

Suggestions for Implementing a Gluten and Casein-Free Diet

Excellent Book Resource:

- “Special Diets for Special Kids” – Lisa Lewis

1st Step - removing ALL dairy products

1. Remove cow milk, ice cream, cheese, yogurt, etc. This is critical to start the process of dietary modification for your child. Alternatives to have on hand are coconut milk, coconut yogurts, almond or hemp milk, and other dairy-free options. These can be introduced before a complete removal of dairy.
2. It is best to avoid soy products as they have a chemical similarity to the proteins found in dairy.
3. When removing dairy products you need to make sure calcium supplement is being taken.
4. Begin the process of purchasing ready to eat gluten-free foods, particularly breakfast items. This includes package mixes of breads, waffles, pancake mixes, cereals, etc. Become familiar with the varieties of gluten-free products available at your local supermarket or specialty markets. You may need to ask the store manager where they keep gluten-free products. Remember, for the first 1 to 3 weeks you are only focusing on removing dairy products from your child's diet. The introduction of gluten free foods will come later.

Note: Many kids are very strong dairy reactors. What this means is when you remove dairy products altogether there can be an upswing in eye contact, receptive or expressive language, less tantrums, better sleep, etc. However, some children have an addictive nature to these foods, and can appear agitated and irritable during the initial few days (3 to 5 days) of removing these foods.

2nd Step – removing gluten

1. Week #1 - Introduce 5 “new” GFCF foods you think your child will eat for breakfast. This could be pre-packaged gluten-free waffles or pancakes, pancakes made from gluten-free flour, or such things as cereal and

gluten-free toast. As part of a balanced breakfast include protein foods such as eggs, bacon and/or sausage.

2. Week #2 – introduce 5 “new” GFCF foods you think your child will eat as part of their lunch. This could be gluten-free sandwiches, pasta, etc.
3. Week #3 – introduce 5 “new” GFCF foods you think your child will eat as part of their dinner. This could be gluten-free hamburger or hot dog buns, pizza, pasta, etc.
4. Week #4 - replace ALL snack foods with GFCF alternatives. This can include cookies, chips, finger-foods or more.