

Leaky Gut Protocol FAQ's

If you are just starting the Leaky Gut Protocol, it is natural to have some questions. Here is a list of the most frequently asked questions with answers from our in-house nutritionists. We look forward to guiding you toward optimal wellness.

Can I have honey?

Honey is sugar and is recommended to avoid during the protocol. However, for some without issues such as yeast overgrowth or blood sugar control, small amounts of raw local honey may be okay. High quality raw honey does contain small amounts of vitamins and minerals, as well as antioxidants.

What fruits have too much sugar?

Dried fruit has a higher concentration of sugar than fresh fruit. Fruit is, however, a good source of vitamins, minerals, antioxidants and fiber. If blood sugar control is an issue it is recommended to avoid the higher glycemic fruits (i.e. bananas, mangos, pineapples). We recommend limiting fruit to 2-3 servings of fresh or frozen fruit per day; focusing on consumption of lower sugar varieties such as berries, melons or stone fruit. Also, adding some protein or healthy fat when enjoying fruit can help maintain a balanced blood sugar.

What does 'whole grain' mean?

Whole grain means that all 3 parts of the grain (bran, germ, and endosperm) are present and the naturally occurring nutrients exist in their original proportions. Refined grains retain only the endosperm (the starchy portion) and eliminates the others which contain the bulk of nutrients including B vitamins, vitamin E, and minerals such as zinc, selenium and magnesium.

What is gluten?

Gluten is the general name for a class of proteins found in wheat, barley and rye. Gluten acts as a glue, allowing foods to hold their shape. By consuming gluten, the production of a protein called zonulin is increased. Zonulin regulates the permeability of the intestinal lining. More zonulin equals increased gut permeability. While consequences of this vary from person to person, increased intestinal permeability occurs across the population when someone consumes gluten containing foods.

Can I have rice?

Rice does not contain gluten, so is permitted on a modified elimination diet. However, many people react to grains and grains can contribute to inflammation as they also raise blood sugar. For these reasons, we may recommend that you remove grains for 30 days as well.



Are corn tortilla chips okay?

All corn and foods containing corn (e.g., corn tortillas, corn chips) should be avoided.

What can I eat to satisfy sweets cravings?

Protein along with a healthy carbohydrate can be helpful to end sweet cravings. Some examples include almond butter with apple or celery slices, slice of turkey or chicken with a bit of roasted sweet potato, handful of walnuts with berries, etc. Additionally, consuming healthy fats can reduce sugar cravings. When we eat healthy fat, a hormone called leptin is released that sends signals to our brain indicating that we are satisfied and can stop eating. Examples of healthy fats include: avocado, nuts, seeds, olives, and coconut.

Can I have potatoes?

Potatoes (not including sweet potatoes) are in a family of vegetables known as nightshades. For some, nightshades can be problematic; especially those dealing with joint or arthritis issues. For these patients, we recommend a trial elimination of all nightshades, including potatoes. For others, some potato in the diet is okay but should not be consumed in lieu of other nutrient dense vegetables such as leafy greens or cruciferous. Other nightshade vegetables include: peppers, eggplant, tomatillos, and tomatoes.

Can I have eggs?

Eggs contain valuable nutrients like choline and are a good source of protein and healthy fats, however because they are a common allergenic food which can lead to inflammation, we have you remove them for the 30 days. Typically, they are the first food to be reintroduced.

Can I have alcohol?

It is recommended to avoid alcohol while on the protocol.

Can I have chocolate?

Cacao (from what chocolate is derived) is a good source of antioxidants, as well as some vitamins, minerals and essential fatty acids. This can be used for homemade treats that follow the recommended dietary guidelines (i.e. cocoa nibs mixed with coconut yogurt). Higher quality and higher percentage of dark chocolate (70% or higher) can be enjoyed as a 'treat' and in small quantities. Stevia sweetened brands are preferable. However, commercially made chocolate will contain sugar and often soy and dairy as well so those forms of chocolate should be avoided.

Can I have butter?

Because dairy is removed when doing an elimination diet, we ask that you also avoid butter as well as ghee (clarified butter).

