

ELIMINATION DIET

We are coming to understand that subtle but important **food sensitivities may result in brain inflammation** which contribute to many of the brain issues we see at Amen Clinics.

While there are many people who know they are sensitive or allergic to certain foods, there are significant numbers of individuals who are completely unaware of their body's adverse reaction to a specific food. Unless it's a real allergy that might cause anaphylaxis or a rash, the symptoms are often not immediately apparent, can be subtle, and may even be attributed to another health issue.

Food is the fuel for our bodies and brains, so when eating foods that the body does not process well, multiple systems of health can be affected. Some of the more common health conditions that may be related to food allergies and intolerances include:

- Anxiety
- Asthma or sinus problems
- Depression or mood problems
- Fatigue
- Indigestion/feeling bloated after meals
- Irritable bowel syndrome (IBS)
- Memory issues
- Migraine headaches
- Rashes
- Rheumatoid arthritis or joint pain

An elimination diet is a strategic eating plan designed to remove the foods that commonly trigger adverse food reactions for 3 weeks then reintroduce them slowly, one by one, so that you may identify the foods that may be causing problems.

The elimination period allows time for:

- The inflammatory response to calm down inside the body and brain
- The gut to restore integrity and health
- The liver to clear the byproducts of adverse reactions

ELIMINATION DIET BASICS:

1. All foods that can potentially be problematic for you need to be removed from your diet for about 3 weeks. This gives your body time to heal from any underlying reaction that you may be having.
2. Elimination Diet foods to completely avoid for 3 weeks include:
 - Sugar (including high fructose corn syrup and sugar alcohol such as xylitol and sorbitol)
 - Alcoholic beverages
 - Soy products (including edamame, tofu, soy nuts, soy milk, soy patties)
 - Eggs
 - Citrus fruits: oranges, grapefruits, tangerines (including juices)
 - Grains: rice, corn, millet, quinoa, buckwheat, amaranth, gluten-free breads, gluten-free pastas, and gluten-free oats
 - Cow, goat and sheep milk products: milk, yogurt, cheese, butter
 - Yeast: baker's yeast, brewer's yeast
 - Synthetics: food coloring, "added flavors," sweeteners, preservatives, MSG, hydrogenated oils
 - Gluten allergens: wheat, rye, oats, kamut, spelt, and barley
 - Nightshades: tomato, peppers, white potato, eggplant, jalapeno and cayenne pepper



3. After the 3 weeks, you will reintroduce **ONE** of the restricted foods from the list every 3 days. It is very important to reintroduce foods slowly and one at a time because adverse reactions may be delayed. Symptoms can occur after a few minutes up to 72 hours later!

If there is not an adverse reaction, you can add that food back into your diet. However, if you start to notice symptoms from that food, it is really important to omit it from your diet for 90 days. This will give your immune system a chance to settle down and allow your gut to heal.

The following is a list of adverse symptoms to be aware of:

- Brain fog
- Difficulty remembering
- Mood issues (anxiety, depression, or anger)
- Nasal or chest congestion
- Headaches
- Sleep problems
- Joint or muscle aches
- Pain
- Fatigue
- Skin changes
- Changes in digestion or bowel functioning

After the 90 days, reintroduce the previously adverse food one more time, if you wish, and take note of any continued adverse reactions. Depending upon your immune system, avoidance of certain foods may be temporary or permanent. The goal is to see if your symptoms clear up for good!

RESOURCES:

- [Allergy-free Cooking: How To Survive The Elimination Diet And Eat Happily Ever After](#) by Eileen Rhude Yoder
- [The Elimination Diet Workbook: A Personal Approach to Determining Your Food Allergies](#) by Maggie Moon
- [Food Allergies and Food Intolerance: The Complete Guide to Their Identification and Treatment](#) by Jonathan Brostoff, MD



DAY 1:

BREAKFAST: Salmon Lettuce Wrap

- Salmon
- Red onion
- ¼ avocado
- Romaine lettuce leaves

MID-MORNING SNACK:

- Handful of (¼ cup) cashews

LUNCH:

- 2-5 oz rotisserie chicken
- 1-2 cups steamed broccoli
- ½ cup butternut squash with pinch of cinnamon and 1 Tbsp coconut oil

MID-AFTERNOON SNACK:

- 2-3 Tbsp hummus with 1 cup raw veggies

OR

- 2 Tbsp unsweetened almond butter
- ½ apple

DINNER:

- 2-5 oz grilled steak, lamb or scallops
- ½ cup peas
- 4 oz lite unsweetened coconut milk
- 1 cup carrots and cauliflower
- Large green salad with 1 Tbsp olive oil and fresh squeezed lemon juice

DAY 2:

BREAKFAST: Brain Balancing Smoothie

- ½ cup organic berries or cherries
- 1/8 avocado
- 1 cup spinach
- 1 cup kale or chard
- 1 scoop dried greens
- 4-8 oz unsweetened coconut water/
almond milk
- 1 scoop pea protein powder
- Superfood: aloe vera, bee pollen, cocoa

MID-MORNING SNACK:

- Handful (¼ cup) of almonds

LUNCH: Chicken Salad

- 2-3 cups raw chopped veggies; lettuce, cucumber, carrots, etc.
- 1 Tbsp olive oil with fresh squeezed lemon
- 2-5 oz lean poultry (i.e. grilled chicken, turkey)
- 1 oz sunflower seeds

MID-AFTERNOON SNACK:

- 2-3 Tbsp of guacamole
- 1 cup raw veggies

OR

- Handful (¼ cup) of walnuts and
- ½ cup berries

DINNER:

- 2-5 oz grilled salmon
- 1 cup roasted Brussel sprouts
- 1 small sweet potato
- Large green salad with 1 Tbsp olive oil and fresh squeezed lemon juice

