

Elimination Diet 101

So you've been instructed to remove foods from your child's diet! What do you do next? The basics when starting an elimination diet including a comprehensive resource list are discussed below.

Once instructed to remove a specific food from your child's diet, make sure you are provided a list of foods/ingredients that need to be avoided and appropriate substitutes. The Food Allergy and Anaphylaxis Network (FAAN) is a helpful starting place. Registered Dietitians (RD) are resource for information on appropriate diet to ensure that your child is getting 100% nutrition needs.

Be positive! Your attitude towards food shapes your child's attitude towards food. If you refuse to eat anything green, your child probably will want to avoid anything green. Given time, children will eat the food that you make available to them. This diet will be a significant change that your child may not welcome; it is your job to "sell" it to them everyday!

Many unprocessed or natural foods are safe for your child to eat: fruits, vegetables, meats, poultry, starches (white rice, brown rice, corn, potato, buckwheat, sweet potatoes, and legume flours), seasonings, and oils. By coming up with a list of safe foods to eat, it becomes easier to put meals together. This is also a great opportunity to discover new foods (i.e. quinoa or bean pastas) previously unfamiliar to you!

Several manufacturers specialize in "allergen - free foods" that offer substitutes for common food allergens. Rice-based breads, egg replacers, rice/bean/corn based pastas, and milk substitutes are commercially available. Check the resource list for specifics. Grocery stores specializing in health or natural foods (i.e. peanutfreeplanet.com, Whole Foods) offer a greater variety of these foods than general grocery stores, and are willing to order special foods. You can order many products on line as well.

Eating healthy can become a challenge when removing foods from the diet. Make essential nutrients such as calcium and protein a priority. Supplementation with an appropriate elemental formula (see resource list) may be necessary in meeting nutritional needs. Elemental formulas can be used as a supplement or as a sole source of nutrition. Speak with your medical team if you want to try these formulas, they can provide you with samples and ideas for flavoring them. Seeing a registered dietician is important to ensure the restricted diet is adequate.

Because many vitamins contain ingredients of the foods that need to be avoided, checking the labels of all supplements is necessary. There are many different types of supplements available with varying amounts of vitamins and minerals, so ask your medical team if you have any questions.

Potential Nutrition Deficiencies (of commonly removed foods)

Food	Nutrients	Alternative Food Sources
Milk	Protein, calcium, vitamin D, Vitamin A, B12, Riboflavin, Pantothenic acid, Potassium	Meats, legumes, whole grains, nuts, fortified foods with B vitamins, calcium, vitamin D
Egg	Protein, Vitamin B12, Pantothenic acid, Biotin, Selenium	Meats, chicken, legumes, whole grains

Soy	Protein, Iron, Zinc, Magnesium, Thiamin, Riboflavin, Pyridoxine, folate	Meats legumes
Wheat	Iron, Thiamin, Riboflavin, Niacin, Folate	Alternative fortified grains
Peanut/Tree Nut	Vitamin E, Niacin, Magnesium, Manganese, Chromium, Folate, Vitamin E, B6, Copper, Zinc, selenium, Phosphorus & Potassium	Whole grains, vegetable oils
Fish/shellfish	Vitamin B6,E, Niacin, Phosphorus, Selenium, Omega 3 Fatty Acids	Whole grains, meats, oils, soybean, flaxseed, nuts

Serve a variety of foods, using different preparations, spices/flavorings for different tastes. (Potato; mashed, boiled, baked, etc.). For young children, using cookie cutters of different shapes can encourage intake. Encourage a healthy diet and exercise moderation. With some foods:

- Say no to sugary candies/drinks most of the time
- Offer 1/2 portions of "empty calorie" foods
- Encourage healthy eating from an early age

Being creative can help make mealtimes enjoyable, especially with food restrictions. FAAN cook books, newsletters, and magazines offer recipes specific to many food allergies. Review regular cook books, cooking shows and magazines for ideas on presentation. Involve your child in preparation of safe foods when appropriate.

Label checking is critical; you must read labels on all foods every time you buy them because ingredients and manufacturing processes can change without warning.

On 1/1/06 The Food Allergen & Consumer Protection Act went into effect. It states: The presence of a major food allergen (milk, soy, egg, wheat, peanut, tree nuts, fish, shell fish) must be listed in the ingredient list or

- 1).the word "contain" followed by the name of the major food allergen
- 2). A parenthetical statement in the list of ingredients for major food allergens. (i.e. "whey (milk)").

Major food allergens must be declared in flavorings, coloring and incidental additives. You will need to clarify other ingredients with manufacturer.

Contact food companies to clarify ingredients, food safety, and food handling practices. Ask specifically for a "dedicated line or facility" to ensure there is no cross contamination. When in doubt about a food or ingredient, it is best avoid it.

Cross-contamination occurs when a food comes into contact with another food and their proteins mix. As a result, each food now contains small amounts of the allergenic food. This can happen with food manufacturers, grocery stores, restaurants and at home.

Food manufacturers can have cross contamination occur while processing different foods on the same line (i.e. cookies containing milk and those that are milk free). Sometimes equipment is not cleaned between making different products. Rework is a term used in the food manufacturing industry describing the practice of adding left-over product to a new batch. Errors can occur as well in the manufacturing process or at restaurants; ingredients added to food by mistake or product put in wrong packaging. FAAN offers an email alert for consumers regarding specific manufacturing errors. This service is free, so you can sign up on website.

To avoid cross contamination while shopping, avoid the bakery section, bulk bins, the deli section and salad bars.

When eating out avoid buffets and salad bars, due to high risk of cross contamination from shared utensils or food dropping into other foods. Frying or grilling more than one food using the same equipment can lead to cross contamination as well as errors. Call the restaurant ahead of time; speak with a manager or chef, asking specific questions about ingredients and preparation methods. Choose simple dishes like green salad with out croutons, allowable vegetables with dressing on the side, baked chicken without marinade, steamed vegetables and rice or potato and fruit).

For the school-aged child, inform the teacher and school nurse of the special dietary restrictions and provide a list of safe snacks and allowable foods for your child to eat at school. If any medications are required to be kept at school such as an EpiPen, special instructions should also be provided. For the preschool aged child, always have a bag of "safe" foods available for snack time, or send special treats for celebrations to ensure that your child does not eat something they should not.

At home, it is necessary to purchase separate equipment such as toasters, bread makers and colanders. Buy separate foods that are "shared" such as jelly, honey, mustard, or other spreadable condiments. Be careful when using sponges because besides being a source of bacteria, are likely to spread unsafe food particles around the kitchen. Use disposable paper towels, and disinfect frequently to ensure the surfaces are clean and free of any potential allergens

Strategies for a "safe" kitchen can include having the whole family follow the restricted diet; this minimizes cooking, but can be difficult and more expensive. If you aren't able to restrict the whole family's diet, it will be necessary to sort through food storage areas (pantry, refrigerator, and freezer) to separate allergen free (safe) from allergen containing (unsafe) items. Designate safe and unsafe foods and areas for those foods. This can be done with stickers (RED=unsafe, GREEN=safe) or separate shelves and cabinets for safe foods. Prepare safe foods first and cover to avoid risk of shared utensils and spilling. Also limit meals and snacks to dining areas only. The risk for cross contamination increases in an uncontrolled environment.

Eliminating foods from your child's diet may seem difficult initially, but over time most parents say "the diet is easier to follow than I thought". The key to helping you get started and successfully adhering to the diet is to have resources and to be part of a dedicated team, of whom the most important players are you and your child!

Resource List ?]Xg`K]h` : ccX`5``Yf[]Yg

Food Allergy & Anaphylaxis Network. 1-703-691-3179; www.foodallergy.org

Food Allergy Initiative. 1-212-527-5835; www.foodallergyinitiative.org

American Academy of Allergy, Asthma, & Immunology. 1-800-822-2762;
www.aaai.org

North American Society for Pediatric Gastroenterology, Hepatology and Nutrition (NASPGHAN). 1-215-233-0808; www.naspghan.com

American Dietetic Association. 1-800-877-1600; www.eatright.org: locate RD

Living Without.- magazine for patients with multiple food allergies. PO Box 2126 Northbrook, IL 60065 www.livingwithout.com

Enjoy Life Foods. www.enjoylifefoods.com- allergen free foods

Miss Roben. www.allergygrocer.com- allergen free foods; search by allergen

Tinnkyada: www.tinnkyada.com- wheat free pastas

Ener-G Foods: www.ener-g.com- allergen free foods

Nature's Path: www.naturespath.com- allergen free foods

Cherry Brook Kitchen. www.cherrybrookkitchen – allergen free baking mixes

Chocolate Decadence. www.chocolatedecadence.com- dairy-free chocolate

Vermont Nut Free Chocolate. www.vermontnutfree.com- nut free chocolate

Not Nutz. www.notnutz.com – nut-free treats

Namaste Foods. www.namastefoods.com- allergen free foods

Orgran Foods. www.orgran.com allergen free foods

Novartis Nutrition- 1-800-333-3785 www.novartis.com.
Vivonex product line

Nutricia (formerly SHS North America)- 1-800-365-7354 www.shsa.com.
Neocate product line, Pediatric E028

Ross Products- 1-800-258-7677 www.ross.com
Elecare (unflavored, vanilla)

Kids With Food Allergies www.kidswithfoodallergies.org