

ELIMINATION DIET

WHAT IS AN ELIMINATION DIET?

The purpose of an Elimination Diet is to identify foods or food groups that may be having adverse effects on a person's health and it is done in two stages:

- 1 Follow a strict 'chemical-free' elimination diet for approximately 2-4 weeks until your symptoms cease.
- 2 Once you have had 5 days in a row symptom free, foods are gradually reintroduced one-by-one, also known as a food 'challenge', to identify the foods or chemicals that may be causing your reactions or symptoms.



How do I know this diet is right for me?

People's reaction may vary to different foods and food chemicals which means there is no one diet that suits everyone. Before making any changes to your diet, consult your practitioner to make sure it is appropriate for you. There is a difference between food allergies and food intolerances, and it is best to follow this process under the guidance of a qualified healthcare practitioner.



What to expect

Around 25% of people experience 'withdrawal' symptoms during the first week of an elimination diet which may include fatigue, irritability, headaches and increased hunger. Symptoms typically resolve within 1-3 days. The best support during this time is to rest and hydrate well.

Eating out and at celebratory events can be a challenge while undergoing the elimination diet, therefore it is best to plan your meals in advance and schedule the diet during a quieter time if you can. Plan your elimination diet meals and shopping lists in advanced and co-ordinate them with family meals as best as you can. Your practitioner may provide you with resources and recipes to make this achievable.




















Read labels

Packaged foods commonly contain hidden allergens. 'Flour' usually means wheat, 'vegetable oil' may mean corn oil and 'casein' and 'whey' are dairy products. If you are taking supplements, your practitioner will ensure they are free from the ingredients outlined on the following page.

Sample Elimination Diet

There are variations to elimination diets depending on what practitioner you see. On page 2 is an example collated from Australian hospital allergy units.



FOOD GROUP		AVOID	ENJOY
	Corn	Whole corn & foods made with corn such as corn chips, tortillas & popcorn. Also avoid products that contain corn oil, vegetable oil from an unspecified source, corn syrup, corn sweetener, dextrose & glucose.	-
	Vegetables	Tomatoes (fruit), eggplant, potatoes, zucchini, capsicum, cucumber, broccoli, onion & anything not on the 'enjoy' list. Avoid pickled or processed vegetables.	Iceberg lettuce, carrot, celery and sweet potato (all washed & peeled)
	Fruits	Oranges, grapefruit, lemons, limes, tangerines & all dried fruits.	Pears, Golden delicious apples (all washed & peeled)
	Dairy	Milk, cheese, butter, yoghurt, sour cream, cottage cheese, whey, casein, sodium caseinate & calcium caseinate.	Unsweetened rice milk (check all listed ingredients)
	Wheat	Breads, pasta, flour, baked goods, durum semolina & any foods containing these. Avoid all grains (other than rice) & gluten-containing products.	Rice noodles, rice papers, rice crackers, rice cakes, puffed rice
	Eggs	Whites & yolks from chicken, duck & quail eggs & any product containing eggs.	-
	Soy	All	-
	Legumes	All	-
	Nuts and seeds	All nuts and seeds including nut butters and nut flours/meals.	-
	Meats	Beef, pork, any processed meats such as sausages (includes chicken & lamb) & deli meats or marinated meats.	Chicken, turkey & lamb
	Seafoods	All	-
	Condiments & sauces	All herbs (dried or fresh), spices, seasonings, sauces & vinegar.	Fresh parsley & a small amount of table salt
	Oils	All vegetable oils & products containing vegetable oils such as mayonnaise, coconut oil or nut & seed oils.	Cold-pressed olive oil
	Beverages	Tap water, soft drink, cordial, juice, milk, both caffeinated & decaffeinated coffee & tea & any beverage containing alcohol.	Filtered water or bottled spring water in glass bottles
	Food additives	Artificial colours, flavours, preservatives, texturing agents & artificial sweeteners. Grapes, prunes & raisins that are not organically grown may contain sulphites & should be avoided.	-
	Refined sugars & sweeteners	Table sugar & any foods such as lollies, soft drinks, pies, cakes, chocolate & sauces that contain sugar. Avoid molasses, honey, maple syrup, barley malt syrup, fruit concentrate sucrose, sucralose (E955), high-fructose corn syrup, corn syrup, fructose, cane juice, glucose, dextrose, maltose, maltodextrin, levulose & aspartame (E951).	-
	Known allergies	Any food you know you are allergic to, even if it is allowed in this diet.	-

****Use organic produce & products as much as possible***



Other considerations

Avoid as many chemicals as you can during this time. Consider using natural makeup and beauty products, deodorant and toothpaste and avoid perfumes, commercial creams and hair treatments as they may contribute to symptoms and reactions.



How to reintroduce food groups

Your practitioner may provide you with a specific order in which to reintroduce foods, and this is usually from least reactive food group to most reactive. Introduce one single food group to the elimination diet for one day only and monitor symptoms for 2 days. Most food reactions occur between 5 minutes and 12 hours after consumption, however, some reactions occur after 48 hours or more. If you have no observable symptoms after 2 days, you may try introducing another food. The entire process may take 5-6 weeks.



Keep track of your symptoms

Keep a symptom diary during the elimination and reintroduction time and monitor symptoms that are appropriate for you such as sleep, mood, energy, abdominal pain or bloating, skin rashes, joint pain and inflammation, headaches, sinus or respiratory issues or bowel changes. See your practitioner at any time that you are concerned about your symptoms.

FOODS TO HELP HEAL YOUR GUT

Many people who suffer from food allergies and intolerances have underlying gut dysfunction. Once you have completed an elimination diet and have identified the foods and food groups you need to avoid, you can begin to include foods to help heal your gut and improve the symptoms associated with leaky gut.

Fibre



Prebiotic fibre provides essential fuel for the good bacteria found in the large intestine and helps to promote a balanced microbiome and healthy gut function. When good bacteria consume fibre, they produce beneficial short chain fatty acids, such as butyrate which inhibit the growth of dysbiotic flora and pathogens and provide protection for the intestinal lining. Foods such as oats, lentils, beans, nuts and seeds, along with supplements containing psyllium have good levels of soluble fibre and provide bulk to the stool. Insoluble fibres promote normal movement of our intestinal contents and encourage the elimination of waste and healthy daily bowel motions. Fruits and vegetables are a great natural source of fibre. Include a variety of vegetables that are all the colours of the rainbow such as kale, spinach, red cabbage, zucchini, sweet potato, green beans, carrots, capsicum, peas and mushrooms.

How much?

Try to include 5-7 serves (½ cup cooked or 1 cup raw) of fresh or cooked fruit and veggies daily.

Fermented Foods



Fermented foods such as apple cider vinegar, sauerkraut, miso, kimchi and kombucha are often promoted as ‘probiotic’ beverages or foods. Although these foods are produced through a fermentation process, they don’t actually contain a high level of probiotic microbes. However, they do support the production of digestive enzymes, taking stress off the digestive tract to allow gut healing.

How much?

1-2 serves a day with meals (eg. 1 Tbsp apple cider vinegar as a salad dressing or 1Tbsp pickled ginger on your Poke bowl).

Bone broth



Homemade bone broth is super nutritious and an excellent source of gelatin which contains high levels of the collagen forming amino acids glutamine, glycine and proline. Along with other nutrients they benefit the gut by reducing inflammation, healing the gut by strengthening the protein bonds of the intestinal lining and aiding digestion by supporting gastric secretions. Bone broth is also high in trace minerals such as calcium, magnesium and phosphorus.

How much?

Include at least 1 cup per day on its own or as a base for soups and casseroles.

Anti-inflammatory foods



Systemic or localised inflammation may impact the gut in a range of ways including promoting intestinal permeability and disrupting to the balance of beneficial flora in the gut. This can then have a negative effect on nutrient absorption and increase the chances of developing food intolerances and allergies.

Foods such as turmeric, ginger and digestive teas (licorice, marshmallow, peppermint and chamomile) are simple and easy to include in your daily routine and can have a strong effect on reducing inflammation in the gut.

Foods containing antioxidants also exert a strong anti-inflammatory effect that can be beneficial for gut healing by counteracting the effects of free radicals. Foods high in antioxidants include broccoli sprouts, green tea, garlic, berries and dark chocolate.

How much?

Herbal teas are generally safe to consume a couple of times per day and fresh ginger and turmeric (around 1 Tbsp) can be grated straight into cooking. Antioxidant-rich foods can be enjoyed multiple times a day in smoothies and salads or however you desire.

Healthy fats



Healthy fats from avocado, oily fish and coconut oils provide essential fatty acids which are required for a healthy intestinal mucosal barrier and transportation of other nutrients from the gut. Some essential fatty acids such as omega-3 fatty acids can act as prebiotics and feed the beneficial flora, supporting a healthy balance in the gut.

How much?

2 serves of oily wild-caught fish per week, ½ avocado every other day, cook with coconut oil and use 1 Tbsp cold-pressed olive oil in salad dressings.

PRACTITIONER NOTES:



Bio Concepts Pty Ltd

19A Guardhouse Road, Banyo QLD 4014.

www.bioconcepts.com.au