

**DIVIDE CREEK, P.C.**  
**202 SOUTH MONTANA STREET**  
**BUTTE, MONTANA 59701-1694**  
**Telephone 406-723-6526**

NEAL L. ROGERS, M.D., F.A.C.S.  
OTOLARYNGOLOGY  
HEAD & NECK, MAXILLO-FACIAL SURGERY

**ELIMINATION DIET**

This is only for foods that you continually eat. NEVER! Test a food you have had a severe or anaphylactic reaction to!

We are asking you to complete an elimination diet. You have to take the elimination diet very seriously and refer to the food lists in order to accomplish the proper goal. The foods that we are most interested in are milk, wheat, corn, eggs, yeast and soy. Each of these can cause significant problems especially when eaten on a regular basis. The allergies are not obvious. Sometimes, the allergies occur days after the foods are ingested. If the foods are ingested on a daily basis, symptoms can become masked and it is very difficult to tell which particular food is causing the problem. When you do an elimination diet it is best to eliminate the food completely, for at least a period of ten days. It is important that you do not cheat and eat any foods containing the offending food that we are trying to eliminate. You may notice that after 2 – 4 days that you are actually getting worse with symptoms, for example, your headache gets worse or your stomach gets worse. This is normal in the withdrawal from the offending foods. We see this quite often with patients that are overdosing on milk. After that 2 or 4 day period, usually the symptoms will calm down and patients will feel better. If you are doing the “Caveman Diet” you are eliminating all the foods at the same time and you will most likely have symptoms get worse after two or three days. But after approximately 7 – 10 days, you should feel much better. At this point, you are ready to finish the elimination diet and then test or challenge the food.

In order to challenge the foods, you need a pure food in order to test. For example, milk tests for milk, cream of wheat might work for wheat, corn would work best with canned corn, eggs would work with eggs, yeast is difficult but usually should be done after you pass the wheat part of the test, (use bread) and soy would be best in the form of soy milk. You only test one food at a time, so for example, if the first test is milk on the 10<sup>th</sup> day of your elimination diet in the morning, you drink a glass of milk and wait for 30 minutes and see if you have any symptoms. Some patients will get tired, a rash, get weak, or fall asleep, so it is usually best to have somebody there to observe you during this period. If this does not cause any symptoms then have a second glass of milk and finish your day staying off the other foods that you might be eliminating and see how the symptoms go over a two-day period. If you do not get any symptoms then this elimination and challenge test is essentially negative. If you get symptoms, Benadryl may be helpful!

After two days, you can try the next food. Try wheat. Next, have cream of wheat in the morning and wait for 30 minutes, have some more cream of wheat and see what happens. If any of these foods provoke symptoms then these are definite allergy foods on your list that may need to be eliminated. You can discuss this with the allergy staff, so you can figure out exactly how to carry out your particular diet. Finish all 6 foods with the elimination and report to us with your results.

What do you do once you’ve found you are allergic to a food? You need to try a trial of elimination of the food. Sometimes by eliminating the food for a period of time you can become tolerant of the food and it won’t cause symptoms. You can then rotate the food back into the diet no more often than every 4 days. Here is the difficult part..... Some of us can eliminate the food for a month and tolerate it. Others may need to eliminate the food for 2 months, 4 months, 6 months or even a year before they can tolerate the food again. Of course, if the food causes major symptoms – fatigue, mental changes, headache, rashes, belly upset, swelling in the mouth, etc. - you should avoid it. But what happens if the symptoms are minor - a little stuffy nose – most of us will continue to use that food. Just make sure you rotate it no more often than every 4 days. We don’t want to be oppressive. We are here to help. If you have multiple foods, you need to rotate them no more often than every 4 days in the diet.

Remember for severe reactions you need to avoid the food permanently. If you feel you cannot live without a particular food we may be able to test you and develop drops that will improve your symptoms. Ask the nurses about this.

Neal Rogers, M.D.