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## **THE ROTARY DIVERSIFIED DIET FOR ALLERGIC PATIENTS**

It is important for the person who has allergies to learn how to eat a diet that will control allergic symptoms and prevent the onset of new sensitivities. At least half of our patients, who have allergies to inhalants in the air, will also be allergic to foods. These symptoms vary greatly and the patient should be educated about potential food allergies and their symptoms. If you suspect food allergies, a good way to start, is to keep a food diary for two weeks.

Common symptoms of food allergies are the following: nasal congestion, runny nose, headache, palate or throat itching, dizziness, bloating, gas, excessive drowsiness, diarrhea, swelling of the hands, feet and ankles, hyperactivity, decreased mental function, and night time awakenings.

In general, foods that are eaten every day are more likely to cause trouble than those eaten infrequently. Common allergic foods are wheat, milk, corn egg, citrus (orange, grapefruit, lemon), potato, chocolate, tomato, spices, yeast and malt, nuts, beef and pork, roughly in that order. Most people eat these foods in some form every day.

It is also well established that avoidance of a food leads to “tolerance” toward it, and that repetitive ingestion of a particular food, particularly in large amounts, increase “sensitivity” to it. Therefore, the allergic individual must learn to “rotate” his or her foods from day to day, and to eat a wide variety of different foods (“diversify”). The rotation and diversification of diet is the basic principle of preventing the development of new food allergies and controlling adverse symptoms of allergic foods.

Children are particularly susceptible to food allergies and allergic children would benefit from a rotary diversified diet. In children, wheat and corn cereals, peanut butter, chocolate, cola drinks and popcorn are frequent offenders. Adults should remember that all alcoholic drinks contain corn, yeast, malt and other cereal grains. If just one or two drinks give you unpleasant symptoms of any type, strongly suspect an allergy.

The rotary diversified diet is difficult for most people, because it requires constant thinking, planning, and work. However, as your allergy is brought under control and you begin to feel better, it is possible to eat allergic foods again, provided that you do not eat it too often or in large amounts.

In most instances, the strict rotary diet must be followed for at least four to six weeks. Many patients have to follow it only during their worst allergy season, such as during grass pollinating season (April-June) or ragweed pollinating season (August-September).

Learn to read labels on cans and bottles! What do they contain? Keep in mind that almost all foods purchased in the grocery store have added sweetening agents, chemical preservatives, coloring agents and other substances which may affect you. If you are a food sensitive patient, and approximately 60% of allergic patients are, you simply must familiarize yourself with what you eat. An occasional lapse is not harmful but repetitive ingestion of an allergic food will complicate your allergy and prolong your symptoms indefinitely in spite of otherwise good allergic control.

## **ROTARY DIVERSIFIED DIET RULES**

1. Any food, in any amount or form, must not be eaten more often than once in four (4) days. Starting counting the first day after eating a food as day one, and you may eat the same food again on day four.

Example: Apples eaten on Monday may NOT be eaten again until Friday, 4 days later.

2. Foods that are in the same family (related to one another) may be eaten the following ways:

- A. Food family members may be eaten together, at the same meal and then rotated four days later.

Example:      Monday Breakfast-    Orange & Grapefruit  
                     Friday Breakfast-      Orange & Grapefruit

OR

- B. Different foods in the same food family may be eaten on a rotation schedule alternating them every two days (or every other day). Ideally food family members should be separated by a minimum of two days and preferably by three days.

Example:      Monday Breakfast - Oranges  
                     Wednesday Breakfast- Grapefruit  
                     Friday Breakfast- Oranges  
                     Sunday Breakfast- Grapefruit

As noted in the above example, the individual foods are separated by four days and the family members are separated by two days.

3. Food family members may NOT be eaten at various times during a specific day. If you eat a food family member in the morning, you may NOT eat one of its family members during the same day.

Example of what NOT to do:

Blueberries may be eaten at breakfast on a specific day, but cranberries (its food family member) may not be eaten for supper that same day.

4. When you pass a food in a specific family, you do not automatically pass other foods in that family. ALL FOODS must be tested, including food family members.

Example: If you pass carrot, you may place it in your rotation diet. This does not automatically mean that celery, dill, parsnip or parsley (its food family members) are safe to eat. You must test each one of these foods before placing them in the diet.

5. More than one food in the same food family may be eaten at a single meal. Be sure that each food is tested individually before putting them together.

Example: Monday Lunch- Potato  
Wednesday Lunch- Tomato, Green Pepper, Eggplant  
Friday Lunch- Potato  
Sunday Lunch- Tomato, Green Pepper, Eggplant  
Tuesday Lunch- Cantaloupe and Honeydew Melon  
Thursday Lunch- Zucchini and Acorn Squash  
Saturday Lunch- Cantaloupe and Honeydew Melon  
Monday Lunch- Zucchini and Acorn Squash

6. The specific time of day that the food is eaten, is not essential. But remember to be faithful to the four day rotation.

7. All foods are to be eaten only once during a specific day and are not to be eaten throughout the day, even in small amounts.

Example: Milk consumed at breakfast may not be eaten at lunch, supper or any other time during that day. The next scheduled day for milk would be four days later.

8. Foods passed in one form may be automatically eaten in other forms, at the same meal and then rotated four days later. However, some people are able to eat some foods in only certain forms.

Example:

- a. If you pass corn, you may also have corn sugar, corn oil, corn starch, corn meal, corn on the cob, popcorn, etc., at a specific meal, and then rotate them all four days later.
- b. Milk may be eaten at one meal with its other forms such as butter, cream, cheese (If yeast is passed), sour cream, etc., and then rotated four days later.
- c. Almonds may be eaten with almond oil and/or almond butter.
- d. Buckwheat groats may be mixed or used with its other forms

including buckwheat flour and oil.

9. All ingredients used in cooking must be regarded as separate foods, including oils, spices, flavorings, etc., and must be tested and then rotated on a four day rotation.
10. Think innovatively in preparing your Rotary Diversified Diet. If you only have one food per meal, be creative and try the following suggestions:
  - a. Eat the food raw, steamed, and cooked whenever possible. This gives different textures and flavors to the food.  
Example: Have carrots raw, steam some and perhaps have some shredded with a little carrot juice added.
  - b. Use the juices of the specific food whenever possible, since there are numerous vegetable and fruit juices available.  
Example: Tomato juice may be used as a beverage and/or heated up with stewed tomatoes to make soup.
  - c. Freezing fruits and eating them partially frozen can be an enjoyable treat. Some fruits may be frozen, then pureed in a blender and served as an ice cream.  
Example: Bananas may be frozen in their peel. When frozen, place the peeled banana, in a blender for a short time and then eat as a mock banana ice cream.  
Example: Peaches and apricots may be placed in a blender and pureed and then frozen in a container, removed and eaten. (Honey, if passed, may be added for sweetening).
  - d. Dried foods may also add texture and variation to your diet, so use whenever possible.  
Example: Fresh pineapple, dried pineapple, and pineapple juice may be eaten together at one meal.