



TEXAS LUNG ASSOCIATES

Allergy Clinic

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ELIMINATION DIET

“If a man avoids cheese for several days and then partakes, he will be much injured.”

– Hippocrates 2,000 years ago

The purpose of Elimination diets are to control symptoms of food allergy by taking the offending food out of your diet. They are available in several forms, ranging from removing just the foods we identify as offenders to removing a large portion of your diet.

In its purest form, elimination diets work by removing all possible offending foods, going through a withdrawal period and then gradually adding foods back into your diet.

To be successful, you will need to avoid the foods for 7-10 days. You should continue prescription medications, but stop taking any vitamins, herbs, or over the counter medications that you are taking.

Most people have an initial increase in symptoms and feel worse on the second to fourth day. Common symptoms include headache, fatigue and malaise. You can take Tylenol or Ibuprofen to help these symptoms. A weight loss of three to four pounds usually occurs. You should feel better by the fourth or fifth day, so don't give up.

CLASSIC ELIMINATION DIET

Foods to Avoid

All foods and liquids to which you are known to react.

Avoid all milk products including cheese, butter, ice cream, margarine, yogurt, cream soups, bread, crackers, cookies, cakes, candies, luncheon meats, manufactured and processed foods containing milk.

Avoid egg and egg containing foods including custards, cakes, cookies, ice cream, pies, macaroni, salad dressings, noodles, pancake and waffle mixes, manufactured and processed foods.

Avoid all grains including corn, wheat, rye, barley, rice or products containing these grains

such as breads, cookies, crackers, cereals, batters, luncheon meats, candies, packaged and processed foods.

Avoid all sugar containing foods including candies, cokes, pies, cakes, cereals and processed and packaged foods containing beet or sugar cane.

Avoid all citrus including orange, grapefruit, lemon and all foods containing citric acid.

Avoid all chocolate and cola containing foods including all chocolate candies.

Avoid all forms of pork and beef.

Avoid white potato and any other vegetable eaten more than twice per week.

Avoid all yeast containing foods including bread, wine, vinegar, mushrooms, vitamins, condiments and dried fruits.

Avoid all coffee, tea and alcohol products.

Avoid peanuts, beans (except green beans) and peas.

Foods Allowed

Meats: chicken, turkey (that has not been basted with mild or corn or any other additives i.e. butterball), fish, lamb, shrimp, deer, duck, oysters, clams, lobster, crab, pheasant, frog legs and quail.

Fruits: apples, apricots, bananas, blackberries and blueberries, cantaloupe, cherries, cranberries, coconut, dates, dewberries, figs, grapes, loganberries, mangos, peaches, pears, persimmons, pineapple, plums, prunes, raspberries, strawberries, watermelon.

Vegetables: Sweet potatoes, cabbage, carrots, squash, asparagus, cauliflower, celery, okra, onions, radishes, greens, cucumbers, egg plant, brussels sprouts, kale, avocado, broccoli, parsnips, collards and rutabaga. (Omit any vegetable eaten more than twice per week).

Grains: Rice, barley.

Nuts: Pecans, cashew, almonds, brazil nuts, hazel nuts, chest nuts, pistachios, english walnuts, black walnuts, hickory nuts.

Beverages: Bottled water is best. Unsweetened juices of the berries allowed (e.g. grape juice).

Oils: Safflower and sunflower oils (may use for frying).

Foods may be baked, boiled or broiled or microwaved. You may also fry with safflower or sunflower oil.

ALTERNATIVE ELIMINATION DIET

For a more focused elimination diet that removes only the foods you know you are allergic to, follow the above guidelines excluding only known offenders. **Caution:** by following this diet, you may not identify some offending foods.

General Instructions

Look at your calendar to see if there is any reason to postpone beginning the diet (i.e. a birthday party, holiday or family occasion in the next 3 weeks. You will need several days to shop and get ready. You will have food at home that should not be on the diet. Take several days or a week to use these up. As you use these foods up, transition into the diet using foods allowed on the elimination diet.

Remember, you will probably feel worse on day two, three and four. If you have true food reactions, you should begin to feel better on day three, four and five. You will need to continue the diet for 7-10 days.

If your symptoms begin to clear, call the office and make an appointment for the 7th to 10th day to review your progress and enter the challenge phase. Stay on the diet until that appointment. If you do not have any symptom relief by day 10, call and make an appointment to discuss further options.

Challenge Feeding Phase

If, during the diet, symptoms have ceased or have lessened, you will begin the oral food challenge phase by adding one food daily to your basic meal plan. The food is eaten in its purest form and may be eaten several times a day. If no reaction occurs, the food is considered safe and returned to the diet. A second food is added on day two, a third on day three and so on until all foods are returned to the diet.

Suggested selection and sequence of food to add during the challenge phase:

Citrus – an orange

Egg – boiled egg

Potato – baked or broiled potato

Wheat – cream of wheat

Beef – Broiled beef

Corn – boiled corn on the cob

Milk – glass of milk

Pork – bacon, broiled pork

Sugar – teaspoon of sugar (in milk if it is not an offender or water).

Legume – bean, pea, peanut (if no known allergy)

Yeast – slice of bread if no wheat reaction

Coffee/ tea

During the challenge phase, if a food causes a return of symptoms, that food is eliminated from the diet for eight weeks. The next food to be tested is introduced into the diet only after symptoms have cleared. That usually occurs by one to two days.

After foods that have caused symptoms have been eliminated from the diet for eight weeks, it is re-challenged. If no reaction occurs, it can be eaten every three to four days, but not daily. If symptoms return, the food is again removed from the diet for four weeks and re-challenged. If the food causes a return of symptoms after three to four re-challenges, it is considered a “fixed food reaction” and is removed from the diet permanently.

If you have any questions about the diet or any reaction you are having to the diet, do not hesitate to contact us (940) 382-LUNG (5864).