



Gut Health *Elimination Diet* How To Guide

GET A BETTER
UNDERSTANDING
OF HOW TO IMPLEMENT
THIS METHOD

Elimination Diet 101

What is an Elimination Diet?

This method of eating is a temporary diet that was designed to give the body a break from inflammatory and gut damaging foods. The goal is that by eliminating foods that can cause increased permeability of the gut (leaky gut) and hormone issues, the body can restore balance.

Conditions related to food sensitivities and leaky gut are very common, under diagnosed, and often misunderstood. Nutrition is one tool that, when done right, can reduce inflammation throughout the body. This then provides the body with the fuel it needs to heal, rather than over burdening the body with toxins and gut damaging foods.

The goal of this elimination diet is to heal the gut lining, restore the gut microbiome (the balance of living organisms within our gut), calm inflammation throughout the body, and to understand if you have sensitivities to foods (or food groups). Your symptoms should be monitored closely during this process.

What are the Stages of an Elimination Diet?

There are two main phases of any elimination diet: the elimination stage and the reintroduction stage.

During the **elimination phase** of this method, the following food groups will be eliminated: Grains, dairy, eggs, soy, corn, gluten, nightshades, nuts and seeds, legumes, sugar (aside from very small amounts of honey or maple), highly processed oils, artificial sweeteners, and coffee/caffeinated drinks. Meals should be focused on nutrient dense foods and variety. The elimination phase should last no less than 30 days.

During the **reintroduction phase**, each food group will be reintroduced independently. Deciding on which foods to reintroduce first will depend on the person's history with food. For example, if the person suspects that they have a sensitivity to nuts, then this would be introduced last. If there is a reaction when a new food group is reintroduced, the food must be eliminated once again and the person should wait until symptoms subside before reintroducing the next food. See below for more details on the reintroduction phase.

Reintroduction of Food Groups

Why reintroduce food groups?

The purpose of the elimination phase is to give the body time to heal, it is not meant to be a permanent solution. You likely do not need to eliminate all of these foods long term to feel your best. By reintroducing foods slowly, you will be able to recognize how your body reacts to certain foods or food groups to get a better understanding of whether or not these foods can safely be a part of your regular diet.

How do I know whether or not I am ready to reintroduce foods?

Ask yourself these two questions:

- 1) Have I completed the elimination phase for at least 30 days?
- 2) Have my symptoms significantly subsided?

If you feel your symptoms are still decreasing, it is recommended to continue with the elimination phase until they have completely gone away or they have plateaued.

What symptoms should I be paying attention to?

There is a very wide range of symptoms related to leaky gut and food sensitivities but here are common symptoms to be tracking.

- Headaches
- Nausea
- Anxiety/depression
- Cramping (stomach or otherwise)
- Constipation
- Diarrhea
- Gas
- Bloating
- Dry skin/hair
- Brittle nails
- Itching
- Seasonal allergy like symptoms
- Fatigue
- Afternoon energy dips
- Brain fog
- Acid reflux or heartburn
- Frequent infections (such as yeast or fungal infections)
- Skin rash or irritation
- Acne
- Joint pain
- Muscle/tendon aches or pains
- Sleep disturbances
- Night sweats

Reintroduction of Food Groups Cont.

How do I reintroduce foods?

When you reintroduce a new food, use this method:

- Eat one teaspoon of the new food being reintroduced and wait 15 minutes. If there is a reaction, stop there and eliminate this food.
- If there is no reaction, eat a full portion of the food.
- If there is still no reaction by the next day, eat two portions of that food group. Wait 3-7 days.
- If you do not have any reaction after 3-7 days, you can bring this food back into your diet and move onto the next food.

What is the best order to reintroduce foods?

When reintroducing foods, start with the most nutrient dense but also the least likely to cause a reaction. This particular order of foods for the reintroduction phase has been the most studied as a part of the autoimmune protocol diet. If you have a known food sensitivity or you suspect you are sensitive to a certain food group, wait and introduce this food group last. Below is the most common order of reintroducing foods, but you can modify this if needed. Work with your coach to determine the best order for you to reintroduce foods.

- Egg yolks
- Legumes (only including the beans with edible pods)
- Nut and seed oils (examples: walnut oil, sesame oil, and almond oil)
- Seed-based spices (examples are black pepper, mustard, celery seed, cardamom. [See here for complete list](#)).
- Ghee (from grass fed cows)
- Coffee (on an occasional basis)
- Cocoa/Chocolate
- Nuts and seeds (whole, flours, and butters)
- Alcohol (in small quantities, only if alcohol was part of your previous diet)
- Egg whites
- Butter (from grass fed cows)
- Coffee (daily basis)
- Nightshades (only eggplant, paprika, bell peppers, peeled white potatoes)
- Lentils, split peas, garbanzo beans
- Grass-fed dairy (milk, cheese, yogurt)
- Remaining nightshades (chili pepper, tomatoes, white potatoes with skin) [See here for a complete list](#)
- White rice
- Other gluten-free grains ([See here for a complete list](#)).
- Other legumes (peanuts, soy beans, English peas)

Things You Must Know Before Starting

Quality Matters!

The quality of your food is extremely important with this diet. If you are eating poor quality meats and plants, your efforts will go to waste. Here is what to look for:

- Organic and 100% grass-fed and finished meats.
- Organics and preferably pasture raised poultry and eggs.
- Wild caught fish. Brands of canned tuna that are low in mercury are Safe Catch and Wild Planet.
- Organic fruits and vegetables (especially those of which you are eating the skin of the fruit or vegetable).
- Clean filtered water (avoid drinking water that has been stored in plastic bottles).
- Keep even natural sugars to a minimum. Fruit should be had in small quantities.

Progress Takes Time

Give this plan some time to take effect. With this protocol you are trying to undo years of damage to the body. The elimination phase should last a minimum of 30 days but, if you have not noticed a significant reduction of your symptoms, more time may be needed for the elimination phase.

Keep Snacking to a Bare Minimum

Though there are some snacks that are allowed during the elimination diet, it is key to keep this to a minimum. In order to improve gut health, reduce inflammation, and improve hormone balance, blood sugars must be kept under control. Snacking on things like fruit and chips or baked goods made with cassava flour or coconut flour can cause blood sugars to spike. It is best to stick with routine and well balanced meals (two or three meals per day). Keep your fruit intake to one or two servings daily.