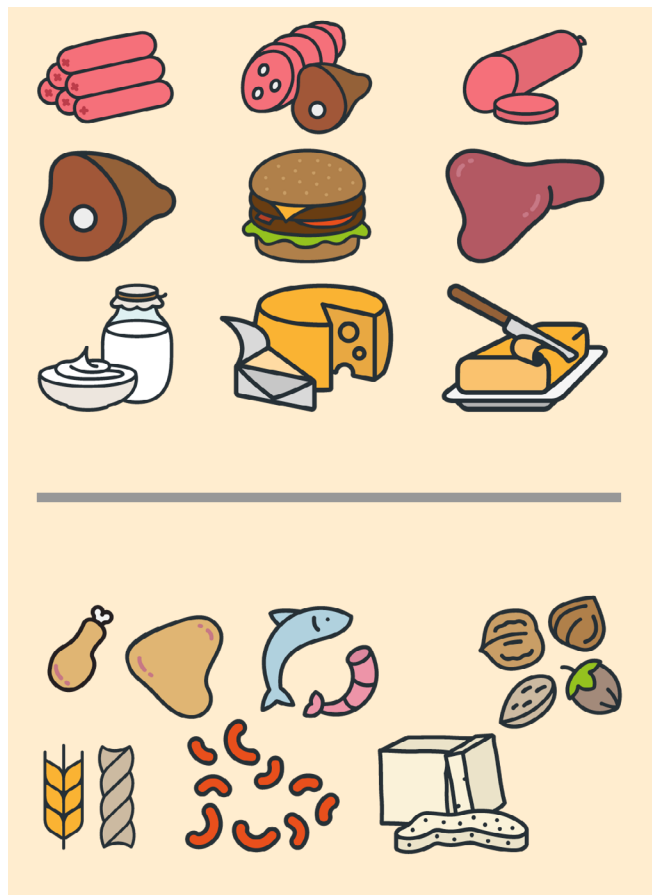


Alpha-Gal Syndrome Food Substitutions

Alpha-Gal Syndrome (AGS) is an allergy to the alpha-gal molecule found in meat and other products from mammals such as beef, pork, goat and sheep. It can develop after a person is bitten by the lone star tick.

Many of the foods recommended below are naturally free of mammal products, but some may have hidden ingredients or come into contact with mammal ingredients during processing. AGS trigger foods can vary from person to person. Talk with your healthcare provider to determine which foods need to be avoided. Check out the MU Extension publication *Shopping Tips for Alpha-Gal Syndrome* (N1352) for more information on hidden ingredients. It is important to carefully read food labels every time. Alpha-gal sensitivity varies from person to person. Consult with your healthcare provider or registered dietitian to determine which specific foods need to be avoided and to develop a safe eating plan tailored to your needs.

If you want to try a food substitute in your favorite recipe, start by buying a small package to test it out. You can also split the item with a friend to save money. Before using it, look up how much you should use in place of the original ingredient. To find food substitutes, try shopping at different places like local grocery stores, natural food stores, or ethnic markets. You can also order many foods online. If you don't see what you need, talk to the store manager or owner to ask if they can order allergy-friendly foods for you.



Original Item	Substitutions
Mammalian meat (Beef, pork, deer, rabbit, lamb/mutton, bison/buffalo/beefalo, etc.)	<p>Poultry: Chicken, turkey, duck, quail, pigeon, goose, pheasant, dove, emu, ostrich, etc.</p> <p>Freshwater fish: catfish, carp, walleye, trout, bass, crappie, etc.</p> <p>Saltwater fish: salmon, tuna, cod, mahi mahi, snapper, flounder fillet, sardines, anchovies, etc.</p> <p>Shellfish: shrimp/prawns, crab, lobster, clams, oysters, scallops, crayfish/crawfish/crawdads, etc.</p> <p>Plant-based proteins & grains: tofu, plant-based meat alternative, beans, quinoa, lentils, farro, barley, rice, oats, etc.</p>
Mammalian fats (Butter, lard, suet, tallow, etc.)	<p>For baking: Shortening, coconut oil, apple sauce, margarine (some kinds), vegan butter, mashed avocado</p> <p>For sautéing/pan frying: Olive oil, vegetable oil, canola oil, coconut oil, corn oil, avocado oil, peanut oil, grapeseed oil, sesame oil</p>
Milk	Plant milk alternatives* such as soy milk**, almond and other nut milks, oat milk, rice milk, coconut milk, flaxseed milk, hemp milk, pea milk
Buttermilk	Plant-based milk & an acid (1 cup plant-based milk + 1 tablespoon vinegar or lemon juice = 1 cup buttermilk)
Cheese	Nutritional yeast***, vegan cheese^
Cream cheese	Vegan yogurt, avocado, vegan cream cheese^, hummus, silken tofu

Original Item	Substitutions
Beef or pork broth / stock	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water • Vegetable broth/stock, vegetable consommé • Vegetable bouillon/base, vegetable bouillon cubes or powder • Seafood broth/stock, seafood bouillon cubes or powder • Water with soy sauce (1 cup water + 1 tablespoon soy sauce = 1 cup broth) • Water with miso paste (1 cup water + 1 tablespoon miso paste = 1 cup broth) • Water with tomato paste (1 cup water + 1 tablespoon tomato paste = 1 cup broth) • Red or white wine, depending on the flavor of the dish (Check that the wine is 'vegan' or 'animal free' because some wines use animal byproducts during processing)
Flavorings [†]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Worcestershire sauce • Liquid smoke • Soy sauce • Nutritional yeast • Miso powder / miso paste • Caesar seasoning ^{^^ †} • Seasoned salts [†] • Mirin (sweet rice wine) • Sesame seeds • Green tea, black tea, other teas • Olives and capers • Dehydrated mushrooms & chilies • Hot sauces [†] • Curry powder or curry paste [†] • Molasses • Pudding mixes, made with plant-based milk • Extracts: vanilla, lemon, almond, orange • Vinegars: white, apple cider, red wine, balsamic • Fermented foods: sauerkraut, kimchi, kombucha

* Plant milk alternatives do not naturally contain calcium and vitamin D, so look for options that have been fortified with both. Make sure the vitamin D comes from plant sources.

** Soy milk is the closest substitute for cow's milk in terms of nutrition.

*** Nutritional yeast is a deactivated form of yeast that is rich in nutrients.



[^] Vegan substitutions for cheese and cream cheese are similar in flavor and texture, but they may not melt the same way traditional cheese does.

^{^^} Caesar seasoning is a dry, powdered seasoning blend designed to imitate the traditional flavor of Caesar dressing and is often sold in vegan form

[†] Natural flavorings can be a common ingredient in some brands. Call food manufacturers to confirm the presence of mammal products in natural flavorings.

References:

Alpha Gal Information. (2022). Try These Substitutions. *Food: First Steps*. Retrieved June 24, 2025, [View source online](#).

Norman-Burgdolf, H., & Cason, A. (2025, April). Alpha-Gal. *Food Allergens*. Retrieved May 22, 2025, [View source online](#).