



Elimination/Provocation Protocol: How to Do an Elimination Diet

In a nut shell: Avoid a suspicious food for 3 weeks, then reintroduce in large quantities; observe if you have a reaction.

Food intolerances, allergies, digestive issues, and any food that stresses your gut and health through a wide variety of mechanisms are not easy to identify.

There's a lot of controversy over what tests can identify food intolerances and allergies. The debate goes on and on. One of the tried and true methods is to eliminate the food to be tested for a long enough period of time to allow your body to get over any potential issues with it, and then re-introduce it in a very specific manner to test and observe if this food bothers your health. This method, while highly effective, requires some fortitude.

The goal is to eliminate the most common allergens as well as any other suspicious food in your life **for a period of over a month**. Once your diet is clean, you will better be able to identify the foods that 'stress' your health. Once you know which foods are personally causing your body trouble, you can avoid them and unlock the health you desire.

Sometimes the stressor food is very counterintuitive such as carrots, spinach, or rice. Your personal trigger foods may be quite wild or surprising. One article called *Food Allergy, Fact or Fiction*, gave accounts of patients with wide and varied symptoms – even from drinking common beverages like tea and coffee – who suffered for many years with many health issues, only to have them go away when they went off tea or coffee.

Food allergies or issues have always raised the hair on the back of many a doctor's neck. It's an area of huge controversy, so we take the "try and see" method seriously. Let's try it and see if we identify foods that stress you and then see how this improves (or doesn't) the rest of your health.



Steps for Food Elimination / Provocation:

1. **Eliminate all foods that you have a known or suspected allergy to** including the top 6 allergy foods.
 - gluten
 - dairy
 - eggs
 - corn, including high fructose corn syrup
 - soy
 - peanuts
2. **Keep a journal of all foods** you eat and all symptoms you experience.
3. Add **foods back one at a time, every four days**. Be sure to test foods in a pure form. For example, test corn by itself in the form of whole fresh corn or corn meal made into a cereal rather than testing corn chowder, corn muffins, or corn chips.
4. **Take your pulse and glucose** before and after eating each food.
5. Observe and track your reactions and symptoms, changes in pulse, and any rise in blood sugar level that goes higher than 110.
6. **Often an offending food will provoke symptoms quickly** (within in 10 minutes, or up to 24 hours). This is part of the protocol where you need to really 'tune' into your body as you can have immediate or delayed symptoms. The symptoms that occur hours or even a day later, the delayed ones, are a bit more difficult to 'link' to eating the suspicious food. This is where vigilant documenting and self-observation come in. If you note symptoms that you believe are linked to this re-introduction of the food, **do not** continue to eat the food.
7. If you don't notice a reaction, **continue to eat the food for 4 days, at least twice a day**. If no reaction occurs during this time period, congratulations. The food passed the test and can be added to the safe foods column on your ***Elimination-Provocation Tracking Form*** (provided below). You can then move on to test the next food in the same manner.

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8. Many times you'll eat a food one day and feel fine, but the **second day you'll notice that you're reacting to the food**. Signs to look for include: dizziness, fatigue, headache, itching, bloating, nausea, gas, constipation, diarrhea, indigestion, anal itching, sleepy 30 minutes after a meal, ear itching and pulling, nose itching and rubbing, flushing, rapid heartbeat, brain fog, joint pain, and depression.

9. If you **notice any reaction during the 4 days of testing**, stop eating the test food and add it to the “problem foods” column of your ***Elimination-Provocation Tracking Form*** (provided below). Wait until all symptoms have subsided before testing the next food on your list.

10. If you're **unsure, take the food back out of your diet for at least one week** before you try it again. Keep track of all responses on your ***Elimination-Provocation Tracking Form*** (provided below).

Special Considerations

Unlike other food antibodies that normally have a half-life of 4 days, **gluten antibodies can continue to cause inflammation for up to 6 – 8 months** after eating if you have autoimmune reactions to gluten. If you have chronic symptoms – especially symptoms related to fatigue, depression, chronic inflammation, digestive disturbances, or an autoimmune condition – we recommend that you wait at least 6 months before testing gluten. Consider getting tested for gluten antibodies before reintroducing any gluten to your diet with the most reliable test we know of at www.enterolabs.com.

Some of the foods on the top 6 allergens list are not foods we recommend for optimum health; thus, it is best NOT to add these back to your diet. These are:

- **Dairy products:** associated with increased incidences of certain cancers and with nasal congestion and asthma
- **Peanuts:** which contain inflammatory fats and high levels of aflatoxin, a cancer causing fungus
- **Gluten:** which tends to be inflammatory in many people
- **Eggs:** whose consumption is fraught with controversy

Complete the form on the following page to track your results.

