



JULY 2021

HEALTH COACHING HINTS

Lifestyle Choices for Strong Bones

empowered
HEALTH

Health Coaching Hint #1: How To Know If You Should Do An Elimination Diet

To know if you should do an Elimination Diet starts with understanding what an Elimination Diet is. The focus of an Elimination Diet is not to restrict your calories or to help you lose weight. Instead, the focus is on helping you determine if there are any foods that may be causing you adverse health effects.

WHAT TYPES OF EFFECTS CAN FOOD CAUSE?

Typically, these symptoms are related to inflammation or are those that cannot be explained through any other method, including things like:

- Joint or muscle pain
- Brain fog or fatigue
- Chronic headaches
- Regular gastrointestinal upset
- A general sense of not feeling good in your body

An Elimination Diet works by removing the foods that are most often associated with triggering inflammation caused by sensitivities or intolerances. While some people are very aware of which foods these might be, many have no idea and the process of going through an Elimination Diet can help them figure this out.

WHO SHOULD DO AN ELIMINATION DIET?

Everyone could benefit from doing an Elimination Diet at some point in their life. Those who could benefit from one sooner rather than later include people who are struggling with:

- Digestive problems
- Headaches
- Chronic sinus drainage
- Low energy
- Depression
- Mood swings
- Eczema or other skin irritations
- Joint aches
- Asthma
- A chronic medical condition that is exacerbated by inflammation*

*These include but are not limited to cardiovascular disease (e.g., high blood pressure, high cholesterol, and elevated blood fats) and dysfunctional metabolic conditions such as metabolic syndrome, type 2 diabetes (T2D), or both.

An Elimination Diet is also good for people who feel stuck in their current health routine or have been overindulging in unhealthy behaviors and are looking to “reset” their metabolism. Personally, I do one at least once a year for this very reason.

If you are interested in joining our next Elimination Diet Support Group (starting September 7th), you can learn more about it on our website (empoweredhealthinstitute.com) or you can sign up by calling the clinic at 509-392-7047. The cost is \$10/members; \$30 non-members.

If a group environment is not your cup of tea you can also work with me individually using our health coaching options. To learn more about how this might work for you, you can go to our website and schedule an inquiry call to talk with me, Erika Zink.

Health Coaching Hint #2: How To Prepare For An Elimination Diet

You’ve decided to do an Elimination Diet. Now what?

Regardless of whether your doctor prescribed it to you, you heard about it from a friend, or you read about it online, let me share with you a few tips from my own experience and from those of past members of the Elimination Diet Support Group on how to prepare for success.

HOW LONG SHOULD YOU PREPARE?

I suggest at least 3 days, but a week can be better to spread these steps out and make it less overwhelming.

PREPARING YOUR KITCHEN

THE PANTRY: Start with cleaning out your pantry and fridge of any foods that are not Elimination Diet approved. The idea here is to get them out of sight so you won't be tempted by them.

FOOD STORAGE: Meal prepping will be your friend during this process. Make sure you have enough food storage containers (preferably glass or stainless steel) to store leftovers and pre-made meals.

SNACKS: You won't be limiting your caloric intake during this process, so stock up on snacks to keep your energy up between meals. This can help with cravings and to keep from being tempted to eat off-menu. Ideas that have been a hit for others include vegetables with hummus, fruit with unsweetened nut butter, or nuts and trail mix.

PREPARING YOUR BODY

SELF-CARE: Since you will be taking the time to take care of your body's digestive system while on the Elimination Diet, this can be a good time to plan for other self-care activities. Scheduling in time for walks in nature, a relaxing bath, or time with a book you've been meaning to read but haven't found the time to do.

WITHDRAWAL FROM SUGAR, ALCOHOL, AND CAFFEINE: Certain foods, such as processed sugars, alcohol, and caffeine can cause your body to experience symptoms of withdrawal while transitioning away from eating them. To reduce these symptoms or prevent them completely, it can be helpful to slowly reduce them over time. For example, if you are a two cup a day coffee drinker, reduce the amount you drink by half each day or every few days until you are down to no cups a day at the time you start. This will allow your body to adjust without headaches or other symptoms of withdrawal.

PREPARING YOUR SCHEDULE

WHEN TO START: Since you may experience withdrawal symptoms, especially from sugar, alcohol, or caffeine it can be helpful to start an Elimination Diet on your days off from work. For many, this could mean starting on the weekend to give your body a couple of days to adjust to the new foods without any big meetings or decisions that need to be made.

MEAL PLANNING: If you can plan out your meals for each week of the Elimination Diet, you will find that you are less likely to deviate from the approved foods list. This includes planning for snacks, even if you don't eat them. Take time before you start to look through the approved foods and plan out at least the first week of meals.

MEAL PREP: Taking the time to prepare extra food or make your meals in advance can go a long way towards completing an elimination diet successfully. Find a time that will work for you, whether it's once a week or a couple of nights each week.

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If you feel that you could use some extra support, our next Elimination Diet Support Group starts on September 7th. We take the time to help make sure you are well prepared before you start and provide you with resources to guide you through the process. You can learn more about it on our website (empoweredhealthinstitute.com) or you can sign up by calling the clinic at 509-392-7047. The cost is \$10/ members; \$30 non-members.

If you would prefer to work with me individually, you can sign up for one of our health coaching packages. To learn more about how this might work for you, go to our website and schedule an inquiry call to talk with me, Erika Zink.

Health Coaching Hint #3: Tips For During An Elimination Diet

You're ready to start the Elimination Diet. What can you do to avoid temptation and ensure success?

Here are a few tips from my own experience and from those of past members of the Elimination Diet Support Group that can help guide you.

MINIMIZE SOCIAL ENGAGEMENTS: Eating out can be a challenge because you don't know exactly what is in the food. Are there added sugars? What oils were used? Potlucks and other friendly gatherings can be just as challenging. Keeping these events to a minimum can go a long way towards being successful. If you do need to attend an event, bringing something you know you can eat can be a great way to be social and still stay on the diet. If you do decide to eat out, see if you can look at the menu beforehand to find something on the approved food list or pick the place, so you know you'll be able to eat.

MAKE TIME FOR MEAL PLANNING AND PREP: This could mean you take one or two days a week and pre-make all or most of your meals. It could also mean you plan for leftovers each time you do cook. Either option can be helpful for when those inevitable long days happen and you don't want to think about what you will eat for dinner, or you don't feel like cooking. You can also have foods ready for a simple grab and go in the morning for breakfast or lunch.

PLAN FOR SELF-CARE: Keeping yourself busy is a great way to keep you from thinking about the foods you are not able to eat and prevent eating out of boredom. A great way to keep busy is to make time for self-care. This could be as simple as adding in a bit more exercise, rewarding yourself with a new journal and making time to use it, purchasing supplies for a nice relaxing bath, or whatever you find to be relaxing and brings you joy.

ESTABLISH YOUR SUPPORT TEAM: Recruit a few friends or family to either do the Elimination Diet with you or can be there to support you when you are tempted to eat off-menu. It can be very helpful knowing you have someone to call or someone to share the experience with.

Another way to create a supportive environment is to join our Elimination Diet Support Group. The next session starts on September 7th. You can learn more about it on our website (empoweredhealthinstitute.com) or you can sign up by calling the clinic at 509-392-7047. The cost is \$10/members; \$30 non-members.

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Health Coaching Hint #4: How to Successfully Complete an Elimination Diet

Once you complete the three or more weeks of eating Elimination Diet Friendly foods, you should be feeling better than before you started. For many, the benefits from having done an Elimination Diet include:

- Increased energy
- Mental clarity
- Fewer headaches
- Less muscle and joint pain
- Fewer or milder GI symptoms
- Improved sense of well-being

What is the best way to reintroduce foods back in?

The final phase of the Elimination Diet, Reintroduction, is the most important part of the of the process. This will allow you to learn which foods your body reacts to so you can limit or remove them moving forward. Here are a couple of tips that I and previous Elimination Diet Support Group participants have found helpful:

Do one food at a time so that you know which food your body is reacting (or not reacting) to.

Wait a couple of days after each new food to allow time for your body to react. An allergic reaction can be instantaneous. You are looking for sensitivities or intolerances, which can take time to present.

By taking the time to learn about how your body responds to food and giving your gut a chance to heal, you will now be in a better position to tap into your body's needs and learn how to feel better today.

As a member of our Elimination Diet Support Group or by working with me one-on-one, you will be given resources to guide you through this process. The next session starts on September 8th. To learn more about it, you can go to our website (empoweredhealthinstitute.com) or you can sign up by calling the clinic at 509-392-7047. The cost is \$10/members; \$30 non-members.