

# Take Action with Puzzling Food Sensitivity Symptoms



Puzzling food allergy symptoms are challenging because there isn't a clear treatment protocol. The sensational, conflicting information on the internet can be overwhelming. Typically, people respond to this stress in one of two ways (often going back and forth):

- 1) Making several haphazard changes (trying several diets, supplements, medications, treatments without giving anything a chance to work).
- 2) Feeling stuck or frozen and not making any changes.

Neither approach is helpful! Creating a systematic action plan is an **essential step** on your journey to a better quality of life. Read more at [Food Sensitivity! Make Progress with an Action Plan](#).

Here are some dietary changes that you can consider for your action plan.

**No change:** It is mentally exhausting and hard on the body when you make too many changes at once. Additionally, it is difficult to know what changes are helping. If you are experimenting with medications or supplements, it is not a good time for dietary changes. For example, if you feel better after starting antihistamine medications and a low histamine diet, you don't know which one helped.

**Healthier diet and lifestyle:** Start your wellness journey with the basics, such as a less processed diet, moderate exercise, enough sleep, relaxation, etc. Focus on the basics before trying extensive treatments. Modified diets (e.g. GAPs, SCD, low

histamine) often improve symptoms. However, these diets eliminate processed foods. The improved symptoms may be from the less processed diet, rather than the modification.

**Look at emotional aspects and stress:** Stress does not cause food sensitivities, but it makes symptoms worse. Negative food messages are everywhere, so it is easy for fearful food perceptions to develop which can lead to symptoms when eating. My private nutrition counselling focuses on this topic. See [food reintroduction online learning](#).

**Move past the endless search for a cure or perfect diet:** The internet makes it sound like there is a "perfect diet" that will eliminate your symptoms, but every website and practitioner has a different idea! There are many other triggers, besides diet, so the right diet will rarely eliminate symptoms. I respect the effort that clients make to find the right diet, but it can go too far. It's essential to find a balance

**Avoid food sensitivity testing:** Food sensitivity tests are very appealing to clients and practitioners because they give specific answers. Unfortunately, each test gives a different result, so it is impossible to judge which tests (if any) provides meaningful information. See [food sensitivity testing](#) for more details.

**Symptom and trigger journal:** Keeping track of potential triggers (e.g. diet, stress, inhaled substances, etc.) and symptoms is a common way to identify triggers. Journals should be a short-term tool, not an ongoing preoccupation. See [Step-by-Step Guide to Food Sensitivity Journals](#).

**Elimination diets:** Eliminating potential food triggers for a defined period and adding them back one-at-a-time, is a common way to pinpoint sensitivities. This process is time consuming and deciding what foods to eliminate is not clear-cut, so clients need time and energy to follow through. Work with a registered dietitian to ensure adequate nutrition (especially for children) and to make this process easier.

***“How you eat” (meal patterns) may be more relevant than “what you eat”:*** When symptoms seem to be caused by diet, it’s tempting to start searching for specific food triggers. However, other factors, such as meal frequency and timing, speed of eating, etc. may be more relevant. Systematically experimenting with meal patterns, may be more helpful than trying to pinpoint specific food triggers. See [“How You Eat” May Be More Important Than “What You Eat”](#).

***Rotation diets:*** With a rotation diet, you eat different foods each day – typically once every three or four days. Some people are more sensitive to foods they eat frequently, and a rotation diet can reduce symptoms. Also, food triggers are easier to recognize with a repeated rotation.