

Anti-Inflammatory Diet

Modified from *Tracking Down Hidden Food Allergies* by William Crook, M.D.

Purpose: To identify hidden food allergens that may be causing some or all of your symptoms. During the elimination period, all common allergens are completely eliminated from the diet for two to three weeks. After your symptoms improve, foods are added back, one at a time, to determine which foods provoke symptoms.

Directions:

- ♦ Ideally, a three-week elimination diet should be undertaken to accurately assess food intolerances or irritants. However, one may notice a favorable response within two weeks.
- ♦ Eat the hypoallergenic diet for 21 days as above.
- ♦ Keep a diet diary and record any symptoms that develop during the period.
- ♦ Introduce one food that has been omitted for the last 1-21 days and eat it at each meal for 1 day. If there is a reaction to the food, discontinue eating that food and wait for the symptoms to clear before introducing the next food. Additional information about reintroduction is listed later in this document.
- ♦ If there is no reaction from the food, you may assume that you are not sensitive to it.
- ♦ Re-introduce a second food in the same way, and observe any effects.
- ♦ Continue re-introduction of additional foods until all foods have been checked.

Try to eat only organically grown foods as they reportedly have two to five times more nutrients and it will decrease exposure to pesticides. There is no restriction on the amount of food you can eat. The foods listed are only examples of foods to eat. Try to compose meals of approximately 40% carbohydrates, 30% protein and 30% healthy fats. Try to eat any one food no more than five times a week. Plan your meals ahead of time and try to find at least ten recipes you enjoy.

For the time being, avoid the following foods:

all animal milks, cheeses, etc		all corn products
eggs	any processed food	fried foods
all wheat (ideally gluten free)	meat-red meat (beef, pork)	Alcohol
citrus fruits	all fruit juices	all dried fruit that have sulfur
peanuts/peanut butter	caffeinated black teas and coffee	Nightshades: peppers, eggplant, tomatoes, potatoes, zucchini.

Steamed Vegetables:

- ♦ The primary reason for using steamed vegetables is that steaming improves the utilization or the availability of the food nutrients allowing the gastro-intestinal mucosa to repair itself. Use minimal raw vegetables except as a salad. Include at least one green vegetable daily.

- ♦ Eat a variety of any and all vegetables (except tomatoes and potatoes) that you can tolerate. It is best to try and eat mostly the lower carbohydrate (3, 6%) vegetables. For example:
 - 3% - asparagus, bean sprouts, beet greens, broccoli, cabbage, cauliflower, celery, Swiss chard, cucumber, endive, lettuce, mustard greens, radish, spinach, watercress;
 - 6% - string beans, beets, Brussel sprouts, chives, collards, eggplant, kale, kohlrabi, leeks, onion, parsley, red pepper, pumpkin, rutabagas, turnip, zucchini;
 - 15% - artichoke, parsnip, green peas, squash, carrot;
 - 20+% - yam.

Add your favorite spices to enhance the taste of these vegetables.

Grains:

- ♦ Eat one to two cups of cooked grains per day of those you tolerate, unless you have indications of high insulin levels such as overweight, high blood pressure, high cholesterol or diabetes.
- ♦ Allowed grains include: amaranth, barley, buckwheat, millet, oatmeal, quinoa, basmati or brown rice, rye, teff.
- ♦ Other grain foods that may be eaten are rice crisps and wasa crackers.

Legumes:

- ♦ Eat a variety of any legumes that you are able to tolerate. Soak for 48-72 hours and cook slowly: split peas, lentils, kidney beans, pinto beans, fermented soy (tempeh or miso), mung beans, garbanzo beans, aduki and azuki beans.

Fish:

- ♦ Poach, bake, steam, or broil deep-sea ocean (not farmed) fish (cod, haddock, halibut, mackerel, sardines, summer flounder, wild Alaskan salmon) is preferred-no shellfish (shrimp, lobster, crab, clam).

Chicken/Turkey:

- ♦ Eat only the meat of free-range or organically grown chicken or turkey. Bake, broil or steam.

Fruit:

- ♦ Eat only 1 or 2 pieces of practically any fruit except citrus. If possible, it is preferred to eat the fruit baked (such as a baked apple or pear). Like the vegetables, try to eat mostly the low carbohydrate fruits. For example:
 - 3% - cantaloupe, rhubarb, strawberries, melons;
 - 6% - apricot, blackberries, cranberries, papaya, peach, plum, raspberries, kiwi;
 - 15% - apple, blueberries, cherries, grapes, mango, pear, pineapple, pomegranate;
 - 20+% - banana, figs, prunes, any dried fruit.

Sweeteners:

- ♦ Occasionally maple syrup, rice syrup, barley syrup, raw honey or stevia – use ONLY with meals.
- ♦ Absolutely no sugar, NutraSweet, or any other substitution sweetener is allowed.

Seeds and Nuts:

- ♦ Grind flax, pumpkin, sesame or sunflower seeds and add to steamed vegetables, cooked grains, etc. You may also eat nut and seed butters, such as almond, cashew, sesame, etc.

Butter/Oils:

- ♦ Coconut oil is a suitable butter replacement. If you buy the virgin coconut butter it will maintain its coconut flavor. If you don't buy the virgin ones then it will not have as strong of a flavor.
- ♦ Use extra virgin olive oil for all other situations requiring oil. Never heat the olive oil above a low heat, this causes oxidation of the oil. Only apply to foods after they have been cooked. When cooking on medium to high heat, use oils such as canola, sunflower, or safflower (some companies actually label their oils with optimum heating temperatures).

Spices:

- ♦ To add a delightful flavor to your food choices, add whatever spices you enjoy.

To Drink:

- ♦ Drink a MINIMUM of 6 to 8 glasses of filtered water every day. Sip the water, try to drink one glass per hour. A few drops of chlorophyll will add a pleasant taste. NO distilled water.
- ♦ Small amounts of soy, rice, or oat milk are allowed ONLY on cooked grains or in cooking.

GENERAL SUGGESTIONS:

DO NOT RESTRICT YOUR CALORIES! Start with a good breakfast, eat frequently throughout the day, and consume at least 4 glasses of water per day. If you do not eat enough, you may experience symptoms of low blood sugar, such as fatigue, irritability, headache, and too-rapid weight loss. To ensure adequate fiber, eat beans, permitted whole grains, whole fruits and vegetables, homemade vegetable soup, nuts and seeds. Be sure to chew thoroughly, in order to enhance digestion.

PLAN YOUR MEALS FOR THE WEEK. TAKE A LIST WITH YOU TO THE HEALTH FOOD STORE.

If your schedule is very busy and it is hard to think of what to fix, take some time before starting the diet to make a list of all of your favorite types of foods and possible meal plans. For ideas, look through cookbooks that specialize in hypoallergenic diets. Most meals can be modified easily to meet the requirements of the

diet, without changing the meal plan for the rest of your family. When you go to the health food store, ask for assistance in locating "allowed" versions of breads, crackers, cereals, muffins, soups, etc. Some people find it helpful to prepare additional foods on the weekend, to cut down on thinking and preparation time during the week.

DINING OUT: Do not hesitate to ask questions or make requests. For instance, you could ask for fish topped with slivered almonds, cooked without added seasoning, butter or lemon. Get baked potato with a slice of onion on top. Order steak or lamb chops with fresh vegetables, also prepared without added seasonings (with the exception of garlic & plain herbs). Use salad bars that do not use sulfites as a preservative, and bring your own dressing (oil and cider vinegar with chopped nuts/seeds and fresh herbs). Get into the habit of carrying water, snacks, seasonings, etc., wherever you go, to supplement your meals or to have something on hand if you start to get hungry.

WITHDRAWAL SYMPTOMS: About one in four patients develops mild "withdrawal" symptoms within a few days after starting the diet. Withdrawal symptoms may include fatigue, irritability, headaches, malaise, or increased hunger. These symptoms generally disappear within 2-5 days and are usually followed by an improvement in your original symptoms. If withdrawal symptoms are too uncomfortable, take buffered vitamin C (calcium ascorbate - 1,000 mg in tablet form or 1/4 teaspoon of the crystals, up to 4 times a day) or 3/4 of a teaspoon of "alkali salts" (2 parts potassium bicarbonate, 1 part sodium bicarbonate) in water as needed, up to 3 times a day for several days. These products may be obtained from a local health foods store. In most cases, withdrawal symptoms are not severe and do not require treatment. It is best to discontinue all of the foods abruptly ("cold turkey"), rather than easing into the diet slowly.

TESTING INDIVIDUAL FOODS: It may take 3 weeks for symptoms to improve enough to allow you to retest foods. However, you may begin retesting after 2 weeks if you are sure you are feeling better. If you have been on the diet for 4 weeks and feel no better, contact the office for further instructions. Most patients do improve. Some feel so well on the diet that they decide not to test the foods. This could be a mistake. If you wait too long to retest, your allergies may "settle down" and you will not be able to provoke your symptoms by food testing. Then, you will not know which foods you are allergic to. If reintroducing certain foods causes a recurrence of symptoms, you are probably allergic to those foods. **Food sources for testing.** Test pure sources of a food. Example: do not use pizza to test cheese, because pizza also contains wheat and corn oil. Do not use bread to test wheat, as it contains other ingredients. Organic sources are the best to use for testing, as you will not experience interference from pesticides, hormones or other additives which may be used in commercial preparations.

Test one new food each day. If your main symptom is arthritic pain, test one new food every other day. Allergic reactions to test foods usually occur within 10 minutes to 12 hours after ingestion. However, joint pains may be delayed by as much as 48 hours. Eat a relatively large amount of each test food. For instance, on the day to test milk, add a large glass at breakfast, along with any of the other foods on the "permitted" list. If after one serving, your original symptoms come back, or if you develop a headache, bloating, nausea, dizziness, or fatigue, do not eat that

food anymore and place it on your "allergic" list. If no symptoms occur, eat the food again for lunch and supper and watch for reactions. Even if the food is well tolerated, do not add it back into your diet until you have finished testing all of the foods. If you do experience a reaction, wait until your symptoms have improved before testing the next food. If you wake up the next morning with head or joint pain, nausea, or any other suspicious symptom, you may be experiencing a delayed reaction to the food you tested the day before. If you are uncertain whether you have reacted to a particular food, remove it from your diet and retest it 4-5 days later. You do not have to test foods you never eat. **Do not test foods you already know cause symptoms.**

Foods may be tested in any order. Begin testing on a day you are feeling well (without colds, unusual headaches, flu). Review the list of symptoms to watch for and keep a journal of how you feel.

Dairy tests - Test milk and cheese on separate days. You may wish to test several cheeses on different days, since some people are allergic to one cheese but not another. It is usually not necessary to test yogurt, cottage cheese, or butter separately.

Wheat/Gluten test – Test with any wheat product that doesn't contain eggs or dairy.

Corn test - Use fresh ears of corn or frozen corn (without sauces or preservatives)

Egg test - Test the whites and yolks on separate days, using hard-boiled eggs.

Citrus test - Oranges, grapefruits, lemons, and limes. Test these individually on four separate days. The lemon and lime can be squeezed into Perrier or seltzer. In the case of orange and grapefruit, use the whole fruit.

Optional tests - The following foods and beverages are considered undesirable, regardless of whether or not you are allergic to them. If any of them are not now a part of your diet, or if you are fully committed to eliminating them from your diet, there is no need to test them. However, if you have been consuming any of them regularly, it is a good idea to test them and find out how they affect you. Reactions to these foods and beverages may be severe in some cases. They should be tested only on days that you can afford to feel bad.

Coffee and tea tests (separate days) - Do not add milk, non-dairy creamer or sugar. May add soy milk. If you use decaffeinated coffee, test it separately. Coffee, tea, decaffeinated coffee, and decaffeinated tea are separate tests.

Sugar test - Put 4 teaspoons of sugar in a drink or on cereal, or mix with another food. **Chocolate test** - Use 1-2 tablespoons of pure baker's chocolate or Hershey's cocoa powder.

Alcohol test (test this last) - Beer, wine, and hard liquor may require testing on different days, as the reactions to each may be different. Have 2 drinks per test day, but only if you can afford not to feel well that day and possibly the next day.

Food additive test - Buy a set of McCormick's or French's food dyes and colors. Put 1/2 teaspoon of each color in a glass: Add one teaspoon of the mixture to a glass of water and drink. If you wish, you may test each color separately.

AFTER THE TESTING IS FINISHED: IT IS TIME TO RETURN TO THE DOCTOR'S OFFICE FOR A FOLLOW-UP VISIT:

When you are within 10 days or so of completing your testing, call the office for an appointment. Bring your journal with you, so you may review your experiences with the doctor.

SYMPTOMS THAT MAY BE DUE TO FOOD ALLERGY OR SENSITIVITY:

General: Fatigue, anxiety, depression, insomnia, food cravings, obesity.

Infections: Recurrent colds, urinary tract infections, sore throats, ear infections, yeast infections.

Ear, Nose and Throat: Chronic nasal congestion, postnasal drip, fluid in the ears, Meniere's syndrome.

Gastrointestinal: Irritable bowel syndrome, constipation, diarrhea, abdominal cramping, ulcerative colitis, Crohn's disease, gallbladder disease.

Cardiovascular: High blood pressure, arrhythmia, angina.

Dermatologic: Acne, eczema, psoriasis, canker sores (aphthous ulcers), hives.

Rheumatologic: Muscle aches, osteoarthritis, rheumatoid arthritis. **Neurologic:** Migraines and other headaches, numbness.

Miscellaneous: Asthma, frequent urination, teeth grinding, bedwetting, infantile colic.

Note: most of these disorders have more than one cause, but food allergy is a relatively common and frequently overlooked cause.

ADDITIONAL READING:

Anti-inflammatory cookbook by Dr. Jessica Black

Allergy Self Help Cookbook

Recipes From an Ecological Kitchen

If It's Tuesday, It Must Be Chicken (a primer on rotation diets)

References:

Dickson Thom, DDS, ND, Natural health Choices Clinic

Alan Gaby, MD

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