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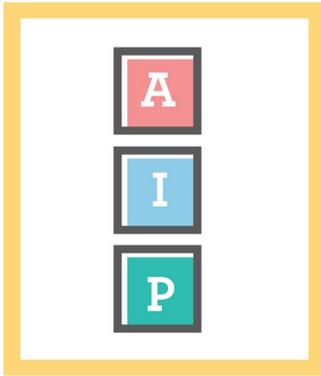
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Created by
DR. SARAH BALLANTYNE, PHD
WWW.THEPALEOMOM.COM



WHAT IS AIP?

The Autoimmune Protocol is a specialized version of the Paleo diet, with an even greater focus on nutrient density and even stricter guidelines for which foods should be eliminated. The Paleo Autoimmune Protocol works by addressing four key areas known to be important contribu-

WHAT TO EAT & WHAT TO AVOID

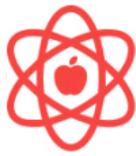
EAT:

- ✓ [Organ meat and offal](#)
- ✓ [Fish and shellfish](#)
- ✓ [Vegetables of all kinds](#)
- ✓ Edible fungi, like mushrooms
- ✓ [Sea vegetables](#)
- ✓ [Herbs and spices](#)
- ✓ [Quality meats](#)
- ✓ [Healthy fats](#)
- ✓ [Fruit](#)
- ✓ [Probiotic/fermented foods](#)
- ✓ [Glycine-rich foods](#)
- ✓ Source the best-quality ingredients you can.
- ✓ Eat as much variety as possible.

AVOID:

- ✗ [Grains](#)
- ✗ [Legumes](#)
- ✗ [Dairy](#)
- ✗ [Refined and processed sugars](#) and [oils](#)
- ✗ [Eggs](#) (especially the whites)
- ✗ [Nuts](#)
- ✗ [Seeds](#) (including cocoa, [coffee](#) and seed-based spices)
- ✗ [Nightshades](#) (potatoes, tomatoes, eggplants, sweet and hot peppers, cayenne, red pepper, tomatillos, goji berries etc. and spices derived from peppers, including paprika)
- ✗ [Potential Gluten Cross-Reactive Foods](#)
- ✗ [Alcohol](#)
- ✗ NSAIDS (like aspirin or ibuprofen)
- ✗ [Non-nutritive sweeteners](#) (yes, all of them, even [stevia](#))
- ✗ [Emulsifiers](#), thickeners, and other food additives

For my printable 1-page guides on what to eat & avoid on AIP, click [here](#).



SCIENCE SPEAK

As we adopt the Paleo Autoimmune Protocol, our food choices become focused on consuming the nutrients to support healing—foods that provide everything our bodies need to stop attacking themselves, repair damaged tissues, and get healthy again: high-quality proteins, carbohydrates, and fats to sustain a normal metabolism, build new tissue, and produce hormones, important proteins, and signaling molecules; fiber from fresh vegetables and fruit to support a healthy gut microbiome; and the full range of fat-soluble vitamins, water-soluble vitamins, minerals, and antioxidants to get rid of inflammation, regulate the immune system, and support the normal functioning of all the body's systems.



EASY TIP

If all this is overwhelming, check out the in-depth explanations in my first book, *The Paleo Approach*. It's the most comprehensive resource out there for the AIP, and it includes all the scientific information you'll need to feel comfortable following this plan. My post, [Making Healthy Choices: What's Your Currency?](#) is also a great read if the YES/NO foods list seem impossible for you.

Autoimmune Protocol
LECTURE
Series

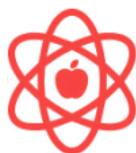
**Learn about the autoimmune protocol
in this 6 week intensive course**

WITH DR. SARAH BALLANTYNE



WHAT ARE NIGHTSHADES?

Tomatoes, potatoes, eggplants, sweet and hot peppers (but not black pepper), and chili-based spices (including paprika) all come from plants which are members of the nightshade family. Nightshades can be problematic for many people due to their lectin, saponin and/or capsaicin content. They tend to be even more problematic for those with autoimmune disease and of all the foods restricted in the autoimmune protocol, are probably the least likely to be successfully reintroduced, especially tomatoes and chilies. Want to know more? [Read my post, What are Nightshades?](#)



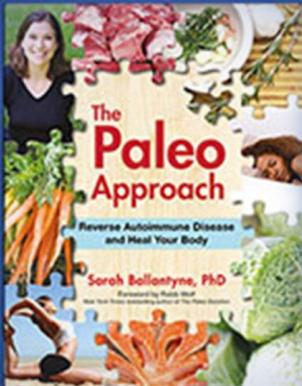
SCIENCE SPEAK

Nightshades contain three potentially problematic compounds: lectins, saponins and capsaicin. Tomato lectin is known to enter the bloodstream relatively quickly in humans, which suggests that tomato lectin can contribute to the development of a leaky gut, and increase antibody formation by activating the immune system. The flowers, fruit, and foliage of the nightshade family contain a type of saponin called glycoalkaloids and contain steroidal drugs. Glycoalkaloid poisoning can occur with excessive consumption of nightshade vegetables, and many researchers have hypothesized that the low level toxic exposure from more moderate consumption of nightshades can contribute to a variety of health conditions. Capsaicin, a steroidal stimulant found in chili peppers, is a potent irritant to a variety of tissues, including skin, eyes and mucous membranes. Very importantly, there is evidence that capsaicin can increase intestinal permeability.



EASY TIP

For many people, avoiding nightshades is absolutely critical to health improvement. This can make it difficult to eat out, as many restaurants season with a blend of nightshade-based spices like paprika and red pepper. Instead, consider batch-cooking for yourself ahead of time, or stocking your freezer with pre-made meals from [Paleo on the Go!](#) Their AIP-compliant meals are delicious, quick to defrost and an absolute life-saver in my nightshade-free house.



REVERSE AUTOIMMUNE DISEASE & HEAL YOUR BODY

The first book ever to explain how to adapt the Paleo diet and lifestyle to bring about a full recovery.

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NUTS & SEEDS

WHY AVOID NUTS AND

It boils down to two simple facts. Tree nuts are one of the top allergens and most common food sensitivities. People with autoimmune disease are very likely to have a leaky gut, which increases their susceptibility to developing food allergies and food sensitivities. This means that people with autoimmune disease are more likely to have a sensitivity or allergy to nuts and seeds than other people. And cutting nuts out of the diet using an elimination diet approach such as the Autoimmune Protocol is a good way to isolate whether or not nuts are a problem for you. If you continue to eat something that you have an allergy or sensitivity to, it is very difficult for your gut to heal and for your immune system to deactivate.



SCIENCE SPEAK

There are quite a few myths out there about why we eliminate nuts and seeds on the AIP. It's not about lectins. The lectins that we avoid eating on a Paleo diet are lectins such as gluten that are known to survive cooking, be poorly digested, interact with the cells that line the gut, increase intestinal permeability and/or cross the intestinal barrier largely intact where they can stimulate the immune system. To date, there is no scientific evidence that the lectins in nuts and seeds cross an intact gut barrier or prime the immune system.

Nuts are relatively high in phytate, and consuming large amount of foods high in phytic acid and/or phytate is not a good idea because it leads to mineral deficiency. However, phytate may also be an important antioxidant and help reduce cardiovascular risk factors and risk of developing cancer when consumed in moderate quantities. This is really just an argument for limiting our intake of nuts and seeds, not for eliminating them.

It isn't about the omega-6 content of nuts, either. Nuts tend to have much more omega-6 polyunsaturated fats than omega-3 polyunsaturated fats. However, in a diet rich in fish and grass-fed meat, small quantities of nuts that are conscientiously consumed should not be a problem.

What are the chances that you're intolerant to nuts? One study in patients with IBS showed that cashews are one of the most common nut intolerances, affecting upwards of 50% of us. In comparison, incidence of intolerance to almonds was about 28%, Brazil nuts was 23% and walnuts was 3%. With potentially half or even more of all autoimmune disease sufferers being intolerant to at least one type of nut, it's a no-brainer to eliminate them when first adopting the AIP and then later reintroduce systematically.



EASY TIP

Nuts are a very popular ingredient in Paleo baking, since they have the ability to (somewhat) substitute for flour. I've gotten pretty good at nut-free baking, and have even developed some AIP treats you can feed your family! Try my [AIP Dinner Rolls](#) and [Paleo Flour Tortillas](#) to start!

**Strength
in Food**

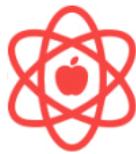
**AIP RESOURCES & TOOLS,
DELIVERED MONTHLY**





WHY EAT LIVER?

Because of nutrient density! You've probably heard a lot about how important it is to eat organ meat: things like liver, kidney, tripe, heart, and even brain. Organ meats are the most concentrated source of just about every nutrient, including important vitamins, minerals, healthy fats and essential amino acids. And they used to be dietary staples; so, what changed? How have we, as a society, migrated so far from organ meats in just a couple of generations? I think the answer to that question could be a dissertation in itself, but there is one BIG benefit for us: organ meat, even from grass-fed animals, can be very cheap compared to muscle meat (and organ meats from grass-fed animals are even higher in nutrients than organs from grain-fed animals). So, not only do we get to eat the healthiest meat from the animal, but we get to save money doing it! If you're living on a tight budget, this might be a great way to work in some grass-fed meat! Learn more in my post, [The Importance of Nutrient Density](#).



SCIENCE SPEAK

Compared to the muscle meat we are used to eating, organ meats are more densely packed with just about every nutrient, including heavy doses of B vitamins such as: B1, B2, B6, folate (B9) and the very important vitamin B12. Organ meats are also loaded with minerals like phosphorus, iron, copper, magnesium, iodine, calcium, potassium, sodium, selenium, zinc and manganese and provide the important fat-soluble vitamins A, D, E and K. Organ meats are known to have some of the highest concentrations of naturally occurring vitamin D of any food source. Organ meats also contain high amounts of essential fatty acids, including arachidonic acid and the omega-3 fats EPA and DHA.

Liver is known to be one of the most concentrated sources of vitamin A of any foods. In addition to containing dozens of important vitamins and minerals, it is an outstanding source of Vitamin D, Vitamin B12 (and other B-Vitamins), copper, potassium, magnesium, phosphorous, manganese, and iron, which is in a form that is particularly easily absorbed and used by the body. Other organ meats have different, but equally amazing, nutrient properties!

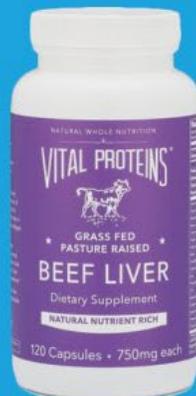


EASY TIP

I know that for most people, cooking organ meat can be a little repulsive. I recommend you ease into organ meat consumption with [Vital Proteins' Liver Pills](#)! You can get a full serving of liver with a few portable, and more importantly palatable, pills every day. I take these with me when I travel so I'm never far from the incredible nutrient density of liver!



VITAL PROTEINS™



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NEW ZEALAND BEEF



WHY ARE VEGGIES CRUCIAL ON THE AIP?

When I put together a meal, I make my plate 3/4 vegetables. It's a little good-eating habit I document with the hashtag [#threequartersveggies](#). It helps me balance my plate, and focus on the most important part of my modified AIP diet—the vegetables! It's important to eat a variety of veggies at every meal, particularly when we're battling autoimmune disease. In fact, I aim for 10-14 servings per day! Also keep in mind that often specific nutrients are linked to the color of a vegetable, so “eating from the rainbow” is a good way to make sure we are getting everything we need. There really isn't such thing as too much!



SCIENCE SPEAK

Veggie intake is particularly important for those with autoimmune disease because of the principle of [nutrient density](#). Aside from organ meats, vegetables are some of the densest sources of the vitamins, mineral and other nutrients we need to heal. They provide important antioxidant phytochemicals and the fiber in veggies feeds a healthy gut microbiome. There seems to be no indication of an upward limit on the servings of veggies we can healthfully eat in a day, but new research indicates 8 or more is ideal for health.



EASY TIP

If you are a person who has a very hard time eating large servings of vegetables, smoothies or vegetable juices might be consumed in moderation as part of a meal. If you have trouble digesting large amounts of vegetables (if you have any gastrointestinal symptoms or can identify intact vegetable particles in your stool), try taking digestive support supplements (plant enzymes are especially helpful for breaking down fiber) with your meals and limiting yourself to cooked and/or pureed vegetables initially.

A great solution for getting your veggie servings in every day is [Collagen Veggie Blend](#) from [Vital Proteins](#), an easy AIP protein powder that I helped Vital Proteins develop. One serving has 10g of protein from collagen peptides, 2 servings of veggies (from spinach, kale, broccoli, carrots and squash) and 1/2 serving of high-antioxidant fruit. And because the veggies are dried and powdered, they tend to be easy on even sensitive digestive tracts.”



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COLLAGEN VEGGIE BLEND

Now with 20 Servings & an Improved Taste

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11 WHOLE FRUITS & VEGGIES!



WHY IS SLEEP SO IMPORTANT?

Scientists believe sleep is profoundly important for our brains, our hormones and, most importantly for those on the AIP, our immune systems. Not only does inadequate sleep decrease your body's ability to heal, but lack of sleep has been investigated as a cause of autoimmune disease. The average adult needs 7-9 hours of sleep, and teenagers need 8-10 hours. If you are trying to heal from an autoimmune disease, don't be surprised if what your body needs is on the longer end of that range (say 9 to 10 hours) or even exceeding that range (some people with autoimmune disease report needing 12 hours of sleep every night to heal).



SCIENCE SPEAK

Epidemiological studies show a very strong correlation between short or disturbed sleep and obesity, diabetes and cardiovascular disease. In fact, lack of adequate sleep has been associated with increased morbidity and mortality from all causes. This means that if you consistently don't get enough sleep, you have a much higher risk of getting sick and/or dying. Period. Studies have also evaluated the role that sleep plays in healing from specific diseases, like breast cancer, and show that the less you sleep, the less likely you are to survive.



EASY TIP

There are many simple tricks you can use to improve your sleep, from meditation to supplementation and they are all detailed in my online sleep program [Go To Bed](#).

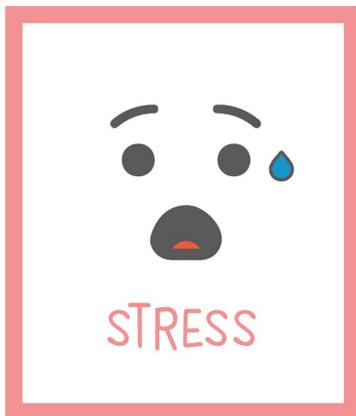
One of my favorite simple tricks involves wearing blue light-blocking glasses for a few hours before bedtime, particularly if I'm looking at a screen. It protects my melatonin production and improves my sleep quality by increasing how much time I'm in deep sleep! My favorite blue light-blocking glasses are called [Swannies](#)!



14 EASY STEPS TO HEALTHIER SLEEP

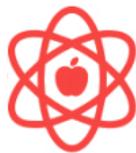
Recharge your life with better sleep!





STRESS AND YOUR AIP SUCCESS

Time for some real talk: I cannot stress enough (pardon the pun) the negative impact that chronic stress has on our health. In fact, stress contributes to the development and/or worsens all disease, from increasing susceptibility to the common cold to being a major contributor to stimulating the immune system in autoimmune disease. Stress is a bigger predictor of cardiovascular disease than any other factor. If we do not manage stress, it will completely undermine all the other positive changes we make. And if we're making other diet and lifestyle changes to deal with our autoimmune disease, it's simply not worth wasting our efforts!



SCIENCE SPEAK

Chronic stress is known to affect health in a variety of ways, including causing the development of metabolic syndrome (the nasty combination of obesity, insulin resistance, and high blood pressure), dysregulation of the hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenal axis along with sympathetic nervous system activation, sleep disturbances, systemic inflammation, impaired immunity functions, blood coagulation and fibrinolysis, and poor health behaviors (chronic stress causes increased appetite, cravings for energy-dense foods, and uninhibited eating behaviors).



EASY TIP

Meditation has been clinically proven to help regulate stress. If you do nothing else to manage your stress levels, consider spending 5 minutes a day meditating with an app like Calm, Headspace or Insight Timer. Better yet, combine the benefits of stress reduction and movement by taking a yoga class or doing a free yoga routine online.

ANNE ANGELONE

IMMUNE
BALANCE

SOUND HEALING

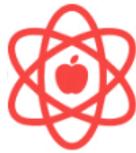
PEACEFUL
SLEEP

Music for Meditation & Healing



THE IMPORTANCE OF CONNECTION

You might be sensing a theme here: the AIP is about way more than what you put on your plate! Lifestyle factors are key to healing. And we can't discount the healing power of connection! Connection, through friendships, romantic relationships, a cuddly pet, or even supportive online communities, will speed your healing and give you the support you need to continue.



SCIENCE SPEAK

Research has proven the role that connection plays in health through two extremes:

- ✓ Social isolation and loneliness corresponds with increased risk of morbidity and mortality
- ✓ A strong social support network corresponds with decreased risk of disease and increased longevity.

Having a social support network improves your health, and not having one pretty dramatically increases risk of disease. How does this work? We are hardwired to be social creatures. Positive social interactions stimulate changes in hormones that affect nearly every system in the body. So, how large is the impact to our health of feeling connected and having a sense of community? It's very comparable to better-known health risk factors such as cigarette smoking, blood pressure, blood lipids, obesity and physical activity!



EASY TIP

If you have trouble connecting during your autoimmune journey, there are amazingly supportive online communities where you can find support, understanding, and encouragement. For some ideas on finding support, check out my post on [“The Health Benefits of Connection.”](#)



AIP *Community*

**CONNECT, MEET, INTERACT, & GET INFORMED ABOUT
THE AUTOIMMUNE PROTOCOL**

ON *the* PALEO MOM.COM



MOVEMENT, EXERCISE AND THE AIP

When it comes to autoimmune healing, movement is absolutely essential. The good news is that my recommendations for “exercise” on the AIP don’t necessarily involve any intense physical activity. Gentle movement throughout the day has many documented benefits that extend to our sleep and stress levels, too. Learn more in my post, [The Benefits of Gentle Movement](#).



SCIENCE SPEAK

Exercise and autoimmune disease can be a tricky balance. It’s not a case that the more exercise we do the healthier we are. And this is an important distinction. Too little activity (like sitting at a desk job) is associated with detrimental health effects, including a compromised immune system, decreased resistance to stress, and decreased resilience of circadian rhythms. However, too much (too strenuous, too intense) activity also negatively impacts health, including causing dysregulated cortisol, increased susceptibility to immune-related diseases and infection, and a leaky gut. That’s the opposite of what we’re trying to achieve on this protocol!



EASY TIP

While “working out” may still be appropriate for some people working to heal from autoimmune disease (keeping the intensity level moderate and making sure to get ample rest between workouts), simply walking outside is a great way to improve not only your immune health, but your sleep and stress levels as well. If you’re unable to walk, do gentle yoga or even work in some stretching, you’ll benefit from movement! Read more in my post, [Balancing Physical Activity with Rest: How Do We Get It Right?](#)

In addition to 20 to 30 minutes of continuous activity like walking, it’s important not to be sedentary during the day. Moving for just 2 minutes out of every 20 negates the negative health impact of sitting, so set a timer and get up and walk around periodically throughout the day.



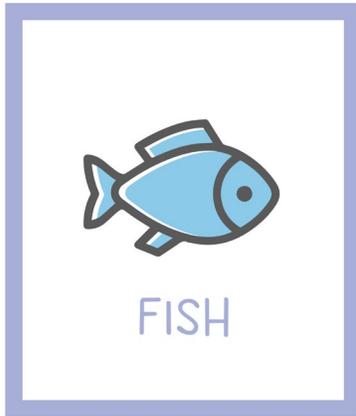
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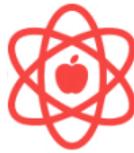
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WHY FISH & SHELLFISH ARE DIFFERENT...AND CRITICAL!

Often when we aren't experiencing improvements on the AIP, it's not because we aren't eliminating enough; it's because we aren't adding enough of the good stuff back in. Fish is a prime example. The more fish you eat on the AIP, the better! Fish and shellfish are rich in the long chain omega-3 fatty acids DHA and EPA, which are anti-inflammatory and easy for our bodies to absorb. Plus, they're high in the hard-to-find nutrients Vitamin D, selenium and iodine (essential for healthy immune function!), and the protein is easy for a compromised digestion to handle (yep, the easiest to digest protein comes from fish!).



SCIENCE SPEAK

Why not just get your DHA and EPA from fish oil supplements? These polyunsaturated fats are very easily oxidized in response to heat or light and are not very shelf stable, especially once isolated. Consuming oxidized omega-3 fats is not helpful to your health (contributes to inflammation as opposed to reducing it). Eating fresh, frozen or canned whole fish protects the omega-3 fats from oxidation plus provides additional valuable nutrients and all the necessary cofactors for optimal absorption and use by the body.



EASY TIP

Which fish are best to include in our diets? Oily cold water, wild-caught fish will have the highest omega-3 and Vitamin D content. Canned fish like salmon and sardines tend to be great, inexpensive options, and pickled herring and smoked kipper are often less expensive as well. Pretty much all fish are an excellent option, even farmed tilapia and catfish! Worried about mercury? Check out [The Mercury Content of Seafood: Should we worry?](#)



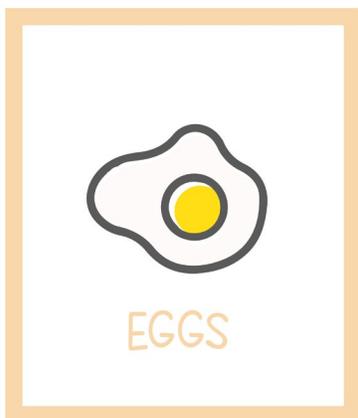
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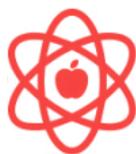
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EGGS MIGHT BE YOUR ISSUE...

In fact, they are one of mine. After embarking on the AIP, I discovered that eggs trigger an autoimmune reaction in my body (which is mostly noticeable on my skin). For many people, eggs are a health-promoting food. But

for those of us with autoimmune disease, they can be problematic. Eggs are a perfect example of something that's "healthy" for the general population (that's why you'll find so many egg-based Paleo recipes out there) but not for those whose immune systems need a little more care and attention.



SCIENCE SPEAK

One of the main functions of the white of the egg is to protect the yolk against microbial attack while the embryo grows. It achieves this worthy goal by using proteolytic enzymes, enzymes that can cleave proteins into shorter chains of amino acids. The specific protease in egg whites that those of us with autoimmune disease (or severe allergies or severely leaky guts) need to be concerned with is called lysozyme. This protein is particularly good at binding with bacterial proteins in the gut and then crossing our gut barrier and entering our bloodstream—not something that needs to concern a healthy individual, but for someone with autoimmune disease, an action that could trigger further immune response.

The good news is that yolks are not likely to cause these issues. I still recommend avoiding both egg white and yolk when you first adopt the Autoimmune Protocol because they are a common sensitivity (1-2% of adults are allergic and one study showed 57% of IBS sufferers were intolerant). However, many people tolerate yolks well and can add them as an early reintroduction.



EASY TIP

There are many great egg-free breakfast options in both of my AIP cookbooks, [The Paleo Approach Cookbook](#) and [The Healing Kitchen](#). Plus, I've shared many egg-free recipes on my site over the years, and one of my favorites is my [Beef Breakfast Sausage \(AIP-Friendly\)](#). It's simple to make in batches and have ready all week, and it's a traditional-enough breakfast that you'll feel totally "normal" eating it in the morning!

100's of
PRODUCTS



100% AIP



no Sugar · no Corn · no Dairy · no Eggs · no Gluten · no Grains · no Nuts · no Nightshades · no Seeds · no Soy



HOW DO YOU KNOW WHEN IT'S WORKING?

Many people approach the AIP with the goal of completely reversing their autoimmune disease and ditching their medication. While remission is certainly a common occurrence, going off all medication should not be your ultimate measure of success. I cannot say this often enough: medication is not failure. My primary autoimmune disease, Hashimoto's Thyroiditis, means my body doesn't have enough active thyroid hormone to function normally. I will likely have to continue to supplement with thyroid hormone forever, and that's okay! We can measure our healing through many other factors, including how good we feel, how well we're sleeping and moving, how disease markers (like antibodies, C-reactive protein, blood sugar, etc) decrease, and whether



SCIENCE SPEAK

With healing, many people find that reintroduction of certain foods is possible. It's an excellent way to measure progress, as long as we approach it systematically and wait until we are truly feeling better (not just when we want chocolate, LOL!). I detail the foods I recommend reintroducing first and the procedure for doing so in *The Paleo Approach* and on my site in [The Autoimmune Protocol](#).



EASY TIP

Keeping a journal is an excellent way to measure your progress. Write down your symptoms, keep track of your supplement routines, and track what foods work for you. Don't forget to include lifestyle factors like sleep, movement and social time. If you're not seeing the results you hoped for, consider working one-on-one with an AIP Certified Coach. These licensed, super-talented and knowledgeable providers can help you troubleshoot, refine, transition, and will absolutely be invaluable members of your healing team.

**AUTOIMMUNE PALEO
CERTIFIED COACH[®]**

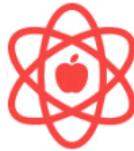
AIP CERTIFIED COACH DIRECTORY

FIND A COACH!



WHAT TAKING CONTROL OF YOUR HEALTH CAN DO

One of the coolest things about the AIP is its ability to help us advocate for our own health. For some that might mean feeling empowered to find a doctor who will support our dietary changes. For others it might mean getting our families on board. And for many of us, it will mean learning to take time for self-care even in the midst of our hectic lives. Who knew a “diet” could teach us so much?



SCIENCE SPEAK

Taking control of our health can help mitigate stress, which we already know can derail all our hard-earned progress on the AIP. Whether it's the relief that comes with uncovering a diagnosis or the proven stress-reduction benefits of building in a few minutes for meditation, feeling empowered can give us all the scientific benefits of stress reduction –and the added benefit of helping us move toward a better understanding of our own bodies.



EASY TIP

Transitioning to a new diet like the AIP can be tough—especially when we’re designing a new menu for ourselves and trying to get our families on board. I use [Real Plans](#) to make meal planning easy for my family. It’s a simple yet powerful tool that lets me include all our dietary preferences and select meals I know my family will love. Plus, it helps me never forget an ingredient at the grocery store, stay under budget, and it lets me take control of my health through food... that’s what the AIP is all about! Learn more about Real Plans in my post, [Meal Plan with Real Plan](#).



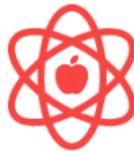
Over 800 AIP recipes
+ 50 new recipes
from The Paleo Mom
(350 recipes total from Dr. Sarah)

www.realplans.com



HOW TREATS CAN HELP YOU STAY ON TRACK

“Cheating” is a relative term in the diet world, and for those of us on the AIP, it can be a little tricky. The elimination phase of the protocol requires complete adherence, so that your reintroductions can give you as much insight as possible. But that doesn’t mean you can’t enjoy a treat! The AIP only suggests you limit your intake of sugar (and fructose in particular). I support enjoying an occasional treat if it will help you keep your cravings for non-compliant foods (like chocolate, alcohol or dairy products) in check! In fact, this strategy of allowing a small indulgence is one I use myself quite frequently!



SCIENCE SPEAK

High intake of fructose (a type of sugar both naturally present in fruits and used to sweeten foods) has been linked to the rise of chronic disease. In excess, it contributes to inflammation, which is why we’re careful to keep our intake in check on the AIP (a diet where we’re trying to manage inflammation!). Too much is the problem though, so avoiding all dietary fructose is not necessary. In fact, moderate amounts of fructose are probably beneficial. Studies show that optimal fructose consumption is probably between 10g and 20g per day. That’s right, it’s healthier to get 10g per day than none. And, over 50g per day is when the harmful effects start to kick in, so the occasional day in the 20g to 40g range is probably fine for most people.



EASY TIP

My favorite portable AIP-approved treats are Paleo Angel's [Power Balls](#) and [Sweet Apricity Caramels](#).

[Power Balls](#) are lightly sweetened and macaroon-like, and with flavors like Vanilla and Blueberry, are satisfying enough to feel like a treat. But, they're also packed with nutrient-dense ingredients like coconut and collagen peptides. It's a win-win!

[Sweet Apricity Caramels](#) are made with clean, AIP-compliant ingredients like coconut cream, honey and coconut sugar. They are definitely a wonderful indulgence, sweet, chewy, and delicious! I like to keep a box in the freezer, so I don't overdo it!





KEEPING YOUR GUT HEALTHY WHEN THINGS GO WRONG

It sometimes feels as though the longer we avoid gluten, the more sick we feel after accidentally eating some. This is in large part because the body stops protecting itself from gluten (for example, there may be less mucus in the gut) so when we do consume some, we are defenseless. Learning to heal from an accidental exposure (because chances are good it will happen) is key to feeling your best.



SCIENCE SPEAK

How long will it take us to recover from exposure to gluten? There's quite a bit of variability in tolerance thanks to genetic adaptation, and if you've been avoiding gluten for a while, you may find your symptoms are worse than ever after an accidental exposure. There are factors that control how sensitive you are (genetics, overall health, diet, stress, nutritional-deficiencies, gut microflora, specific antibodies your body produces...) and there are factors that affect how quickly you heal. The unfortunate fact is that if you suffer from autoimmune disease, your ability to heal is already under stress.

The primary mechanism for damage through an exposure to gluten comes from the inflammation and irritation it causes to the lining of the small intestine. The cells that line the gut, called enterocytes or gut epithelial cells, are constantly regenerating, and a healthy person has an entirely new intestinal lining every 2-3 weeks. Studies in celiac sufferers show much slower healing than that though, up to six months! So, how can you help your body to recover?

You can help your gut heal by following a nutrient-dense diet (eating plenty of veggies, seafood and organ meats) and supplementing with plenty of bone broth, collagen, gelatin

or meat that includes connective tissue (natural sources of these nutrients, which help heal and seal the lining of our guts). Minimizing stress, including the kind caused by intense exercise, and maximizing sleep will also give our bodies a chance to recover.



EASY TIP

The best way to avoid gluten exposure in the first place is to be very proactive when it comes to eating away from home. That means asking questions of your host or server and explaining your dietary limitations in unequivocal terms. My friend, Dr. Tom O'Bryan developed a supplement to help protect our guts from accidental gluten exposure called [Glutenza](#). I've personally had great success using [Glutenza](#) every time I eat out.

Accidental gluten exposure happens though. And, when using broth to recover from gluten exposure, quality really matters. That's because only traditionally-made broth contains the healing constituents we need to help our guts recover. Read: the stuff you buy at the store won't cut it! EPIC's AIP approved flavor of broth, [Homestyle Savory Chicken](#), is perfect for healing from gluten exposure because it's made with ethically-raised chicken bones and simmered to bring out the collagen and glycine needed for healing. Plus, it's so flavorful you can sip it by the mug-full!



Leaky Gut mini-COURSE

Learn how to heal your gut

WITH DR. SARAH BALLANTYNE