

FOOD SENSITIVITIES AND YOUR CHILD:

Elimination diet for autism:

Common foods such as **wheat, dairy, and soy** can cause reactions that can affect your child. You may want to consider a trial of a diet eliminating foods that commonly cause trouble to see if there is any difference. You can add things back one by one to see which foods, if any, your child is reacting to. Consider starting a multivitamin daily and if cutting out dairy and gluten long term, specifically supplementing calcium, vitamin D, and B complex.

- **Wheat (and any product with gluten-the main product in wheat, rye, barley)**
- **Dairy (and any product with casein)**
- **Soy**

How to do the elimination diet:

Parents often take a few weeks to find food substitutes that their child will eat, **and then have them follow the diet strictly for 2-3 weeks. If you are trying this elimination diet for behavioral concerns, it may take longer, at least 8 weeks, to see an effect.** You may want to let your child's school/daycare know about the diet changes and ask them to help monitor what they are eating.

Wait three days between each addition of a food group and watch carefully to see if any food worsens behavior or symptoms. Consider keeping a food/behavior daily diary to see if there is an association with a particular food. You may note for the first few days or week, behaviors or symptoms worsen a bit. This can happen. You should see improvement by the second week if your child is going to respond.

If avoiding dairy, look for sources of Ca and vitamin D. Load up on leafy greens, tofu (tofu is OK if you are not cutting out soy), fortified orange juice. Try to limit sugar, fried foods, and foods with artificial preservatives. Consider consulting with a nutritionist or your doctor if you are going to continue with elimination of certain key food groups going forward.

How do I know the GFCF diet will help?

There is no definitive lab test. The best approach is just to try the diet. Some recommend at least a month for dairy-free and 3 months for gluten-free. The GFCF diet seems to help $\sim\frac{2}{3}$ of individuals with autism, but every individual is different.

More information about GLUTEN/CASEIN/SOY:

WHAT IS GLUTEN?

Gluten is the general name for one of the proteins found in wheat, rye, and barley. It is the substance in flour that forms the structure of dough, the “glue” that holds the product together and is also the leavening ingredient.

WHAT FOOD CONTAIN GLUTEN?

The grains containing gluten include *wheat, rye, barley, and all their derivatives*. These grains are used in such items as breads, cereals, pasta, pizza, cakes, pies, and cookies and as added ingredients to many processed food items.

GLUTEN CONTAINING FOODS:

Wheat, Barley, Rye, Spelt and Kamut based bread, pasta, tortilla, crackers, pretzels, cereal, batters, gravy, sauces, couscous, orzo, faro, soy sauce, salad dressings, beer, matzo, food starch, modified starch, malt, seitan, vegetable gum, bread crumbs, durum, farina, hydrolyzed wheat protein, semolina, triticale, wheat bran, wheat germ, wheat grass, wheat protein isolate

WHAT IS CASEIN?

The main protein present in milk and (in coagulated form) in cheese.

CASEIN CONTAINING FOODS:

Cow, Sheep and Goat based milk, yogurt, cheese, cottage cheese, sour cream, kefir, butter, ghee, cream, half and half

SOY CONTAINING FOODS:

Tofu, edamame, miso, tempeh, soy sauce, soy based milk, yogurt or cheese, soybean oil, natto, shoyu, soy flour, soy protein, tamari, textured vegetable protein, soy lecithin, bragg's aminos

If you are following the elimination diet for gluten/casein/soy, you may be wondering, **WHAT CAN YOUR CHILD EAT?! HERE ARE SOME SUGGESTIONS:**

Proteins:

Chicken, Turkey, Fish, Beef, Lamb, Pork, Eggs, Dried Beans, Lentils, Nuts, Seeds

Healthy Fats:

Olive Oil, Coconut Oil, Canola Oil, Avocado, Coconut Milk, Nuts and Nut Butters

Vegetables:

Colorful, variety of leafy, crunchy and starchy veggies (all are okay to include)

Fruit:

Colorful, variety (all are okay to include)

Non-Gluten Whole Grains:

Quinoa, Millet, Brown Rice, Wild Rice, Corn, Buckwheat (also known as Soba or Kasha), Amaranth, Teff, Gluten-Free Oats, Gluten-Free Flours (almond, garbanzo bean, tapioca, coconut, potato)