Diet for Galactosemia

Galactosemia is when the body is missing a digestive aid (*enzyme*) that helps break down galactose. This is a naturally occurring sugar in many foods. Lactose is sugar contained in milk which is made up of galactose and glucose. Lactose is made up of 2 sugars, galactose and glucose.

Galactosemia is usually diagnosed during infancy or childhood. When your child cannot digest galactose properly, it can build up in the body and cause damage to the liver, central nervous system and other body systems.

SYMPTOMS

During infancy include:

- Yellowing of the skin (*jaundice*).
- Vomiting.
- Poor weight gain.
- Refusing to feed.
- Tiredness.
- Irritability.
- Convulsions.

TREATMENT

Avoid milk, milk containing foods and all foods that contain galactose. Your child will need to follow these restrictions for life. It is important to know what foods contain lactose and galactose.

It is important to work with a Registered Dietitian to help you and your child find what foods they can and cannot eat. Your child needs good nutrition to allow for growth and development. A Registered Dietitian can help with this special diet.

These diets may lack in calcium, riboflavin, and vitamin D, according to the Recommended Dietary Allowances of the National Research Council. Supplements of these nutrients may be needed.

HOME CARE INSTRUCTIONS

- Lactose and galactose are carbohydrates. The major food source is dairy products. Reading food labels is important. Many products contain lactose, even when they are not made from milk. Look for the following words:
  - Whey.
  - Milk solids.
  - Dry milk solids.
  - Nonfat dry milk powder.

Typical sources of lactose other than dairy products include:

- Breads.
- Candies.
- Cold cuts.
- Prepared and processed foods.
- Commercial sauces and gravies.

All foods must be prepared without milk, cream, or other dairy foods.

- A vitamin/mineral supplement may be necessary. Consult your caregiver or dietitian.
- Lactose also is found in many prescription and over-the-counter medications.
- Lactose-free supplements may be used as an alternative to milk.

These are other non-milk foods that contain galactose and should be avoided:

- Organ meats.
- Dried beans.
- Sugar beets.
- Lentils.
- Lima beans.
- Peas.
- Soybeans.
- Blueberries.
- Honeydew melon.
- Peaches.

FOOD INGREDIENTS WHICH CONTAIN GALACTOSE

- Butter.
- Cream.
- Milk shocolate.
- Cheese.
- Buttermilk solids.
- Nonfat dry milk solids.
- Milk solids.
- Lactose.
- Casein.
- Sour cream.
- Dry milk.
- Whey and whey solids.
- Dry milk protein.
- Yogurt.
- Sodium caseinate.
- Calcium caseinate.
- Tragacanth Gum.
- Lactostearin.
- Lactalbumin.
- Dough conditioners*
- Hydrolyzed Protein*
- Margarine*
- MSG (Monosodium Gluconate)*
- Soy sauce*

NOTE: Lactate, Lactic acid and Lactylate do not contain lactose and are acceptable ingredients.

* Dough Conditioners may include caseinates which are UNACCEPTABLE. Most labels specify the name of the conditioner which is added to the product. If not, contact the company to make sure that all are acceptable.

* Hydrolyzed protein is UNACCEPTABLE and is commonly found in canned meats, like tuna. Hydrolyzed vegetable protein, however, is acceptable.

* A few diet margarine's do not contain milk. Check labels before using any brand. If "margarine" is listed as an ingredient in any processed food, consider the product UNACCEPTABLE.

* MSG or Monosodium Glutamate itself is acceptable. However, some MSG's contain lactose extenders. It is best to avoid MSG whenever possible.

* Soy sauce is UNACCEPTABLE if it is fermented. Brands must be checked before including this in the galactosemic diet.

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