



Healthlink

A publication by the Women, Infants & Children (WIC) Program
Chester County, Pennsylvania.

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"Good Nutrition Today For A Healthier Tomorrow"

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Toughkenamon WIC Clinic - New and Improved!



During the 2nd week of November, 2009, the WIC Clinic in Toughkenamon moved 2 blocks south to a new location. Toughkenamon, located between Kennett Square and Avondale in southern Chester County, has been the site of one or our three permanent WIC clinics for many years, but the old building was no longer large enough to accommodate our needs.

The address of the new clinic is
1120 Newark Road, Suite 400-A,
P.O. Box 214,
Toughkenamon, PA 19374.

WIC has the middle suite of the long, gray building of the Tower Center with easy accessibility and a huge parking lot located at the end of the building. The telephone number, 610 268-5153, and the fax number, 610 268-5148, did not change.



With the increased waiting room space, our participants are able to allow their children to play with the toys provided, have room for their infant carriers, and chat with the friends they find

there. The number of participants has steadily increased in the Toughkenamon Clinic in the last few years with about 1,575 participants served each month.

The new site has 2 clerical areas. At the first area, participants are required to provide demographic and income information which is collected every 6 months for continued participation in WIC. They also fill out nutrition information for themselves if they are a pregnant, postpartum or breastfeeding woman, and/or for their infants

and children until they reach the age of five and can no longer receive WIC benefits.

The 2nd clerical area is where participants receive their WIC vouchers and appointments for their next WIC visit.



Lab space in our Toughkenamon Clinic has expanded so the weight, height, and hemoglobin (if needed) can be easily checked for our participants. With easy accessibility to all staff members, the new lab makes the health assessment of the program easier to do and less stressful for children.

Nutritionists now have three private areas to discuss nutrition or breastfeeding education with our clients. Education has long been a highlight of the WIC program, requiring a one-on-one nutrition assessment of our participants every 6 months for children, once during a pregnancy and once after delivery for women. And now, every 3 months nutritionists are also checking with the caregiver to see if specific nutrition goals are being put into place with our WIC families.

With the addition of these new working spaces, our Toughkenamon site can now conduct triple clinics, roughly 3 families every 30 minutes, which allows us to serve more families in a timely manner.

The transition to a new location has been popular with both participants and WIC staff. We know that it will better serve the needs of WIC families in that part of our county.



Have trouble drinking milk? So did our ancestors!



According to a recent BBC News article, analysis of Neolithic remains lead us to believe that early man could not digest cow's milk, and only after a specific gene spread in the population did milk become a staple of our diets. The gene made it possible for our small intestines to produce lactase, the enzyme that breaks down lactose, or milk sugar, into 2 more simple sugars, glucose and galactose, which can be absorbed into our bloodstreams.

The uneven development of this gene in all populations might also explain why so many African American, Asian, Hispanic, and Native American people complain of lactose intolerance more than those of us with European ancestors.

Whatever the reasons, it is a fact that many people do not digest milk products well, leading to the terms lactose intolerance or lactase deficiency. It should be noted that lactose intolerance is not the same as a milk allergy, which is caused by a reaction to the proteins found in dairy products and might be life-threatening. Most people with lactose intolerance have discomfort when they eat foods that contain milk, causing the most common symptoms of diarrhea, nausea, abdominal cramps, bloating, and/or gas. The symptoms occur when the undigested lactose makes its way into our colon.

Generally speaking, adults have greater issues with lactose intolerance than children. Scientists believe that most of us are born with generous amounts of lactase but as we age, our body produces less and we develop some intolerance. Thanks goodness we have a lot when we are born because our major diet for the first year of life is milk! Breast milk, of course, is more easily digested, with many infants showing issues with infant formulas based on cow's milk. An exception to this would be premature infants (28 to 32 weeks of gestation) who have not had enough developmental time to produce the lactase enzyme.

Some people develop lactose intolerance after an illness or injury to the small intestine. It might happen as a result of Crohn's or celiac diseases, and become a permanent condition. Often if it is caused by gastroenteritis or a bad stomach virus, the intolerance may clear up in a few weeks with no lasting results.

According to information provided by the Mayo Clinic, there are some things we can do to help us tolerate milk more easily:

- Drink small amounts at a time. With most of us having some intolerance, a smaller serving goes down more easily.
- Get your dairy servings during mealtime with other foods. This slows digestion and allows for better access to lactase.



- Try some different dairy products, not just milk, because they vary in the amount of lactose they contain. Hard cheeses such as Swiss and cheddar, for example, with less lactose, may be tolerated well. Processed dairy foods such as yogurt may also be easier to eat.
- Buy lactose-reduced or lactose-free foods, even if they are a little more expensive. Generally located in the dairy case near regular milk, these products contain all of the necessary nutrients found in regular milk, but have had the lactose treated for better digestion. There are also lactase tablets which can be taken before a meal high in dairy foods.
- Read food labels to look for hidden lactose. Without realizing it, we may be getting lactose in our diets from prepared foods such as cereal, instant soups, salad dressings, milk chocolate and baking mixes. Check the labels for words such as milk, lactose, whey, milk by-products, fat-free dry milk powder, etc.

Why should we be concerned when we can't digest dairy products well? It's because they are excellent sources of calcium, riboflavin, phosphorus, and Vitamins A and D, necessary nutrients in our diet. Children with their rapid growth can be especially vulnerable if they don't regularly drink milk or eat other dairy foods.

At WIC, we are currently providing lactose-reduced or lactose-free milk to our participants who need it, as well as substituting some of their dairy allotment with cheese when they can tolerate it. Soy milk is also available for women with no prescription and for children if their physician requests it. While lactose intolerance isn't going to go away, we have found ways to work around it to make sure our participants stay healthy and grow strong bones.



Veggie Valentine

You may not "carrot" all for me
The way I care for you.
You may "turnip" your nose
When I plead with you.
But if your heart should "beet" with mine
Forever "lettuce" hope
There is no reason in this world
Why we two "Cantaloupe!"

Unknown

WIC is an equal opportunity provider.