

Food Elimination Diet for Eosinophilic Esophagitis (EoE)

What is eosinophilic esophagitis (EoE)?

Eosinophilic esophagitis or ‘EoE’ is a chronic inflammatory disorder of the esophagus where there are too many special white blood cells called ‘eosinophils.’ EoE is triggered by allergens in foods and likely also environmental allergens that are breathed in or swallowed. One option for long term treatment of EoE includes changing your diet.

Symptoms

Symptoms in **adults** include:

- Trouble swallowing
- Food impaction
- Reflux

Symptoms in **children** include:

- Trouble swallowing
- Nausea and vomiting
- Pain in abdomen

Why are foods I eat important with EoE?

EoE is a different kind of allergic reaction that cannot be diagnosed with a blood or skin test. If you want to find out which food may be causing your EoE, we suggest an elimination diet. This type of diet removes likely food triggers to improve the symptoms. Then, triggers are added back in a special order to see which ones cause your EoE. A dietitian can help counsel you on diet treatment for EoE. They can help make sure your diet is complete and offer many tips to make the diet process easier.

What is the Six Food Elimination Diet?

This is one of the diets used to find EoE food triggers. This diet is best for finding triggers but takes longer than the other options.

Six Food Elimination Diet

1. Take the top 6 most common food allergens out of your diet for 4-6 weeks (milk products, eggs, wheat, soy, peanut/tree nuts, and fish/shellfish).
2. We then perform an EGD test with biopsy to retest the esophagus for narrowing or inflammation. Your symptoms may or may not improve.
3. You can then bring foods back into the diet, one or two at a time, as a one month “challenge.” You will have an EGD after each challenge. See the complete process on page 4.

The “Step Up” Approach

If the Six Food Elimination Diet is not the best fit for you, try the “Step Up” approach. It is shorter and still works well.

1. Take out the 2 most common EoE food triggers (milk and wheat) for 4-6 weeks.
2. Complete the EGD. If your results are still high, then “step up” to a 4-food elimination (milk, wheat, eggs, and soy).
3. Repeat the EGD. If still your results are still too high, “step up” to the full six food elimination diet.
4. If at any step of the diet, your EGD shows that your EoE responds well, then you will only add back in the foods you took out. For instance, if you are better after taking out only milk and wheat, you will only challenge milk and wheat.

What can I eat? (Below is list for the Six Food Elimination Diet)

- Chicken
- Beef
- Game meats
- Turkey
- Lamb
- Pork
- Beans, lentils
- Chickpeas
- Rice (brown, wild, white)
- Potato (russet, red, sweet)
- Quinoa
- Millet
- Buckwheat
- Some gluten-free labeled foods
- Gluten-free oats
- Fruits and vegetables
- Seeds
- Oils (sunflower, canola, olive)
- Most coffee and tea
- Rice or coconut milk
- Vinegar
- Foods with allowed ingredients
- Most people allergic to soy can safely eat soy lecithin and soybean oil

Nutrition Tips

Always read food labels. Foods must say whether they contain the top food allergens. This is found in a “Contains Statement” (i.e. “Contains wheat and eggs”). Some food labels have a “May Contain” statement. In this case, you may call the manufacturer to find out more. When in doubt, avoid the product.

We suggest a hypoallergenic daily multivitamin for this diet. Make sure it does not contain the top six food allergens. We also suggest a calcium supplement if you are not eating calcium fortified foods or drinks.

Aim for the best diet variety that you can. This will help you get all the vitamins and minerals your body needs to function.

Avoid cross contamination. This happens when a food comes into contact with another food. Reduce the chance of this by washing your hands often, avoiding bulk bins, and taking special care in the kitchen (like using a separate toaster for your bread). Risk of cross contamination is high at restaurants. It may be best to avoid restaurants while on this diet.

Resources

www.foodallergy.org

www.apfed.org

Allergen Free cookbooks

Common Foods and Ingredients of Food Allergens

These are the most common allergens and should be clearly labeled by law on all products.

Milk

Foods include:

- Butter
- Cheese
- Cream
- Custard
- Half and half
- Cow’s milk
- Pudding
- Sour cream
- Yogurt
- Goat’s milk

Milk ingredients to avoid:

- Casein
- Diacetyl
- Lactalbumin
- Lactose
- Lactulose
- Recaldent

- Rennet casein
- Tagatose
- Whey

Eggs

Foods to avoid:

- Eggs
- Eggnog
- Mayo
- Meringue
- Surimi
- Egg substitutes
- Beware of baked goods, puddings

Ingredients to avoid:

- Albumin
- Lysozyme
- Ovalbumin
- Lecithin
- Globulin
- Ovovitellin

Wheat

Wheat foods to avoid:

- Bread
- Couscous
- Crackers
- Most flours
- Pasta
- Pizza crusts

Instead purchase gluten/wheat free items made from potato, rice, tapioca

Wheat ingredients to avoid:

- Bulgar
- Durum
- Einkorn
- Emmer
- Farina
- Kamut
- Matzoh
- Semolina
- Spelt

- Triticale

Soy

Soy foods to avoid:

- Edamame
- Miso
- Natto
- Shoyu
- Soybean
- Soy sauce
- Tamari
- Tempeh
- Tofu
- Quorn

Soy ingredients to avoid:

- Soy
- Soy flour
- Soy fiber
- Soy protein
- Textured vegetable protein
- May be in vegetable gums, starches and broths

Nuts and Tree Nuts

Nut foods to avoid:

- All nuts (seeds are okay)
- Lychee

Nut ingredients to avoid:

- Nut meal
- Nut meat
- Nut milk
- Nut extracts
- Nut paste
- Peanut oil

Seafood and Shellfish

Seafood and shellfish to avoid:

- All fish
- Krill
- Barnacle
- Crab, crayfish
- Lobster
- Shrimp, prawns

Fish ingredients to avoid:

- Check imitation fish
- Fish stock, sauce
- Seafood flavoring
- Surimi
- Bouillabaisse

The Six Food Elimination Diet Process

1. EoE diagnosed
2. Failed trial of PPI (Proton Pump Inhibitor)
3. Trial Steroid Therapy or Consider Diet
4. Elimination of 6 most common food allergens
5. EGD after 4-6 weeks
6. Introduce 1-2 least likely offending food groups (usually seafood and nuts)
7. EGD after 4 weeks
8. Introduce 1-2 more offending food groups (usually soy and eggs)
9. EGD after 4 weeks
10. Introduce wheat products
11. EGD after 4 weeks
12. Introduce milk products
13. EGD after 4 weeks

Who to Call

If you are a UW Health patient and have more questions, please contact UW Health at one of the phone numbers listed below. You can also visit our website at www.uwhealth.org/nutrition.

Nutrition clinics for UW Hospital and Clinics (UWHC) and American Family Children's Hospital (AFCH) can be reached at: **(608) 890-5500**.

Nutrition clinics for UW Medical Foundation (UWMF) can be reached at: **(608) 287-2770**.

If you are a patient receiving care at UnityPoint – Meriter, Swedish American or a health system outside of UW Health, please use the phone numbers provided in your discharge instructions for any questions or concerns.

Your health care team may have given you this information as part of your care. If so, please use it and call if you have any questions. If this information was not given to you as part of your care, please check with your doctor. This is not medical advice. This is not to be used for diagnosis or treatment of any medical condition. Because each person's health needs are different, you should talk with your doctor or others on your health care team when using this information. If you have an emergency, please call 911. Copyright © 8/2020 University of Wisconsin Hospitals and Clinics Authority. All rights reserved. Produced by the Department of Nursing HF#553.