

## GETTING STARTED

People with food intolerances vary:

- in their reactions to different foods and food chemicals;
- in their degree of sensitivity;
- in the frequency and severity of their symptoms;
- in their personal dietary preferences and lifestyle.

For these reasons there is no single diet that suits everybody.

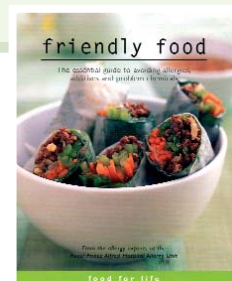
### CHOOSING THE APPROACH THAT SUITS YOU BEST

You will be able to choose from 3 optional elimination diet approaches indicated at the foot of each chart:

- **STRICT elimination diet**  
For those with distressing symptoms that interfere with day-to-day life or work. **EAT FROM THE LOW COLUMNS ONLY.**
- **MODERATE approach**  
For those with less severe symptoms, and those who find the strict elimination diet approach too restrictive.  
**EAT FROM THE LOW AND MODERATE COLUMNS ONLY.**
- **SIMPLE approach**  
For those with infrequent or mild symptoms, where simple dietary changes are often sufficient to prevent symptom recurrences.  
**AVOID FOODS IN THE VERY HIGH COLUMNS AND CUT OUT ADDITIVES MOST LIKELY TO CAUSE REACTIONS (page 25).**

### Before starting:

- Check the relevant columns in the **FOOD CHEMICAL CHARTS** and the **SHOPPING GUIDE** when doing your shopping to make sure you've got a supply of suitable foods in the house.
- **KEEP A DAILY RECORD** of everything you eat and drink, what symptoms you've had and any medications you've taken. Use the **FOOD & SYMPTOM DAIRY** template opposite page 30.
- If you haven't already been given one, obtain a copy of the low-chemical recipe book, **FRIENDLY FOOD** (Murdoch Books) which can be ordered online from [www.allergy.net.au](http://www.allergy.net.au)





## THE FOOD CHEMICAL CHARTS

These charts at the top of each double page list foods according to their overall natural chemical content. This scheme provides the basic structure for your Elimination Diet.

**LOW**  
foods are almost never a problem

**MODERATE** and **HIGH**  
foods may upset you, depending on how sensitive you are and how much you eat

**VERY HIGH**  
foods often cause symptoms in sensitive people

FOOD CHEMICAL CHART			
VEGETABLES			
LOW	MODERATE	HIGH	VERY HIGH
<p><b>Potato</b> brushed white, peeled <b>Lettuce</b> iceberg</p> <p><b>Bamboo shoots</b> tinned and fresh <b>Beans</b> butter, French, string or snake <b>Bean shoots</b> <b>Brussels sprouts</b> <b>Cabbage</b> red, green (drumhead), savoy, wombok (Chinese cabbage) <b>Celery</b> <b>Chives</b> <b>Choko</b> <b>Garlic</b> very small amounts only <b>Leek</b> <b>Mungbean sprouts</b> <b>Shallot</b> <b>Swede</b></p> 	<p><b>S Asparagus</b> <b>S Beetroot</b> <b>S Bok choy</b> pak choy <b>S Carrot</b> <b>S Cucumber</b> fresh, peeled <b>S Kumara</b> <b>S Lettuce</b> cos, red &amp; green coral, red &amp; green oak, mignonette <b>S Marrow</b> <b>S Parsnip</b> <b>S Peas</b> green, snow peas, sugar snap peas <b>S Potato</b> blue, new, pink, purple, red, yellow <b>S Pumpkin</b> butternut, squash <b>S Sweet potato</b> <b>S Turnip</b> <b>S Zucchini</b> peeled</p> 	<p><b>S Alfalfa</b> <b>S Artichoke</b> <b>SA Avocado</b> just ripe <b>SAG Broccoli, broccolini</b> <b>SA Cauliflower</b> <b>SG Corn</b> <b>S Cucumber</b> with peel <b>S Endive</b> <b>S Fennel</b> <b>SAG Gai lan</b> Chinese broccoli <b>S Parsley</b> <b>S Pumpkin</b> grey, kent, JAP <b>SA Radicchio</b> <b>S Radish</b> <b>SA Rocket</b> <b>S Snow pea sprouts</b> <b>S Spring onion</b> <b>SAG Tomato</b> fresh, peeled, sliced <b>S Water chestnut</b> <b>S Watercress</b> <b>S Zucchini</b> with peel</p>	<p><b>SA Avocado</b> soft, mashable <b>S Basil</b> <b>SA Broadbeans</b> fava beans <b>S Capsicum</b> green, red, yellow <b>S Chicory</b> <b>S Chillii</b> <b>SA Choy sum</b> <b>SA Eggplant, eggfruit</b> <b>S Gai choy</b> mustard greens <b>S Herbs &amp; spices</b> dried or fresh <b>SAG Kang kong</b> Chinese spinach <b>SA Olives</b> <b>S Onion</b> <b>SAG Pickled vegetables</b> cucumber, gherkin, olive, pickled onions, pickles <b>S Mint</b> <b>SAG Mushroom</b> all types <b>SAG Sauerkraut</b> fermented cabbage <b>SAG Seaweed</b> <b>SAG Spinach</b> English, silver beet <b>SAG Tomato</b> dried, sun-dried, juice, puree, paste, sauce <b>SAG Truffles</b> <b>SAG Vegetable juice, soups, stock</b> cubes, liquid, powder</p>
STRICT elimination diet		AVOID	
MODERATE approach		AVOID	
SIMPLE approach		AVOID	

**CHOOSE THE ELIMINATION DIET APPROACH THAT SUITS YOU BEST**

## SYMBOLS

Foods in each column are coded with coloured symbols to indicate which natural chemicals are present.




- 
  - S** contains **SALICYLATES** only
  - A** contains **AMINES** only
  - G** contains **NATURAL GLUTAMATES** (MSG)
  - SA** contains **SALICYLATES & AMINES**
  - SAG** contains **SALICYLATES, AMINES & GLUTAMATES** (MSG)

## THE SHOPPING GUIDE

At the bottom of each double page is a Shopping Guide.

The first two columns contain lists of foods and commercial products allowed on the STRICT elimination diet. The third column contains useful hints and guidelines, and the last column contains simple recipes.

### SHOPPING GUIDE STRICT elimination diet

ALLOWED VEGETABLES			
FOODS	PRODUCTS	GUIDELINES / HINTS	EASY RECIPES
<p><b>FRESH VEGETABLES</b></p> <p>Potatoes brushed, white, peeled</p> <p>Lettuce iceberg</p> <p>Swedes</p> <p>Cabbage red or green</p> <p>Brussels sprouts</p> <p>Celery</p> <p>Choko</p> <p>Butter beans</p> <p>Green beans French, string or snake</p> <p>Mungbean sprouts</p> <p>Bean shoots</p> <p>Bamboo shoots</p> <p>Leeks</p> <p>Shallots or spring onions</p> <p>Chives</p> <p>Garlic</p> 	<p><b>FROZEN VEGETABLES</b></p> <p>Brussels sprouts</p> <p>Swede diced</p> <p>Celery cuts</p> <p>Butter beans</p> <p>Green beans</p> <p>Lima beans</p> <p><b>McCain Foods</b></p> <p><b>Healthy Choice Potato Chips</b></p> <p><b>Potato Nuggets</b></p> <p><b>Hash Browns</b></p> <p><b>NOTE:</b> there are VERY low levels of added antioxidants in the oil in these products (less than 0.1 mg/100g for <i>Healthy Choice</i> fries) – when eaten occasionally as a recommended serving size this should not be a problem <b>BUT</b> more fat in product = more antioxidant. Not suitable for people with coeliac disease.</p> <p><b>CANNED VEGETABLES</b></p> <p>Green beans</p> <p>Bean sprouts</p> <p>Bamboo shoots</p> 	<p>Use only fresh, frozen or canned vegetables.</p> <p>Avoid any vegetables not listed.</p> <p>Wash vegetables thoroughly.</p> <p>Cabbage should be eaten raw or cooked for less than 5 minutes to avoid creating the compounds that cause flatulence.</p> <p>If you are highly sensitive, discard outer darker green leaves of lettuce.</p> <p>Choose large white or dirty brown potatoes. Peel thickly (about 2 mm) and do not eat potatoes that have green in the skin.</p> <p>Avoid tasty red and flavoursome varieties while on the strict elimination diet.</p> <p>Avoid potato products with added flavours and preservatives eg. antioxidants (310–312, 319–321) or sulphites (220–228).</p> <p>Some vegetables contain sulphur compounds which double after 5 minutes of cooking, eg. garlic, leeks, shallots, chives, cabbage, Brussels sprouts, onion, cauliflower, broccoli and turnips. Eat raw or quickly steam or stir fry.</p> <p><b>Always turn on the extractor fan when doing any cooking – this reduces moisture and cooking fumes going back into the household air.</b></p>	 <p><b>VEGETABLE STOCK</b></p> <p>1 tablespoon canola oil; 350 g swede; 3 celery stalks, peeled and chopped; 1 large leek, halved lengthways, washed and chopped; 3 garlic cloves, crushed; 4.5L (18 cups) water; ground sea salt.</p> <p>Heat oil in large saucepan or stockpot over medium heat. Cook, stirring often, for 5–8 mins or until vegetables turn light golden. Pour in the water.</p> <p>Cover with lid and bring to the boil. Simmer partially covered for 1 hour, or until the vegetables are very soft.</p> <p>Strain stock. Season with salt to taste. Set aside to cool and transfer into an airtight container.</p> <p>Use or freeze for up to 4 weeks.</p> <p><b>FOR VEGETABLE SOUP</b></p> <p>Add a selection of vegetables in addition to lots of potato. Add a little more salt to taste.</p>

FOODS AND COMMERCIAL PRODUCTS ALLOWED ON THE STRICT ELIMINATION DIET

Useful hints

Easy-to-prepare basic recipes

If foods are listed without brand names, most brands are suitable.

Always double check ingredients in packaged foods, even if they are familiar products, since ingredients may change without it being obvious on the label.

## ADDITIVES TO BE AVOIDED on the elimination diet

ARTIFICIAL COLOURS		
YELLOWS	102, 107, 110	<p><b>ADDED</b> to a wide variety of foods including lollies and sweets, cakes and cake icing, buns and biscuits, custard mixes, sauces, commercial mint jelly, jellies, savoury snacks, cordials and ice cream to enhance the colour to make pale products look richer and creamier.</p> <p>These colour additives are banned in some countries.</p>
REDS	122–129	
BLUES	131, 132	
GREEN	142	
BLACK	151	
BROWNS	154, 155	
NATURAL COLOURS		
COCHINEAL	120	<p><b>NATURAL</b> red dye from a female Mexican scale insect that lives on a cactus plant – true allergy reactions (even anaphylaxis) can occur.</p>
ANNATTO	160B	<p><b>NATURAL</b> reddish yellow dye from seeds of a Central American native plant.</p> <p><b>ADDED</b> to colour cereals, snack foods, dairy foods including yoghurts, ice creams and cheeses.</p>
PRESERVATIVES		
SORBATES	200–203	<p><b>ADDED</b> to preserve cheese spreads, cottage cheese and sliced cheese, dried fruits, fruit drinks, fruit juices, yoghurts with fruit or nuts, licorice, low sugar jams, soft drinks and some juices.</p>
BENZOATES PABA	210–218	<p><b>ADDED</b> to preserve cordials, fruit flavoured drinks and juices, soft drinks and marinades.</p> <p><b>ADDED</b> to preserve cosmetics and skin creams and sunscreens.</p> <p><b>NATURALLY</b> present in berries and other fruits but low compared to added amounts.</p>
SULPHITES (labelling mandatory)	220–228	<p><b>ADDED</b> to dried fruits (eg. apricots, pears, peaches and apples), potato products, dried coconut, sausages, all crustaceans (prawns, lobsters and crab) dessert toppings, cordials.</p> <p>Produced <b>NATURALLY</b> in fermented grape products (wine and vinegar).</p> <p>Found in all foods containing wine, wine products and vinegar.</p> <p>May be <b>ADDED</b> to wines, particularly cask wine, to ensure appropriate fermentation.</p>
NITRATES, NITRITES	249–252	<p><b>ADDED</b> as a colour fixative (pink colour) for cured meats (ham, salamis and corned beef) and to inhibit dangerous germs growing in these meats. Also used in cheeses in low levels.</p>
PROPIONATES	280-283	<p><b>ADDED</b> to preserve breads, bread crumbs, dressings, fruit and vegetable juices to stop fungal and mould growth.</p> <p><b>NATURALLY</b> produced in the large intestine as a by-product of digestion of dietary fibre.</p>
ANTIOXIDANTS		
GALLATES TBHQ BHA BHT	310–312 319 320 321	<p><b>ADDED</b> to preserve chewing gum, butter blends, cereal deserts such as rice pudding, soft sweets, dried vegetables, nuts and seeds, seasoning for instant noodles, powdered soup mixes, flaked cereals, grains, meats, baked goods that contain fat, snack foods, dehydrated potatoes &amp; oils used for deep fried foods (chips, battered fish and donuts).</p> <p><b>ADDED</b> to preserve animal feeds (even those labelled hypoallergenic), cosmetics, rubber products, and petroleum products. Many plastic packaging materials incorporate BHT.</p> <p><b>NATURAL</b> antioxidants are now being used more widely to preserve foods eg. rosemary is added to baby rice cereals. These can be just as irritant as the manufactured additives.</p>
FLAVOUR ENHANCERS		
MONOSODIUM GLUTAMATE (MSG) AND RELATED FLAVOUR COMPOUNDS	621 620, 622, 623, 627, 635	<p><b>ADDED</b> to flavour bland foods. These salts added to nearly all savoury snack foods such as flavoured crisps, biscuits and two-minute noodles.</p> <p><b>NATURAL</b> glutamates occur in high levels in strong cheeses (Parmesan, Camembert, Brie &amp; Gruyere), soy sauce, oyster sauce, black bean sauce, tomato sauce, miso, TVP, HVP, Vegemite, mushrooms, plums and spinach.</p>



## READING FOOD LABELS

When you're shopping for food, whether you have intolerances, allergies or coeliac disease, you should get into the habit of always checking the label before buying any product. The critical information may be buried in a long list of ingredients where you may miss it if you don't look carefully.

### NAME, DESCRIPTION AND PICTURE OF FOOD

Labels must tell the truth, but the name may not indicate the components you are most interested in.



### NUTRITION INFORMATION

provides the content of energy, protein, fat, carbohydrate, sodium (salt), and calcium.

Products labelled **gluten-free** will list gluten content as "nil" or "0.0g"

### INGREDIENT LIST

this is where you will find information about **ADDITIVES** (with code numbers) and **ALLERGENS**.

### ALLERGEN ALERT

used when allergens are present as an ingredient, eg. **crackers contain soy**. It's mandatory for the following to be declared on the label when present in any amount: **Peanuts, tree nuts, seafood, fish, milk, eggs, soy, sesame, gluten, and sulphites (SO<sub>2</sub>)**

### ADVISORY STATEMENTS

(eg. **may contain...**) used when there is a possibility of unintentional contamination with one or more of the allergens in the mandatory labelling list.

### CONSUMER ALERT

**Free from** statements may be helpful to identify suitable products, but do not rely on these alone.

They are not mandatory, and may not include the critical information you need.

## ELIMINATION DIET INSTRUCTIONS

- If you're doing the **STRICT ELIMINATION DIET**, eat only from the **LOW** columns of the food chemical charts.
- If you've chosen the **MODERATE** approach you can have **LOW** foods *plus* up to 2 serves/day of fruit and 3–4 serves per day of vegetables from the **MODERATE** columns.
- If you are taking the **SIMPLE** approach, choose foods and drinks from the **LOW**, **MODERATE** and **HIGH** columns according to the healthy eating guidelines (page 91). Avoid foods in the **VERY HIGH** columns.

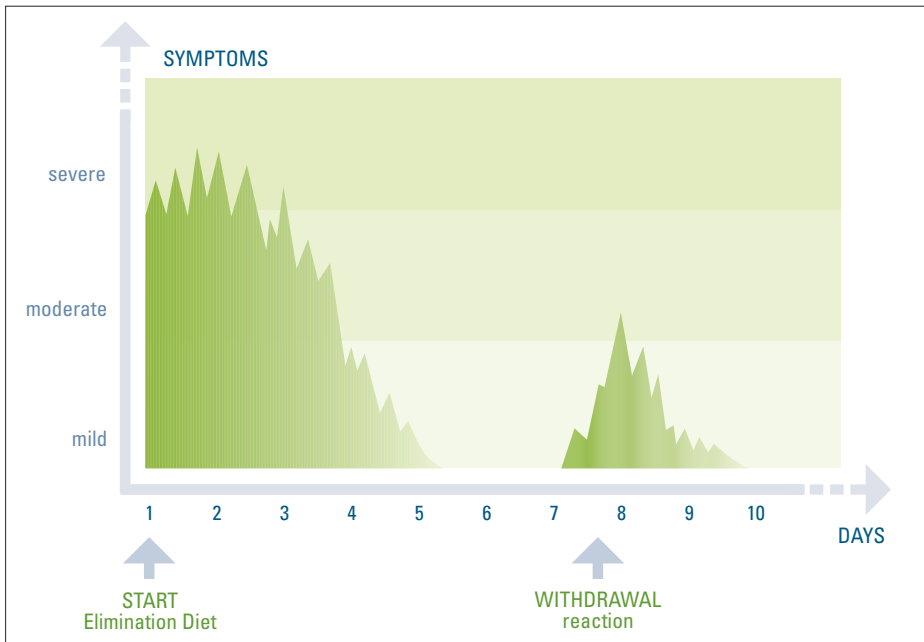
## AVOID non-essential medications (pages 113-117)

Don't take anything containing **ASPIRIN**. Wash the colour off tablets, or open capsules and take the powder. Use only recommended vitamin and mineral preparations.



## 'Withdrawal' reactions

- Some people can develop a temporary flare-up in their symptoms during the first week or two after starting a strict or moderate elimination diet.
- 'Withdrawal' reactions of this kind can be brief – a day or two – or they may last for up to a week or more – after which symptoms generally settle.
- If your symptoms have recurred or worsened during the first week or two on your elimination diet – **DON'T GIVE UP!** A withdrawal reaction usually indicates that you *do* have underlying intolerances, and symptoms should improve if you persist.



## Challenges

- Follow your elimination diet for at least 2 weeks.
- Symptoms can take up to 6-8 weeks to settle. Once you've had at least 5 good days in a row, you are ready to begin taking challenges.
- Challenges can be done 'double-blind' (with purified food chemicals in capsules) and/or with selected foods grouped according to chemical content.
- Contact your doctor or dietitian for instructions.



## Your individually modified diet

- Once your problem substances have been pinpointed by systematic challenges, your dietitian can advise you how to modify your diet to avoid a recurrence of symptoms.
- After a month or two on your individually modified diet – provided you remain well – you can begin gradually re-introducing foods to establish your threshold for each food chemical.
- Use the **FOOD CHEMICAL CHARTS** in this handbook as a guide to liberalization.

## What to do if you're not improving

If you've had no improvement in symptoms after 4 weeks, check with your doctor or dietitian.

- First review your diet to make sure you haven't made any inadvertent mistakes.
- If you've been following the **STRICT** elimination diet it may be worth eliminating gluten and dairy products for another 2-3 weeks if you haven't already done so.
- If you've been following the **MODERATE** or **SIMPLE** approach, switch to the **STRICT** elimination diet for a further 3-4 weeks.
- If you've had no significant improvement after 6-8 weeks on the strict elimination diet (with no gluten or dairy products), chances are you *don't* have food intolerances and can go back to your normal diet.

## Going back to a normal diet

- Even if you didn't improve on the **STRICT** elimination diet, some foods may still cause reactions when you first re-introduce them.
- If this happens, don't be discouraged – intolerances needn't be permanent. You'll probably find that your threshold will fluctuate over time, and you may eventually be able to return to a more normal diet.
- By systematically re-introducing foods in groups, according to their chemical content, you'll find out what you can comfortably tolerate. Use the food chemical charts in this handbook as a guide.

## DIETITIAN RECOMMENDATIONS

### YOUR ELIMINATION DIET

**STRICT ELIMINATION DIET**

Additive free  
eat from **LOW** columns only

Include [✓] or exclude [✗]

Gluten containing foods	
Legumes/lentils	
Soy	
Milk	

**MODERATE APPROACH**

Additive free  
avoid **HIGH** and **VERY HIGH** columns

**SIMPLE APPROACH**

Additive free  
avoid **VERY HIGH** columns



### FOOD ALLERGENS

	ALLOWED	AVOID
Egg		
Uncooked egg		
Egg traces		
Nuts		
Peanuts		
Dairy foods		
Dairy traces		
Tahini (sesame)		
Sesame seeds		
Fish		
Crustaceans		
Kiwi fruit		
Wheat		
Soy		
Lupin		

### MILK/DAIRY REPLACEMENT

	INCLUDE	AMOUNT
<b>SOY</b>		
<b>RICE MILK</b>		
Protein "extras"		
Energy/Calories		
<b>BABY FORMULA</b>		

### NUTRITIONAL SUPPLEMENTS

MULTI VITAMINS	AMOUNT
<b>INFANTS &amp; CHILDREN</b>	
Paediatric Seravit	
Orthoplex Children's Formula	
<b>CHILDREN &amp; ADULTS</b>	
Amcal One-a-Day	
Genovis Multivitamin and Minerals	
Natures Own Multivitamin and Minerals	
Amcal Multi Vitamins and Minerals	
Vitaminorum	
Herron Multi Vitamin	
Myadec Capsules	
Blackmores Multivitamin sustained release	
<b>PREGNANCY &amp; LACTATION</b>	
Elevit	
FABFOL plus	
<b>CALCIUM</b>	
Caltrate (600mg)	
Herron (600mg)	
FABCAL 1-2-3 (400mg)	
Golden Glow (250mg)	
OsteVit-D & Calcium (600mg)	
Other:	
<b>VITAMIN D</b>	
Kirkmans Hypoallergenic Powder	
OsteVit-D	
Other:	
<b>IRON</b>	
FAB Iron & vitamin B complex (5mg iron)	
FGF (80mg iron)	
Other:	
<b>FOLIC ACID</b>	
Alphapharm Megafol	
Golden Glow Folic acid	
I-Folic	
Other:	
<b>VITAMIN C</b>	



## FOOD AND SYMPTOM DIARY

### INSTRUCTIONS

Use the diary template opposite to record your food intake and symptoms each day while you are undergoing dietary testing. At the top of the page, **NUMBER EACH DAY** consecutively, starting from **WHEN YOU BEGAN THE DIET**. Alongside, record the day of the week and the date.

In the **INTAKE** column, record:

- the time of your meals and snacks
- which foods and drinks you had
- vitamin & mineral supplements
- regular medication



In the **SYMPTOMS** column, record:

- **ANY SYMPTOMS** whether or not you think they're food related
- **TIME** symptoms began and how long they lasted
- **SEVERITY** graded as:
  - 1: **Mild**  
aware of the symptom, but easily tolerated without medication
  - 2: **Moderate**  
bad enough to interfere with what you're doing, or to require medication
  - 3: **Severe**  
incapacitating, with inability to work or carry on with normal activities
- **ANY MEDICATIONS** taken for symptoms

Record any **REMARKS**, for example:

- social events, dining out, travel, etc.
- stressful events at home or work, accidents etc.
- infections, dental work, operations etc.
- menstrual periods
- exposure to strong smells or fumes, chemicals etc.



Photocopy as many pages as you need of the **DIARY TEMPLATE** opposite

Later, when you start taking **CHALLENGES**, you can also record at the top of the page:

- the challenge code number and time taken (capsule challenges)
- the food substance being tested, eg. salicylates, amines, nitrates etc (food challenges)

DAY:

DATE:

CHALLENGE:

**INTAKE**

foods, drinks, vitamins, medicines

**SYMPTOMS**

include severity\* & other remarks\*\*

**BREAKFAST:**

**Morning snack:**

**LUNCH:**

**Afternoon snack:**

**EVENING MEAL:**

**Evening snack:**

\* SEVERITY: mild = 1, moderate = 2, severe = 3

\*\* OTHER REMARKS: eg. infections, social occasions, stressful events etc