



Diagnosed with an Autoimmune Disease  
or severe Food Allergies?

# 5 Actions to Take After You Leave Your Doctor's Office



# You just left the doctor's office, and your mind is reeling from the news.

The allergist confirmed you have three serious food allergies (soy, dairy, eggs), and your doctor has confirmed you have an Autoimmune Disease.

She suggests you make an appointment with a nutritionist and follow up with your allergist; the allergist says to avoid the food allergies and come back for a follow up in one year.

*Now what?*

**Here are five actions you should do  
after you leave the doctor's office...**

# 1

**Make an appointment  
to see a board certified nutritionist  
who has experience with others in  
your condition.**



If the person does not know much about your condition, move on and find someone else.

# 2

## **Once you know what you're going to need to avoid, get rid of every item that contains your food allergens.**

And in some cases, you will need to go through your personal care products, household detergents, and personal body and hair care items, such as toothpaste, lip balm, shampoo, and sunblock.

Get rid of every single bit of it. No cheating, since the only one you truly cheat is first yourself, and then your family members who are depending on you.

If necessary, you may need to clean your entire kitchen with water and vinegar to remove the residues of foods such as nuts and nut oils and wheat/gluten. If you are highly allergic, you may need to hire someone else, or be willing to glove up and wear a mask while cleaning.

For example, I found wheat, soy, and quinoa in my hairspray! I switched to a pump spray hairspray that does not have these ingredients. Later, I switched to a low-process cream that I can apply directly to my hair without it going airborne, reducing my chances of inhaling chemicals that place more stress on my body.

Some frequently used items in your kitchen may need to be disposed of. Wooden cutting boards and toasters may not be able to be cleaned of every crumb or cross-contaminated ingredient. Pizza stones absorb residue and cannot be cleansed thoroughly enough; some of your older muffin tins might be better off replaced.

# 3

**Start tracking your food and beverage intake, and any reactions or responses to food, positive or negative.**



Over time, you may be able to desensitize your gut to some foods. Your nutritionist and allergist will find this information helpful. Generally speaking, many autoimmune conditions are improved with nutritious foods, even if you have no intolerances or allergies; this is likely because certain foods have anti-inflammatory properties, may be easier to digest, or keep the body in a lower state of stress. You will need to become a detective on your own behalf.

# 4

**Learn how to cook simple foods first, while avoiding eating out until you are free of your allergic reactions to food and medicines.**



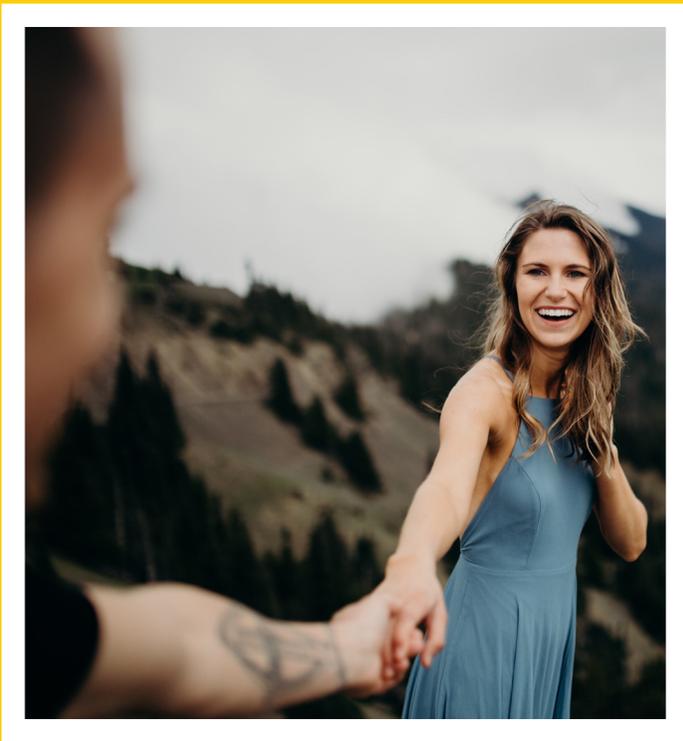
Eating out and eating processed foods are two sources of food that you have the least amount of control over. Unless you are in that commercial kitchen watching every morsel of your food make it through the preparation and cooking stages, you can't possibly know if your food is safe. Processed foods have unpronounceable ingredients, chemicals, and additives that may have unknown interactions with your gut.

A special mention about processed gluten-free foods: in order to enhance the texture, flexibility, and lightness found in their gluten-filled counterparts, gluten-free foods will often have an emulsifier, gum, extra sugar, or unusual preservatives to extend shelf life and hide any unusual flavors. The very nature of gluten-free flour will be nutritionally inferior, but the sugar content and additives are a health-costly trade, along with a more expensive price tag. It is likely both cheaper and more nutritionally dense for you to learn to make it yourself, and leave out the yuck.

Make a short list of several single-ingredient foods you can make in large batches. If you need help with this, take a look at my [Adventures in Batch Cooking](#) post.

# 5

## **Find a friendly food ally (someone who completely understands what you need to do to be safe and improve your health.)**



If you don't have an ally or food champion, you will need to create one. Sit a trusted friend or family member down, and explain to him or her what changes will need to be made to your work schedule, home schedule, activity level, and social life. If you don't yet know what those changes will be, try joining a local support group for people with your specific condition or for food allergic people. Ultimately, you may be your own food champion for awhile; eventually, you'll find others who are similar to you.

You can also join the virtual community on the blog of [My Allergy Advocate](#). Having an ally will help you feel a little less alone, and you chat with others who may have similar experiences.

# What happens next?

For most people with food allergies and intolerances, there will come a time where you may be asked to try reintroducing a food you have reacted to in the past. This is called an Elimination/Provocation test: first you eliminate the food for a set period of time. Then, you may be subjected to a food in low amounts through either an in-office medical setting, or at home through a controlled exposure.

However, at the moment of diagnosis, it is NEVER recommended that you try a reintroduction of a known allergen. It is always recommended by a medical professional to eliminate the food from the diet as a first-line defense against harm. Please follow the guidance of an experienced helping professional at all times.



**Feeling overwhelmed  
by all you need to do?**

**Set up a complimentary consult,  
and see how having a  
Food Concierge can help you.**

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