



## COMPLETE GUIDE TO A DAIRY ELIMINATION TRIAL

Are you struggling with chronic pain, fatigue, skin issues, headaches or hormonal imbalances?

Dairy products may potentially be responsible for these symptoms.

Testing for dairy sensitivities or doing a trial elimination may be the key to unlocking part of your health mystery.

It is true that dairy is part of the traditional diet for many cultures around the world and a nourishing option for some individuals.

However, there's also a set of people who do better with out it. If you are on a journey to optimize your health and find answers for chronic inflammatory conditions, then properly evaluating your body's reaction dairy is one box to check off.

### POTENTIAL INFLAMMATORY ISSUES WITH DAIRY INCLUDE:

- Quality of the milk source – what did the cows eat? Were the cows healthy?
- Added sugar in yogurt, ice cream, pudding, etc
- Aged cheeses – these are a commonly reported migraine trigger
- Lactose intolerance (Inability to break down the sugar, lactose, found in milk)

- Casein intolerance (Immune reaction to the protein casein. About 50% of people who are gluten intolerant are casein intolerant as well)
- Whey intolerance (Reaction to the protein whey, slightly less common)

If you are sourcing the best quality dairy products and yet still experiencing health challenges, the remaining factors to examine would be bio-individuality – how your body reacts when you consume dairy right now (yes, this can evolve over time).

## SO HOW DO I KNOW IF I'M REACTING TO DAIRY??

To find out if dairy is part of the stress in your “stress bathtub” – try completely eliminating it for 2-3 months. Using a weekly tracker, monitor your symptoms and note any potential improvement. After the elimination phase you'll do a limited reintroduction, continuing to track after dairy is reintroduced to your diet.

Alternatively, a more comprehensive but shorter elimination diet, like the Whole 30, when done with proper reintroduction (that's the part people usually miss!) can be enlightening as well.

A dairy elimination would mean *temporarily* avoiding ALL:

- Cow and goat milk
- Yogurt
- Cheese
- Butter
- Ice Cream
- Whey protein

## CAN'T I JUST REDUCE DAIRY OR AVOID THE MOST INFLAMMATORY FORMS?

Reduction can help with the problems to do with quality and sugar and even lactose intolerance. But if you are experiencing an immune reaction to the protein in dairy, a reduction, instead of an elimination, won't tell you anything because the immune reactions are delayed reactions.

It is possible to simply try to reduce dairy but you'll need to decide what question you are trying to answer. If, for example, you are trying to evaluate whey and casein separately it ends up dragging out the process longer.

By doing a complete elimination you clean up all dairy proteins in your system. This makes the reintroduction, and potential return of symptoms, much more potent.

## CAN I DO GOAT MILK INSTEAD?

While many who don't tolerate cow milk do okay with goat milk, it is more logical in our view to do a complete elimination and then reintroduce each category so you don't have lingering questions.

## HOW ABOUT BUTTER OR GHEE?

While many who don't tolerate cow milk do okay with butter and/or ghee, it is more logical in our view to do a complete elimination. Otherwise you may not get the full experience of a reintroduction.

## HOW WILL I GET ENOUGH CALCIUM IN MY DIET?

Dairy is not the only source of calcium. Great sources of calcium include raw leafy greens like arugula, kale and spinach, sardines canned with the bones, sesame seeds (tahini), chia seeds, blackstrap molasses, eggs, cooked okra, cooked pumpkin, cooked turnips, chickpeas, almonds and figs, and rhubarb.

Good sources include dried apricots, broccoli, cooked greens, green beans, other legumes, most seafood, and herbs. The exact amount will vary based on growing conditions and soil so don't take those charts with mg of calcium / grams of food too literally.

Soaking nuts and seeds and legumes before eating them will reduce the anti-nutrient phytic acid, which binds to calcium and other minerals reducing their absorption.

Also emphasis foods rich in magnesium and vitamin D for optimal assimilation of calcium and avoid blocking factors such as too much caffeine, alcohol, or sugar.

## WHAT DO I EAT INSTEAD?

Generally it is easier to "start fresh" from the ground up with Paleo and vegan recipes rather than trying to substitute and stick to your old way of eating.

Focusing on filling your plate and menu with veggies first and then a source of healthy protein. This may be different from your usual way of

eating and take an adjustment period but offers endless variety and more nutrition.

As you get started, you'll have one or two sticking points, which we understand. NO one is perfect! Here are a few common sticking points for people though just to get your creative mind going:

**Coffee creamer** – coconut cream, coffee blended with MCT oil, almond milk, drink coffee or tea black, switch to herbal tea since caffeine isn't really recommended while the body is trying to heal itself anyhow.

**Milk on cereal or yogurt on granola** –instead of trying to recreate these look at “Paleo” breakfast ideas such as egg muffins, sautéed greens and a protein, soups or simply having leftovers from dinner for breakfast.

**Cheese on pizza or casserole** – avoid dairy free cheese products as they are highly processed and often soy or vegetable oil based. We know this one is hard but skip these all together.

**Cheese on salads** – stock up on some new nuts and seeds and even some fresh herbs like basil or cilantro to keep your salads flavorful and satisfying.

**Dips (sour cream/cheese)** – guacamole, salsa, hummus and other bean dips, vegan recipes that use soaked cashews.

**Cream based soups** – Try thickening soups with diced potato or potato flakes.

**Butter on bread** – because gluten sensitivity and dairy sensitivity tend to go hand-in-hand, we suggest skipping the bread.

**Ice cream** – Coconut milk or almond milk ice cream

**Pudding** – Avocado pudding

**Yogurt** - Chia seed pudding

#### WILL I FEEL DEPRIVED OR HUNGRY?

For any elimination diet, we recommend focusing on what you can eat and filling your plate with a variety of nourishing veggies followed by high quality proteins first rather than running out and looking for substitutions for your usual yogurt, coffee creamer, cheese, etc.

Substitutions are usually laden with weird additives that have their own health problems and best reserved for an occasional treat.

It takes a little effort, especially at first but if you are trying new foods and eating a colorful diet, you will not starve and if it turns out that you have no problem at all with dairy you'll have discovered some new and interesting additions to your diet in the mean time.

If you discover that dairy does cause or worsen your symptoms, at that point it is your turn to make a conscious choice about whether or not you want to consume it.

## YOU DON'T HAVE TO GO AT IT ALONE

Eliminating foods and finding alternatives can be stressful, so consider working with a nutritionist or health coach to help find nourishing alternatives and new recipes so that you don't feel restricted or end up replacing the dairy with something worse (i.e. Swapping out yogurt for toast and jam or cream in your coffee to a soy latte).

## SHOULD I DO A MORE COMPREHENSIVE ELIMINATION DIET WHILE I'M AT IT?

This depends on factors such as:

- What the rest of your diet looks like right now
- The severity of your symptoms
- How stressful dietary changes are for you
- Your experience with modifying your diet
- Other suspected food intolerances
- How restricted your diet already is

As mentioned earlier, if you do decide to do a more comprehensive elimination diet, the Whole30 is a good place to start.

If you want help prioritizing, our health coaches can help you weigh the pros and cons so that you feel confident in your decision and ability to successfully complete an elimination diet.

Reach out to [support@engineeringradiance.com](mailto:support@engineeringradiance.com) to get a consultation booked.

## IMPORTANT!!! OKAY BEFORE YOU START DO THIS ONE THING

Take a couple of selfies and save them on your computer named “dairy trial-before pictures” – particularly of your face without makeup. After the trial you’ll be comparing the before and after for visible signs of inflammation!

### QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELF DURING THE TRIAL INCLUDE:

- Do you have more energy when you wake up or in the afternoon?
- Are your headaches changing?
- Is your PMS better?
- Do your sinuses feel clearer?
- Has your belly bloat disappeared?
- Is your skin clearer?
- Are your bowel movements more regular or better formed?
- Does your brain feel sharper, are you able to recall words or solve puzzles faster?

## HOW TO REINTRODUCE FOODS

You may be feeling so fantastic you want to avoid dairy for a little while longer.

**Before you start reintroducing foods** -take a picture of your face and compare it with your starting picture –are your features sharper, do you look fresher? That’s a sign that your inflammation level has dropped!

If you do want to reintroduce foods, let’s be systematic about it.

Proceed with introducing one suspected sensitivity-causing food at a time, with 3-4 days in between.

### **For example:**

Day 1: Reintroduce butter. Have butter several times on day 1

Day 1-3 – monitor for symptoms and changes

Day 4: Reintroduce goat’s milk while avoiding other dairy including cheese (if you want to distinguish cows milk and goats milk, do goats milk first, otherwise skip this)

Day 4-7 – monitor for symptoms and changes

Day 8: Reintroduce whey protein while avoiding other dairy. Have a scoop of protein at least twice on day 8.

Day 8 – 11 – monitor for symptoms and changes

Day 12 – Reintroduce cheese. Have cheese several times on day 12 while avoiding other dairy.

Day 12-15 monitor for symptoms and changes

Day 16 – Reintroduce yoghurt

Day 16-19 monitor for symptoms and changes

Day 20 – Reintroduce milk/ice cream (or not ....there's no saying you have to reintroduce any of these if you don't want to).

Day 20-23 monitor for symptoms and changes

## QUESTIONS TO ASK DURING REINTRODUCTION

After elimination, the places you are likely to notice problems pop up during reintroduction include:

- Acne, skin tone
- Puffy face/eyes
- Feeling more tired when you wake up in the morning
- Afternoon slump
- Joint aches and pains
- Changes to your digestion or bowel movements
- Headaches
- Worsening PMS

Any of these are signals your body was functioning better without the dairy in your diet.

### IF I DISCOVER A SENSITIVITY, WILL I HAVE TO AVOID DAIRY FOREVER?

Maybe, but, unlike a gluten-sensitivity it's quite possible that you may recover your ability to tolerate dairy (particularly sourced outside of the dairy industry). This is because at the root of many causes for dairy sensitivity lie problems like leaky gut, damage to the villi that produce lactose digesting enzymes. As you work to heal your gut from infections and restore a healthy mucosal lining and micro biome you can reevaluate your status with dairy every year or two.

Common sense would dictate avoiding or limiting processed dairy and products with added sugars, regardless of whether you are sensitivity to the dairy itself.

### IS THERE TESTING SO I DON'T HAVE TO DO AN ELIMINATION?

There are food sensitivity panels to look for immune reactions to casein, whey, casomorphin, butyrophilin as well as cow vs goat milk sensitivities.

You can get a lactose intolerance test, although lactose intolerance is probably the easiest to determine and we suppose you may already know if you are lactose intolerant.

If you are worried about multiple food sensitivities and have a history of gut issues or chronic pain and inflammation, do reach out and speak with us about whether a food sensitivity test could be worthwhile.

To properly consider your history and be able to provide a recommendation, we recommend an in-depth Case Review, if you haven't already done one. Our functional nutritionists can walk you through food sensitivity testing, if you decide to go that route.

Questions? Contact our team at [support@engineeringradiance.com](mailto:support@engineeringradiance.com)

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