



Elimination Diet Guide

If you are suffering from **chronic conditions** such as **migraines, adult acne, bloating, indigestion, frequent colds, weight yo-yos (and more)**, there is a high chance that you are suffering from a **food intolerance**. The majority of people in the Western world have some form of food intolerance. However, most of them do not know it and do not make the connection between food and sickness. Many are sick of being sick after having dealt with too many doctors, medications, and no relief.

If you are suffering from any of these:

- Weight yo-yos or pounds that just won't go away no matter what you do
- Migraines and headaches
- Skin problems (acne, eczema)
- Bloating, stomach cramps and indigestion
- Candida and other yeast infections
- Thyroid malfunction (including Grave's or Hashimoto's Disease)
- Fatigue and lethargy
- Colds, flues and sinus infections

... it's very likely you are food intolerant.

The most common food groups that cause intolerance are:

- Gluten (this means wheat, rye, barley and spelt)
 - Dairy products (milk, yoghurt and cheese)
 - Eggs
 - Soy and soy-based products
 - Corn
- } The "Big 5"
- Yeast
 - Citrus fruit
 - Nightshades (peppers, tomatoes and eggplants)
 - Fructose
 - Nuts and seeds

Most people find the knowledge of their intolerance to be a life-changing experience. It signals a new journey. This is why:

- Once you eliminate what you are intolerant of, **you will feel heavens better** (lighter, sharper, energized, younger, slimmer, sexier). Imagine a life without headaches, constant bloating, clear skin and finally saying goodbye to that belly pouch that you tried to lose for years?



- Looking for alternatives (to gluten, eggs, dairy, etc.) will **open a new world of possibilities** from the different cooking styles to worldly cuisines you would have not otherwise tried. Eaten Ethiopian before? How about Moroccan tajine with a preserved lemon over quinoa? Teff flour chocolate muffins (and vegan too) can taste better than the “regular” wheat-based muffins. Almond or coconut butter instead of dairy-based butter? You see what I mean?
- Many people, after having made the dietary switch, find themselves **cleaning up other parts of their lives too**, such as quitting smoking and getting out of toxic relationships and habits.

What benefits will I experience?

Most people find themselves to be feeling wonderful when on this diet. This is because a substance that has been toxic for so long is now eliminated and the **healing process has begun**. You too, will find yourself:

- **Freed of the symptoms** you came here with.
- **Energized**, even if fatigue was not your issue.
- **Sharper** in mind and spirit.
- **Slimmer**; yes! When your body is chronically inflamed it stores fat. Now you know why that stubborn belly fat never wanted to go away.
- **Radiant**; people will tell you your eyes and skin glow.
- **Prevented from future chronic diseases**.

Potential Side Effects:

The elimination diet is a gentle form of a detox. There are two reasons for this:

1. **Organic, Whole Food**: You are eliminating processed foods from your life.
2. **Food Sensitivities**: You are eliminating food that your body sees as toxic – food that your body is sensitive to.

Some potential side effects include:

- Weird dreams
- Body odor
- White coating on tongue
- Pimples
- Moodiness
- Nausea
- Poor sleep
- Headaches

These symptoms vary from person to person. They are completely normal (most people experience some) and will go away. Don't worry if you experience any of them. They are natural signs that your body is detoxing, which is what we want to happen.



What is the Elimination Diet?

It's a plan to help you find out what food is making you sick in three simple steps:

Step 1: OBSERVE
Step 2: ELIMINATE
Step 3: CHALLENGE

You have two options for the Elimination Diet:

Option 1: Slow Track

Eliminate one food category at a time. This is a gentle but slow process and takes weeks to complete. You will eliminate only one food group (e.g. soy) for two weeks, and then re-introduce it one day and observe your reactions to it for the following for 2 days. You will then eliminate another food group (e.g. corn) for two weeks, and then re-introduce it and observe for 2 more days. You continue this with the “Big 5” until you have done all of them. This process takes a total of 90 days (about 13 weeks) to complete.

Option 2: Fast Track

Eliminate all foods (big 5s) in one go and then after 2-3 weeks re-introduce them one at a time every 3 days. This may be more of a challenge, because you have to eliminate 5 food categories all at once, but it takes no longer than 34-41 days (5-6 weeks) to complete.

Note for both tracks: If there are any foods that you know you have sensitivities to (e.g. pineapple, nuts, apples, etc), or you had an IgG (food tolerance panel) done, cut those out as well.

Slow Track Option

Step 1: OBSERVE

The purpose of this phase is to get a rough idea or an indication as to what is making you sick. Keep a **Food Journal** (see below) for five days detailing what you eat and drink for breakfast, lunch, dinner and what you snack on. The more details about the food you record, the better. Write down how you feel after you eat certain foods. If you feel bloated or have a headache after a big bowl of pasta, make note of it. You will find yourself getting very in-tune with your body, listening and connecting the symptoms with the food you ate. Remember, **do NOT** change yet what you eat. See the Sample Food Journal at the end of this document for an example of how to keep track.

This step is very important so that you can:

1. Make a connection between the food you eat and how it makes you feel.
2. Start seeing what impacts your eating, e.g. emotions, stress, poor chewing, etc.



3. Begin to understand how healthful or unhealthful you are eating.

Step 2: ELIMINATE

Based on the findings in Step 1, you and I together will decide which food we will start investigating first by cutting it out. If you are aware of any food sensitivities you might have (based on your knowledge of yourself, IgG blood tests or new findings from the Observe phase), we will cut them out too. We will start with the food that has the least effect on you. After 14 days we will see if the symptoms have subsided. Very often they do. We will then start the 3-day Challenge phase for that food type (see below). After the challenge day, we will then return to the elimination phase for the next food category challenge. A typical sequence is: corn, soy, eggs, dairy, and gluten; but it varies per individual. We will continue this process until all foods are investigated.

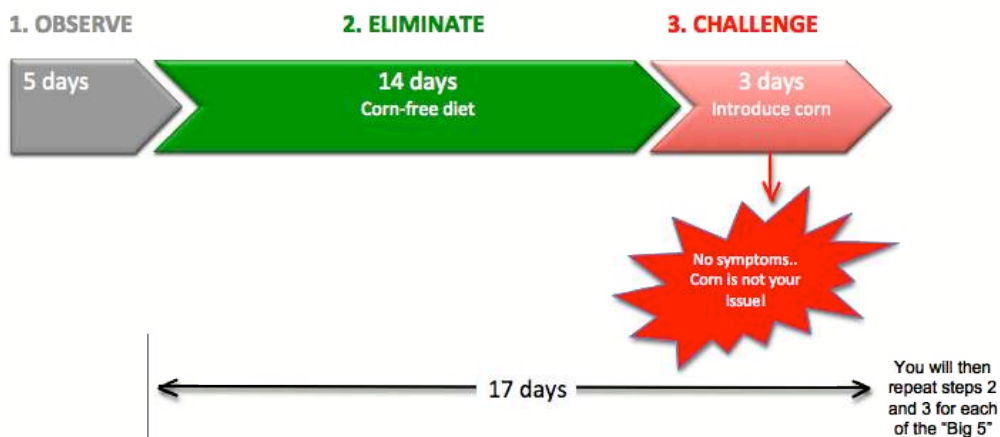
Step 3: CHALLENGE

In this phase you will observe how you respond when the food you eliminated is re-introduced. This will confirm the intolerance/s. You will be asked to introduce say, gluten, in a larger quantity at breakfast, lunch and/or dinner that day – we need you to have at least two meals with gluten. We will then see how you respond over the next two days. Since food intolerance manifests itself with a delayed reaction, we need to wait a full two days to see if any of the symptoms return. Like in the example given below, we will re-introduce corn and wait for two days to see if any symptoms return. We will then re-introduce the next food and do the same. If you have no reaction the first day, you should eat the same food again the next day to see if one occurs. If still no reaction, eat it again the third day. Sometimes it takes more than one introduction of the food before the changes become evident. If after three days of this food there are still no changes, you probably do not have a sensitivity to this food.

When re-introducing dairy:

1. Separate into these categories
 - a. Milk and cheese
 - b. Yogurt, kefir, and cottage cheese
2. Optional: Separate cows/goats/sheep/buffalo milk (cows milk is harder for humans to digest than the other animals)

Example of Slow Track Scenario





Fast Track Option

Step 1: OBSERVE

Refer to Step 1 under Slow Track.

Step 2: ELIMINATE

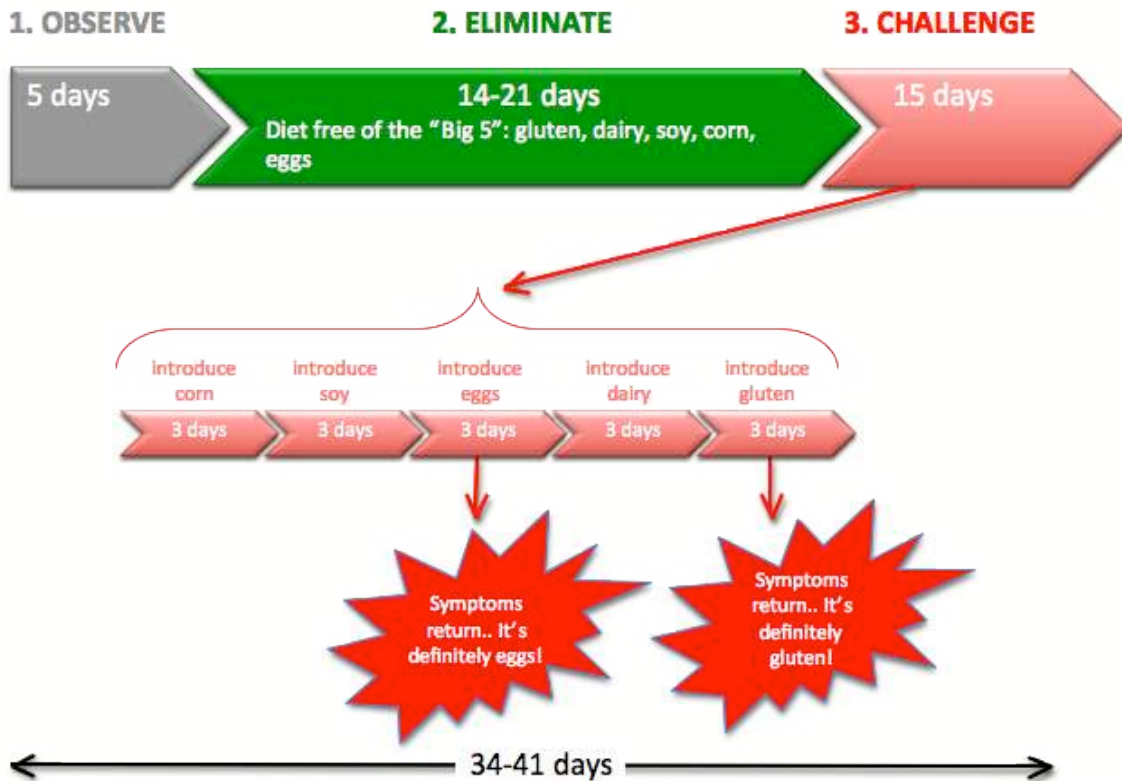
You will be eliminating all of the “Big 5’s” (gluten, dairy, soy, corn, eggs) right off the bat. If you are aware of any food sensitivities you might have (based on your knowledge of yourself, IgG blood tests or new findings from the Observe phase), we will cut them out too. Cut out all the “Big 5’s” (and whatever else) at once and keep them out of your diet for the entire 14-21 days. If you are in a rush, you can complete this step in 14 days, but it is really good to completely free your body of these food substances and give it time to heal.

Step 3: CHALLENGE

Now comes the time to see how your body responds when you re-introduce the food you eliminated. Start re-introducing each of the foods, one at a time, three days apart. Always introduce food that has the most effect on you last and the least effect first. A typical sequence looks like this: corn, soy, eggs, dairy, and gluten. We will choose the progression that is best for you based on your food journal and past experience with that food. Introduce one food back into your diet on one day and observe over the next 2 days how it makes you feel. Keep a food journal detailing what you ate and your body’s reaction to it (example journal at end of document). After the 3 days, introduce the next food back in. Again, observe for 2 days how that makes you feel. If you have no reaction the first day, you should eat the same food again the next day to see if one occurs. If still no reaction, eat it again the third day. Sometimes it takes more than one introduction of the food before the changes become evident. If after three days of this food there are still no changes, you probably do not have a sensitivity to this food. Repeat this with the rest of the “Big 5”. This should give you a clear indication of what foods make you sick.



Example of Fast Track Scenario



I will help you through the Elimination Diet in a few ways:

1. **Meal plans** will be designed for you based on your preferences and free time.
2. **Recipes** will be suggested which are gluten-, dairy-, egg-, corn- and soy-free.
3. If you are intolerant to a certain food, for example, gluten, you will be provided with all the **information** about where gluten is hiding, how to substitute it and where to find stores that support a gluten-free lifestyle.

Useful Tips When Starting the Elimination Diet

1. **Reframe:** Many people have a sense of anxiety and fear of failure about eliminating certain foods from their lives. It is very normal to feel this way. In fact, there is a belief that the more emotionally connected we are with that food, the more we crave it, and the more harmful it is to us. Eliminating that food will cleanse and heal your body. Here is what I recommend for you to focus on and reframe your thoughts:
 - a. It's not forever/permanent – you are only doing it for 14-21 days and you will most likely be able to eat many of the foods again.
 - b. "My body needs my help and I can honor that call for help by giving it a break for 14-21 days." – is what you can tell yourself.



- c. When one door opens, two other open – you might be cutting out a few things but you will be exposed to many foods that you might get to love but never knew existed.
2. **Clean out your kitchen:** Get rid of foods that you are not supposed to eat. If you don't want to throw them out, give them away. Just get it out of the house – you don't want to have any temptations that make this diet difficult. It should be a fun/exciting time where you are trying new things that heal you.
3. **Surround yourself with alternatives:** Look at the Substitutes and Snack List documents you received and the [RECIPES](http://thyroiddietcoach.com/foods-recipes) (<http://thyroiddietcoach.com/foods-recipes>) on our website. These are tools to help you see what options you DO have, and to help you have a plan so that you do not fall off track. It is very important through the Elimination diet that you do not cheat.

Upon Completion of the Elimination Diet

You will now know which foods you are intolerant to. These foods need to be taken out of your diet in order for your digestive track to heal, your symptoms to decrease (or go away completely), and for you to feel better. You should now have an idea of how to live without them and what foods you can introduce instead so you will not feel deprived. If you only had a mild reaction to the food, you may be able to keep it in your diet every four to five days depending on how you feel. If the reaction was significant or was something you don't want to experience at all, you should cut it out completely.

Note: The more we are addicted to a certain food, the more intolerant or sensitive we may be to that food. The good news is that in the process of eliminating the food, the food craving goes away. It is not unusual for a food that you previously were “addicted to” to now gross you out.

You should already be seeing a decrease in the number and intensity of your symptoms. The Elimination Diet is Step 1 of the healing path. It gently detoxifies the body and prepares it for the healing to come. Continue to monitor what you eat and always listen to your body's signals – they are there for a reason.

In case the Elimination Diet does not produce concrete results, there are a couple of things we can do to investigate further.

1. **IgG Food Intolerance test:** test of about 98-300 different foods that could be causing you problems. Most holistic/integrative doctors and naturopaths can run this test for you.
2. **Pulse Test:** This is one quick (but not foolproof) way to find out: by measuring your pulse. Take these steps:
 - Step 1: Measure your pulse (heart rate) over a full 60 seconds.
 - Step 2: Eat the suspected food, preferably after not eating it for a week.
 - Step 3: Wait 10 minutes.
 - Step 4: Check your pulse again. If the pulse increases more than about 10 beats per minute it indicates a reaction.



3. **Kinesiology Food Intolerance test:** test done while holding suspected food against skin.



My Food Journal - *Sample*

Date/Time	Food/Drink Consumed	How I Feel (mood, stomach/digestion, energy level, quality of sleep, skin, aches & pains, etc.)
May 10		
8:00 AM	1 bowl whole grain cereal with low fat milk	
9:30 AM		Feel tired and moody, slight headache, already hungry again
11:30 AM	Water, turkey sandwich on whole wheat bread, potato chips, apple	
12:00 PM		Feel slightly better: less moody, headache gone, still tired
3:00 PM	Small bag of trail mix	
6:30 PM	Roast chicken, 1 bowl of vegetable soup, salad (lettuce, cucumber, tomato, carrot, Italian dressing)	
7:00 PM		Feel much better after dinner
9:00 PM	Bowl of chocolate chip ice cream with a banana	
9:20 PM		Feel exhausted and bloated, just want to go to sleep



My Food Journal

Date/Time	Food/Drink Consumed	How I Feel (mood, stomach/digestion, energy level, quality of sleep, skin, aches & pains, etc.)



Disclaimer

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