

Eliminate-then-Challenge Food Experiment

The Eliminate-then-Challenge Food Experiment is one the best things you can do for yourself. It's a learning tool. It helps you discover how your body reacts to certain foods. Poor reactions are often subtle and can be easily missed, if you have chronic low-grade inflammation. Once you have identified the culprits, you take a break and allow your digestive system to heal. Most people find they can reintroduce many foods after a few months. During the Experiment, people lose weight and feel much better than before they started. Weight gain is sign of inflammation.

Method

1. Choose which foods you want to test.
2. Get a scale to weigh yourself.
3. Go shopping for lots of foods you can eat (See *Core Diet* below). Plan your meals & snacks.
4. Completely eliminate the foods you will be testing for 2 weeks (minimum). Eat a Core Diet.
5. On Day 15, add one test food to the Core Diet – you'll be testing 1 food every 4 days.
6. Eat one helping of the test food 2-3 times on Day 15.
7. Then stop eating the test food on Day 16-18 & resume only the Core Diet.
8. Over Days 15-18, record body weight and any emotional or physical symptoms.
 - a) Weigh yourself at night before you go to sleep and in the morning before you urinate. If you wake in the middle of the night to urinate, weigh yourself first. You should weigh less in the morning. Overnight water weight gain is an inflammatory reaction.
 - b) Record any emotional or physical symptoms. You will be seeing how you are affected as the food travels through your digestive tract and the nutrition is being distributed throughout your body. For instance, you may not react to a food until Day 4. Common reactions might be nasal congestion, constipation or diarrhea, itchy skin, brain fog, poor memory, joint pain, irritability or depression. It's possible if you react strongly enough, you might catch a cold.
9. Continue the Experiment, testing and tracking daily.

Tips

Cut it out. All of it. It is extremely important to completely eliminate all forms of the food you are testing. Eating even a tiny amount thwarts this process. You are decreasing your chronic inflammation so that your body can clearly signal if there's a reaction. It's best to eliminate the basic allergens all at once for two weeks, and then test.

Read labels. Read the labels for hidden allergens and ask if you are eating in restaurants. For instance, non-dairy cheese usually contains the milk-protein casein. Gluten is in wheat-containing bread, pasta, cookies and crackers, but it's also in grains such as oats, rye and spelt. Meats may be coated in flour. Soy sauce, beer and licorice are made from wheat. Salad dressings and Japanese food contains hidden wheat sources. If you are testing nightshades, you will need to make sure your gluten-free bread doesn't contain potato flour.

Get creative. Find substitutes for your favorite foods. There are lots. For instance, rice tortillas instead of corn. Coconut yogurt instead of regular yogurt. Engage your local grocer for help in finding alternatives at your favorite supermarket.

Drink a lot of water. As you clean up your diet, your body may begin to detox. Flush toxins with water. Divide your body weight in half: that's the average minimum # of ounces to drink.

The Big Five Food Allergens:

Wheat
Dairy
Corn
Soy
Sugar

Other Common Allergens:

Nightshades (tomato, potato, pepper, eggplant)
Chocolate
Citrus
Beef
Yeast
Peanuts
Tree nuts (almond, cashew, etc.)
Coffee
MSG
Natural flavors
Artificial flavors, colors and sweeteners

Conditions commonly related to food allergies

ADD/ADHD	Anxiety	Mood disorders	Headaches
Seasonal Allergies	Depression	Brain fog	Poor memory
Poor digestion	Reflux/GERD	Bloating	Chemical Sensitivity
Autoimmune Disease	Rheumatoid Arthritis	Osteoarthritis	Asthma
Insomnia	Sinusitis	Leaky Gut	Constipation
Diarrhea	Irritable Bowel	Eczema	Psoriasis
Fibromyalgia	Lupus	Hashimotos	Fatigue

Core Diet

Okay for most people. However, test any of these if you suspect it might be causing reactions.

Okay grains:

Rice
Quinoa
Amaranth
Millet
Buckwheat

All veggies okay,

Except:

Tomatoes
Potato (sweet potatoes/yams okay)
Eggplant
Bell pepper
Peppers
Tomatillos
Paprika
Chile

Okay meats:

Seafood (if you have skin issues, test shellfish)
Pork
Lamb
Poultry
Buffalo
Wild game
(No sausage or bacon)

Okay fats & condiments:

Olive oil
Coconut oil
Vinegar
(no butter; it's dairy)

All spices okay, except:

No paprika, cayenne, chile

Okay Seeds:

Sesame
Sunflower
Pumpkin

Okay sweeteners, in small amounts:

Stevia
Honey
Dehydrated cane sugar
Coconut sugar
Beet sugar

All fruit okay, except:

Citrus (orange, grapefruit, lemons, limes, tangerines, etc.)

Day	Food Change	Weight AM/PM		Mood & Emotions	Physical Symptoms
Day 1	Core diet				
Day 2	Core diet				
Day 3	Core diet				
Day 4	Core diet				
Day 5	Core diet				
Day 6	Core diet				
Day 7	Core diet				
Day 8	Core diet				
Day 9	Core diet				
Day 10	Core diet				
Day 11	Core diet				
Day 12	Core diet				
Day 13	Core diet				
Day 14	Core diet				
Day 15	Add 2-3 servings of rye bread to test gluten (but not wheat)				
Day 16	Core diet				
Day 17	Core diet				
Day 18	Core diet				
Day 19	If you had no reaction to the rye gluten, eat 2-3 servings of wheat				

Day	Food Change	Weight AM/PM		Mood & Emotions	Physical Symptoms
	bread, pasta, crackers. If you reacted to gluten, skip to Day 23.				
Day 20	Core diet				
Day 21	Core diet				
Day 22	Core diet				
Day 23	Add 2-3 servings of dairy: butter, yogurt, cheese, ice cream, milk, kefir, cottage cheese				
Day 24	Core diet				
Day 25	Core diet				
Day 26	Core diet				
Day 27	Add 2-3 servings of corn: 100% corn-only chips/tortillas, corn on the cob, frozen corn				
Day 28	Core diet				
Day 29	Core diet				
Day 30	Core diet				
Day 31	Add 2-3 servings of soy: soy milk, edamame, tofu, tempe, soy creamer, soy ice cream, soy yogurt (check ingredients)				

Day	Food Change	Weight AM/PM		Mood & Emotions	Physical Symptoms
Day 32	Core diet				
Day 33	Core diet				
Day 34	Core diet				
Day 35	Add 2-3 servings of white sugar: granulated white sugar (caution on combining it with other allergens)				
Day 36	Core diet				
Day 37	Core diet				
Day 38	Core diet				
Day 39	Add 2-3 servings of nightshades: tomatoes, potatoes, bell peppers, red and green chile peppers, eggplant, tomatillos, paprika, cayenne...				
Day 40	Core diet				
Day 41	Core diet				
Day 42	Core diet				
Day 43	Add 2-3 servings of beef: steak, hamburger (no bun), beef broth...				

Day	Food Change	Weight AM/PM		Mood & Emotions	Physical Symptoms
Day 44	Core diet				
Day 45	Core diet				
Day 46	Core diet				
Day 47	Add 2-3 servings of citrus: lime, lemon, oranges, grapefruit				
Day 48	Core diet				
Day 49	Core diet				
Day 50	Core diet				
Day 51	Add 2-3 servings of chocolate: especially dark chocolate (without anything else: sugar, soy, citrus, nuts, dairy)				
Day 52	Core diet				
Day 53	Core diet				
Day 54	Core diet				
Day 55	Add 2-3 servings of treenuts: almonds, hazelnuts, brazil, cashews, etc.				
Day 56	Core diet				
Day 57	Core diet				

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Day	Food Change	Weight AM/PM		Mood & Emotions	Physical Symptoms
Day 58	Core diet				
Day 60	Add 2-3 servings of _____ (next on your optional list)				

**Adapted from instruction and materials by Dr. Amy Neuzil, ND.*