



Milk Kefir Culture Instruction Manual

Milk Kefir Ingredients

- 1 Table Spoon Live active kefir grains
- ½ Liter Cow milk.(Full Cream Dairy Milk) Pasturized

Equipments Required

- Glass jar
- Cloth Piece - Breathable cover for the jar such as a tight-weave towel, butter muslin, paper towel, or paper coffee filter.
- Rubber band - Band to secure the cover to the jar
- Plastic Strainer - A fine mesh plastic strainer for removing the kefir grains from the finished kefir
- Wooden or Plastic Spoon to separate kefir grains and kefir milk

INSTRUCTIONS FOR MAKING MILK KEFIR

- Transfer the active kefir grains from the container to the Glass Jar
- Add fresh milk. (Pasteurized Fresh Milk can be used directly from packet, or boil the milk and cool down before pouring into the jar). Give a gentle stir in a plastic spoon.
- Cover with a clean cloth secured by a rubber band.
- Place in a warm spot, 68°-85°F, to culture. (example: Kitchen top)
- Culture until milk is slightly thickened and aroma is pleasant. This generally takes 24 hours, but can take less time in warmer temperatures, so keep an eye on your grains.
- After the milk changes texture and culturing is complete, separate the kefir grains from the finished kefir. Place a bowl, transfer the finished Kefir Milk into double mesh nylon strainer, and swirl the curdled milk gently with a help of plastic spoon. The kefir grains remains in the strainer, kefir milk passes to the bowl below.
- Place the kefir grains in a new batch of milk.
- Store the finished kefir in the refrigerator.

HOW TO FLAVOR MILK KEFIR (OPTIONAL)

There a number of different ways to flavor milk kefir: blending it with fruit, blending it with

spices, and using it as a base for other foods, like salad dressings or chilled soup.

- **Blend It With Fruit** - Using the ratio of about 1 cup of fruit per liter of milk kefir, place any fruit in a blender and add milk kefir on top, then blend until smooth. Suitable fruits are blackberry, peaches, mango, banana, even kiwi all taste lively, sweet, and fresh.
- **Blend It Or Sprinkle It With Spices** - Spices not only notch up the flavor, but they notch up the benefits you receive. Cinnamon, for example, isn't just a lovely warm flavor, it's a blood and mood enhancer and helps the body function more optimally, so whether you add a spice in order to flavor your kefir or whether you add a spice and use kefir as a vehicle for getting more beneficial spices in your diet, either way you win.
- You can also add spices in their whole form. For example, turmeric offers whole body wellness and you can juice a fresh turmeric root, and then stir the turmeric juice into the kefir as a flavoring.
- Use it to soak your muesli or on top of your oatmeal.
- **Make Traditional Butter Milk** - Put curry leaves, mint leaves, green chilly and ginger in a blender. Make a paste (add a little water if required for blending). Then add kefir, chilled water, roasted cumin powder, asafoetida and salt. Blend thoroughly for two minutes.

FAQ : (Source - Cultures For Health)

BASICS OF KEFIR

- **What is milk kefir?**
Milk kefir is a probiotic beverage made with milk kefir grains. Milk kefir grains to be used to culture dairy milk or coconut milk.
- **What are milk kefir grains?**
Kefir grains consist of bacteria and yeast existing in a symbiotic relationship. The term "kefir grains" describes the look of the culture only. Kefir grains contain no actual "grains" such as wheat, rye, etc.
- **What does kefir taste like?**
The taste of finished kefir varies greatly based on the type of milk used and the length of time it is cultured. Milk kefir has a sour taste and an effervescent texture.

- Why is my kefir grain not looking like dry pop corn when I strain it?**
 Kefir grain is made from gelatinous white or yellow small granules particles called “grains” which forms a clump. These grains contain the bacteria/yeast mixture clumped together with casein (milk proteins) and complex sugars. When you slightly air dry the grains and roll into clumps, you will get the pop corn size and shape.
- Does milk kefir have the same benefits as water kefir?**
 Water kefir contains fewer strains of bacteria and yeasts than milk kefir, but far more than other cultured products like yogurt or buttermilk.
- Are milk kefir grains reusable?**
 Yes, milk kefir grains are reusable. Once a batch of milk kefir has finished culturing, simply remove the milk kefir grains and place them in fresh milk.
- How long do dairy kefir grains last?**
 If cared for properly, milk kefir grains have an unlimited life span and can be used repeatedly to make kefir.
- I want to consume kefir but I'm allergic to dairy. What can I do?**
 You might try water kefir. Water kefir grains contain no dairy and are grown in filtered water and organic sugar only.
- How will I know when the milk kefir grains are making kefir?**
 Once the milk starts to thicken (similar to the consistency of cultured buttermilk or heavy cream) and the aroma is pleasant, the kefir grains are making kefir.
- How long does it take to make milk kefir?**
 Kefir generally takes 12 to 24 hours to form. The exact amount of time will vary depending on environmental factors, the most important of which is temperature.
- How will I know if I've successfully made kefir? How do I know if I shouldn't drink it?**
 The milk will thicken and can have a tangy or sour aroma and flavor. We always recommend that you refrain from consuming anything that looks, smells, or tastes

unpleasant.

CARING FOR YOUR KEFIR GRAINS

- **Do I need to wash the jar/container between batches of kefir?**
We recommend using a clean container for each batch of milk kefir.
- **Can I use a metal strainer with my kefir grains?**
While plastic is preferred, stainless steel is acceptable. Avoid all other types of metal when working with kefir grains.
- **Do I need to rinse the grains off between batches?**
Not required. There is no need to rinse the grains unless they stop making kefir effectively (which can sometimes be attributed to a buildup of yeast on the grains). If it becomes necessary to rinse the grains, use filtered water if possible to avoid chemical exposure.
- **Can I make kefir only once a week and keep the kefir grains in the refrigerator on the other days?**
We caution against keeping your kefir grains in the refrigerator on a regular basis. Cold temperatures slow the kefir grains down putting them into a state of hibernation. It can be very hard on kefir grains to regularly be put into and then come out of a state of hibernation. It can disrupt the yeast/bacteria balance and may also make the kefir grains less efficient and reliable.
- **Will milk kefir grains multiply?**
Milk kefir grains are known to multiply, but at times they are reluctant to do so. Even if they do not multiply, with proper care, kefir grains can be used repeatedly to brew milk kefir. Generally kefir grains take 6 to 8 weeks to begin multiplying.
- **Will kefir culture in a dark cupboard or in a window (exposed to sunlight)?**
Kitchen top is the best place, cupboards are not ventilated, avoid cupboards. Do not expose culturing kefir to direct sunlight.
- **Can the milk kefir grains be cultured in coconut milk?**

Yes, milk kefir grains can be used to culture coconut milk kefir, though this method will not be completely dairy-free. Use finished water kefir to ferment 100% dairy free coconut milk kefir.

- **Can the milk kefir grains be cultured in almond milk?**
Almond milk is a problem. We have not found any of the kefir cultures to work well with almond milk.
- **Can I use UHT (ultra-high temperature aka ultra-pasteurized) milk to make milk kefir?**
Milk that is “too clean,” such as ultra-pasteurized/UHT milk, or milk that has been heated by microwave, may be too sterile for the milk kefir grains to use as nourishment.
- **Can I use non-homogenized milk to make kefir?**
Yes. Non-homogenized milk makes wonderful kefir. The cream will rise to the top of the kefir just as it does with the milk. Once cultured, the top layer of the kefir will be more yellow in color and very thick, while the skim milk portion at the bottom will be cultured but thinner than homogenized whole milk kefir.
- **How do I take a break from making milk kefir and save the kefir grains?**
Add milk kefir grains to 2-4 cups fresh milk. More milk for longer breaks is best, to keep the grains well fed. Put a tight lid on the container and place in the refrigerator. The milk kefir grains should be safe and healthy for up to 3 weeks. If you want to take a long break for few months, Strain the milk kefir grains from the kefir. Gently rinse the grains with fresh clean water. Blot your milk kefir grains gently with a paper towel to soak up most of the water. Place the grains in a zip lock bag. Add a couple of tablespoons of unsweetened milk powder. Pop into the freezer. You can store for 6 - 8 months.

Trouble Shooting -

- **Why do my Kefir Grains look like ribbons?**
In response to very hot weather we have found that they can stretch out, looking like shreds of ribbons. This can also happen when there is overcrowding in the jar or not enough fat in the milk, squishing or pressing the grains (or blending them) or a

combination of all 4 of these factors. This does not mean they are unhealthy, it is simply their way of adapting to reach more food. Sometimes it simply seems to be a response to warmer weather and they are slightly more 'relaxed', and then binding and coiling upon themselves more in the colder weather. You can try giving it more milk, a less crowded environment (take out some of the grains) or a cooler area to ferment and they will usually return to forming a more coiled shape again. When straining, try not to squish or squeeze the grains with your hands or spoon.

- **Why is my kefir grainy, gritty, lumpy, thin or watery?**

Kefir can become agitated by a new environment. This can be anything from a seasonal change, climate change, temperature change, milk change, or ratio of grains to milk change for example. Kefir grains like a stable environment with minimal and gradual temperature changes. Also keep in mind that kefir in the summer is generally thinner and in the winter thicker. Because there are so many strains of bacteria and yeast in kefir, different temperatures and contents in the milk can make one strain respond and become more or less active, thus resulting in a slight variation to your finished kefir. This is not something to be worried about, it is just a natural adaptation and response by the grains themselves, as they are designed to do.

- **What are the tiny sticky threads between my kefir grains?**

When you move kefir grains apart from one another you may notice some sticky thread-like strings hanging and stretching between them (think pulling a pizza slice and its dangling cheese strings). It will look like fine thread-like spider web material stretching and sticking when the grains are separated from one another. This is actually a great sign that your grains are healthy and growing. These threads are simply known as kefiran by the kefir community and they are a gel forming soluble polysaccharide.

- **What is the orange or hard crust discoloration on the surface of kefir grains?**

Kefir grains can sometimes get encrusted by the fat of the milk. This can happen when the milk is not changed regularly, or if you have been using your grains in cream to ferment sour cream etc. It can also be a result of drying out too much.

- **How do you know if grains are contaminated?**

It's very difficult to have truly contaminated kefir due to the very nature of the billions of cultures in contains. If however it is contaminated, it will be an off color and/or off smell and you will be able to recognize this. In most cases it will just be a fuzzy spoilage mold of some sort (the same stuff that grows on everything else that spoils). Milk that is

already near spoiling or spoiled will usually not produce a good kefir. Also, fermenting too little grains in a near-spoiling milk may encourage the bad bacteria to compete and out-do the small amount of grains (and too warm of a room will encourage this further). As long as you are using clean utensils, washing your hands, keeping the room temperature reasonable and maintaining reasonably clean jars (its ok to re-use them for a few weeks before washing), and covering the jars properly there is little risk of contamination.

- **How do you know if the grains are 'healthy'?**

Kefir grains are very resilient and will strive to maintain their health at all times. As long as your grains are converting milk to kefir that is not 'off' they are just fine. They may get stressed and change shape or smell a bit (more yeasty or more stringy looking), but they will bounce right back given the right conditions. They range from creamy white to a dark ivory and coiled brain-patterned balls to bumpy ribbons.

Kefir Grains in the container packed will not look same, as we add some milk and send you through courier. You can see the grains while straining out the milk using double mesh fine strainer.

Fermenting Jar Picture: Use rubber band to secure the mouth of the jar.

