

Despite all you learned in Chapters 3 and 4 about potentially problematic foods and ones that should be better tolerated, no one, not even your doctor or dietitian, can tell you exactly what you should eat. Only your body has the definitive answers. It's probably been trying to relay those answers to you for a while now, but it can be hard to listen when all you hear is chaos.



No one can tell you exactly what you should eat. Only your body knows.

The elimination diet protocol will quiet your symptoms so you can hear the wisdom of your body again.



The next chapter will show you how to reset your body with an elimination diet protocol so you can quiet your symptoms and hear the peaceful sound of silence again. Then you'll be ready for the reintroduction phase, during which you'll see how your body responds to different foods. Following this protocol will help you finally get clear answers to your questions to allow you build your own optimal diet.

Despite all the recent advances in medicine and technology, elimination diets remain the gold standard for identifying food sensitivities. This protocol was first described by Dr. Albert Rowe in 1926 and published in his book "Elimination Diets and the Patient's Allergies," but they have existed for much longer than that.

Elimination diets include two main phases: the elimination phase and the reintroduction phase (also called the challenge phase). This underutilized resource can be complicated to use correctly, but this chapter will show you how to proceed to minimize mistakes and maximize your learning so you can move on to living a healthy, happy life as quickly as possible.

The elimination and reintroduction diet protocol is the most effective way to design a diet that will best address your symptoms. You can get tested for food sensitivities, but these tests are expensive and inaccurate. If you have a leaky gut, the results are likely to suggest reactions to dozens of foods.

If you want your digestive health to improve, you need to first address your intestinal permeability by healing and sealing your gut. Then, you need to work on balancing your gut flora to optimize your digestive health. Most people see their symptoms subside in a matter of days or weeks by following this approach. As the months go by, your digestive health will continue to improve and your food tolerance should increase slowly. Many food sensitivities (with the exception of true food allergies) can resolve over time if you treat the underlying causes of inflammation, intestinal permeability, and gut dysbiosis.

THE ELIMINATION DIET

The rationale behind the use of the elimination diet protocol is simple: during the elimination phase you'll remove any foods to which you could react. It's like pushing your body's reset button.

You need to reestablish a baseline of feeling normal if you want to be able to hear what your body has to say. Without the reset of the elimination phase, you won't know what foods you are sensitive to during the reintroduction phase.

There is no one type of elimination diet. There are many different types. Some elimination diets are designed to help you identify gluten intolerance, a sensitivity to dairy, or problems with FODMAPs or food chemicals. These are all valid approaches to help you improve your diet and digestive symptoms.

So many things can go wrong with your digestive system. Although gluten-free diets or low-FODMAP diets can help people get better, most people that are intolerant to gluten or FODMAPs are also sensitive to other foods. The other problem is that eliminating only gluten or FODMAPs may help to alleviate symptoms but does not address the underlying issues to improve your food tolerance.

Most doctors and dietitians, but not all, are familiar with the concept of the elimination diet, but many of them prefer not to suggest it as a treatment option, which is too bad. Elimination diets take work, and they're not exactly glamorous, but they're the best way to get to the bottom of your digestive issues. And remember, although the term "elimination diet" is used to refer to the avoidance of specific foods, the goal of an elimination diet is not to eliminate foods but to eliminate *your symptoms*.



It's time to push the reset button of your gut.