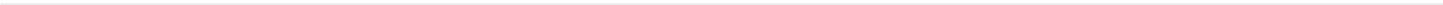




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Lactose Intolerance and Health Disparities Among African Americans and Hispanic Americans: An Updated Consensus Statement

Rahn K. Bailey MD, FAPA (Chairman, President)   ... Sharon Denise Allison-Otley MD (Executive Director)

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[https://doi.org/10.1016/S0027-9684\(15\)30113-9](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0027-9684(15)30113-9)

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Abstract

Dairy foods contribute nine essential nutrients to the diet including calcium, potassium and vitamin D; nutrients identified by the 2010 Dietary Guidelines for Americans as being "of public health concern" within the U.S. population. Milk and milk product intake is associated with better diet quality and has been associated with a reduced risk of chronic diseases or conditions including hypertension, cardiovascular disease, metabolic syndrome, Type 2 Diabetes and osteoporosis. Some research also indicates dairy food intake may be linked to reduced body fat, when accompanied by energy-restriction. On average, both African Americans and Hispanic Americans consume less than the recommended levels of dairy foods, and perceived or actual lactose intolerance can be a primary reason for limiting or avoiding dairy intake. True lactose intolerance prevalence is not known because healthcare providers do not routinely measure for it, and no standardized assessment method exists. Avoiding dairy may lead to shortfalls of essential nutrients and increased susceptibility to chronic disease. This updated Consensus Statement aims to provide the most current information about lactose intolerance and health, with specific relevance to the African American and Hispanic American communities. Topics covered include diagnostic considerations, actual and recommended dairy food intake and levels of consumption of key dairy nutrients among African Americans and Hispanic Americans; prevalence of self-reported lactose intolerance among various racial/ethnic groups; the association between dairy food intake, lactose intolerance and chronic disease; and research-based management recommendations for those with lactose intolerance.

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Keywords

dairy; lactose intolerance; African Americans; Hispanic Americans; chronic disease; National Medical Association; Black; milk

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Financial Disclosure: This study was supported by an unrestricted educational grant from the National Dairy Council.

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