

Parent Guide to Cow's Milk Protein Allergy in the Under 2s

Your doctor has diagnosed your child with a cow's milk protein allergy (CMPA). This happens when your child's immune system reacts to the proteins in cow's milk.

Babies with CMPA will usually have a reaction after drinking standard infant formulas. These are all made from cow's milk. Rarely, in some sensitive breastfed infants, proteins from milk in Mum's diet pass to the baby through the breast milk and cause a reaction.

Older children who are eating solid foods may also react to foods containing cow's milk e.g. cheese, butter, yoghurt, ice cream.

Different reactions to cow's milk

Some children have immediate reactions to milk (called **IgE mediated reactions**). These usually happen within a few minutes of eating/drinking cow's milk. Typical immediate reactions include a red itchy rash on the face or body (like nettles rash), swelling of the eyes or lips or vomiting. Rarely some children have difficulty breathing.

More children have delayed reactions to milk (called **non-IgE mediated reactions**). These can happen several hours or days after eating/drinking cow's milk. Typical delayed reactions include reflux, very loose poo, blood or mucus in the poo, or a flare of eczema.

Some children can have both immediate and delayed reactions.

YOUR CHILD HAS:

- an immediate (IgE mediated) reaction to cow's milk
- a delayed (non-IgE mediated) reaction to cow's milk
- mixed reactions (immediate and delayed)

Treatment of cow's milk protein allergy

CMPA is treated by removing all cow's milk and foods containing cow's milk from the diet.

Mums who are breastfeeding a child with CMPA may need to have a milk free diet with appropriate calcium and vitamin D supplementation in their diet.

Children who are bottle fed need a special formula prescribed (called an 'extensively hydrolysed' formula or 'amino acid' formula). In these formulas, the protein is broken down so it can't cause a reaction.

Lactose free formulas and foods still contain cow's milk protein and are not suitable to use.

Children who are taking solids will need to follow a cow's milk free diet.



