

Primary Care

GUIDELINES FOR HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONALS

LACTOSE INTOLERANCE

Cow's milk protein allergy (CMPA) is frequently mistaken for lactose intolerance. Lactose intolerance is an impaired ability to digest milk sugar (lactose), it is **not an allergy**. Lactose free formulas and milks contain cow's milk protein and are **NOT** suitable for CMPA treatment.

Primary lactose intolerance is **extremely** rare in infants under 2 years, CMPA is much more likely. Temporary lactose intolerance resulting in frothy diarrhoea can occur after gastroenteritis – if suspicious, trial 2 weeks of a lactose free formula. If successful, continue for a further for a maximum of 4-6 weeks afterwards then return to normal formula.

Ongoing diarrhoea warrants further investigation by secondary care.

There is no good quality evidence to support use of lactose free formula or lactase drops (e.g. Colief) as a treatment for colic. Parents can buy lactose free formulas or lactase drops if they wish to use it for this purpose.

Children weaned onto solids will require lactose free dietary advice – see document [Lactose Free Diet Trial - Children Under 2 Years who are Weaned onto Solids \(RDE 18 049 ###\)](#)

Guide to prescription volumes (SMA LF or Enfamil Lactofree)

NOTE: lactose free infant formulas are available to buy over-the-counter

	2 week trial	1 month prescription
0-3m	5 x 430g tins	10 x 430g tins
4-6m	6 x 430g tins	12 x 430g tins
7-9m	6 x 430g tins	11 x 430g tins
10-12m	5 x 430g tins	9 x 430g tins
1-2yrs	Do not prescribe. Parents can buy supermarket full fat lactose free milk	

Some infants may drink more – increase on parental request