

# What is Elimination Diet?

This is a diet used to find hidden food sensitivities that may be causing health problems. Skin, joint, and GI problems can be caused by food sensitivities. Certain foods are taken out of your diet for 2–4 weeks, to allow time for symptoms to improve. Then foods are slowly brought back in to your diet one at a time to see if symptoms return. The purpose of the elimination diet is not to remove foods forever but to identify those that are causing health issues.



## WHAT FOODS SHOULD BE AVOIDED?

Dairy, wheat, corn, eggs, citrus, nuts, soy products, refined sugars, peanuts, alcohol and drinks containing caffeine are the most important things to eliminate during the 2–4 week period. Some people recommend also taking out foods that you usually eat three or more times per week.

## WHAT CAN I EAT?

You can eat rice, beans (except for soy!), meat (turkey, fish, lamb), vegetables and whole fruits (except citrus). However, if one of these foods is something you consume several times a week, you may want to avoid it during the initial stages of your diet.



## TIPS BEFORE GETTING STARTED

The week before starting the diet, look up recipes that are elimination-diet friendly. Go shopping so you have the right foods on hand. Clean out your kitchen and remove all the foods that are going to be eliminated. If they aren't in the house tempting you, you won't have to worry about breaking down and eating them.

## HOW SHOULD I DO THE DIET?

The best way is to remove as many of these foods as you can for 2–4 weeks. You should feel free to snack to help keep your energy up. Be sure to drink plenty of water, anywhere from 2–4 liters daily. You should be sure to read food labels for hidden ingredients to be avoided, especially in pre-prepared and packaged foods. Foods you make at home are the best!

For more information, scan the QR code below, or visit [nciph.org/elimination\\_diet](http://nciph.org/elimination_diet)



## KEEPING TRACK OF YOUR SYMPTOMS

During the 2–4 week elimination period, you should keep close track of whether there are changes in your target symptoms. Whether you are trying to deal with joint pains, GI problems, skin issues, fatigue, or other symptoms, you should write down a symptom score from 0–10 every day during the diet. 0 is no symptoms at all, and 10 is the worst you have ever had. This will help you decide if the diet is working! It sometimes can take 2–3 weeks for symptoms to improve enough for you to tell a difference. Make sure you start keeping track of your symptoms from Day 1 and try not to miss a day!

## HOW DO I BRING FOODS BACK IN TO MY DIET?

After the 2–4 week elimination stage, you want to reintroduce food groups one at a time. After you bring a food back in, you should wait 2–3 days to see if your symptoms get worse. If they do, take that food back out of the diet and wait 2–3 days before going on to the next food. If they don't get worse, you can go on to bring the next food back in right way. Keep repeating these steps until all the foods you took out are either back in your diet or identified as a problem food. It usually takes 4–6 weeks to get through all the foods you took out. By the end you will know a lot about how your body responds to different foods, and hopefully have a way to control the symptoms that were bothering you.

