

Some cheese is now allowed in the galactosaemic diet but you must choose carefully as not all cheese is suitable.

Why is some cheese now allowed?

In October 2000 dieticians working with Galactosaemia held a workshop on the use of cheese in a Galactosaemia diet. The diet in Galactosaemia is based on the exclusion of lactose and therefore also of any foods containing milk and milk products. In the UK cheese had always been excluded from the diet however, in Europe many countries allow certain types of cheese such as Emmentaal and Gruyere. The rationale for allowing cheese in Countries such as Germany and Holland is based on the cheese making process. Cheeses that are fermented and are very mature or that use certain bacteria in their maturation to make "holes" are relatively low in lactose. Lactose is also lost as the cheese matures and is leached out of the cheese. This very mature cheese has less lactose than young cheese.

Samples of different varieties and maturity of cheese were analysed at the LGC (Laboratory of Government Chemists) to determine their lactose and galactose content. The results were discussed with a cheese expert and as a result certain cheese is now allowed.

Which cheese is allowed?

- Emmentaal
- Gruyere
- Mature or Extra Mature West Country Farmhouse Cheddar featuring PDO seal (see below)
- Italian Parmesan
- Grano Pranado
- Jarlsberg

Emmentaal & Gruyere Cheese

These cheeses are made by a process where the bacteria utilize the lactose and remove it from the cheese. Grated and sliced emmentaal have also now been analysed and are safe to use.

Processed forms ie Babybel Emmentaal is NOT suitable

Cheddar Cheese

Cheddar cheese has to be carefully chosen. Cheddar is a process of cheese making and can take place anywhere in the world. There are many different types of cheddar cheese and the term mature or mild is often used by the supermarkets to categorise the taste of the cheese as opposed to the age. West Country Farmhouse Mature or Extra Mature Cheddar is made by one of 12 farms in the West Country Farmhouse Cheese Makers Association who guarantee their cheese is at least a year old and is aged by a process whereby the lactose is leached out of the cheese.

This cheese is identified by the PDO (Protected Designation of Origin) seal which is a yellow and blue logo found on the packet.

*It must state West Country **Farmhouse** Cheddar.* There are other cheeses which come from the West Country but they are not suitable as the cheese is rated by flavour rather than age.



Italian Parmesan

This cheese is matured for a long period of time – at least one year and often two or more and as a result the lactose is leached out of the cheese. Parmesan is the common term for *Parmigiano Reggiano DOP* and it features a PDO yellow and blue seal to certify it is made in Northern Italy. This is the type of parmesan that is suitable. Ready grated parmesan which has the DOP seal is also suitable. DOP is the Italian abbreviation for PDO . American Parmesan is **NOT** suitable.

Grana Pradano

This is a slightly different type of parmesan made in another area of Northern Italy. Both block and grated forms of this cheese with the DOP seal is allowed.

Jarlsberg

This cheese is made in a similar way to Emmentaal.