casein protein, which may lead to the comfort feeling after digestion and any cravings for chocolate and cheese that are unrelated to hunger.

Studies by Dr. Reichelt in Norway and Dr. Cade at the University of Florida, among others, found that urine samples from people with autism, PDD, celiac disease and schizophrenia contained high amounts of the casomorphin peptide. It has been suggested that the amounts of this peptide may also be elevated in other

similar disorders such as chronic fatigue, fibromyalgia and depression based on the reported benefits of a gluten-free and casein-free diet.

### **The Problems With Milk**

While casein is most certainly a concern, it's not the sole problem with milk. A large study led by Catherine S. Berkey of Harvard Medical School and Brigham & Women's Hospital in Boston revealed that the consumption of milk may be contributing to the growing problem of childhood obesity.

Breast Surgery Chief of California's Seton Medical Center, Dr. Robert Kradjian, reviewed archives of medical and scientific journals and found that milk is



*"The benefits of a casein-free diet are not new and have been studied and considered for over a decade."*

not the "perfect food" it is reported to be. He found that many childhood disorders were, if not induced, certainly aggravated by an increased intake of dairy products, including but not limited to: allergies, ear and tonsil infections, bedwetting, asthma, intestinal bleeding (lesions), colic and childhood diabetes.

The American Academy of Pediatrics advises parents not to give their children dairy milk before their first birthday. Dr. Frank Oski, former Chief of Pediatrics at Johns Hopkins University Hospital and the author of *Don't Drink Your Milk*, believes that milk should not be given to children to drink, ever. Since milk has been associated with iron deficiency anemia, occult gastrointestinal bleeding and various manifestations of food allergies, he believes it would be prudent to recommend that milk not be consumed at all.

### **Other Dairy Products**

These problems with milk most certainly carry over into all dairy products, including butter, cheese, ice cream,

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yogurt, etc., and, in reality, are compounded by the process of creating these food items.

The process of making cheese removes the water, lactose and whey proteins resulting in the casein being concentrated, increasing the effect of the peptides being released during digestion.

### **What to Avoid**

There are many foods that as matter of course contain casein and should be avoided, these include but are not limited to milk, cream and Half & Half, yogurt, butter and sour cream, cheese (even some soy brands), white or milk chocolate, ice cream, ice milk or sherbet, creamed soups or vegetables, soup bases, puddings, custard and whey.

Foods that may contain casein because it has been added as a "bonding agent" include but are not limited to:

- Margarine
- Dairy-free cheese
- Tuna fish
- Semi-sweet chocolate
- Hot dogs, sausages and lunch meats

### **Other Choices**

The benefits of a casein free diet are not new and have been being studied and considered for over a decade. As such, many alternatives are available now, these include rice, soy or almond based milks, Pareve creams and creamers, mocha mix, Tofutti brand products, sorbet and Italian ices, soy ice cream (but not all flavors), Soymage cheese, coconut butter, Imagine brand soups and coconut milk.

Learn to substitute when necessary. When a recipe calls for 1 cup of milk replace it with 1 cup of soy, rice

or coconut milk or 1 cup of water mixed with 1 egg yolk. If a recipe calls for a cup of yogurt consider the following substitutions: 1 cup of soy yogurt or soy sour cream, 1 cup unsweetened applesauce or 1 cup of pureed fruit.

### **Concerned About Calcium**

When making a decision to eliminate dairy many parents are concerned about calcium. According to researchers from Washington University in St. Louis, food is the best source of calcium, with a cup of spinach containing more than an 8 ounce glass of milk. Other great sources include broccoli, kale, romaine lettuce, cabbage and oranges.

### **In Summary**

Consuming dairy products is a matter of choice, but with the potential for allergic reactions, the high fat content and the problems with casein, it's good to know that there are other choices.

While a casein-free diet can be necessary for those struggling with specific disorders, everyone can benefit from making this life-changing decision.

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### **Suggested Resources**

[www.livingwithout.com](http://www.livingwithout.com)

[www.austimndi.com](http://www.austimndi.com)

[www.gfcfdiet.com](http://www.gfcfdiet.com)

Gluten/Casein Free Grocery Shopping Guide and Gluten/Casein/Soy Free Grocery Shopping Guide available at [ceceliasmarketplace.com](http://ceceliasmarketplace.com)

The Kid-Friendly ADHD & Autism Cookbook  
ISBN 1-59233-223-6

The Kid-Friendly Food Allergy Cookbook  
ISBN 1-59233-054-1

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*Dear Patient,*

*Dr. Glassman is dedicated to providing you with the absolute best in family wellness care. So take a moment today to discuss with your Family Wellness Chiropractor and concerns you may have regarding your family's dietary needs.*

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