



Natural Selection for Lactose Tolerance

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Animation
Transcript

Mutations arise at random in a population. Suppose a mutation arises that causes adults to produce lactase in a population that doesn't have any dairy cows. Adults don't drink milk, so producing the lactase enzyme is a waste of energy. The mutation is lost, or remains rare. If this same mutation arises in a population where people have domesticated cows, adults could drink milk without getting sick and gain energy from the sugar in the milk. They would be more likely to have children and pass on their genes. And the mutation would rapidly spread throughout the population.