

Rotation and Rotary Diets

My second child, Noah, became allergic to rice by age two because it was the primary food that he ate. He consumed a great deal of it for 18 months, and by the time he was two years old, foods containing rice would produce the same gastrointestinal symptoms as if Noah had eaten gluten. I was devastated once I realized it was rice that had become the new problem in Noah's diet. And my son is by far not the only person who has become allergic to rice as a result of eating it on a daily basis. Our family friend, Linda Breitbart, became allergic to rice after eating it every day for four years while living in China. And Linda was not a person who had food allergies or problems with foods.

Rice is a major ingredient in most commercially available gluten-free and wheat-free foods. Rice is a major ingredient in baking mixes and even in recipes. An allergy to rice can produce physical reactions that are unpleasant at best. It is painful to be on the gluten-free diet and not be able to eat rice! Trust me when I say that if you can avoid this problem it is well worth it. I include this section on Rotation and Rotary diets as a tool to help you avoid developing new food allergies.

A rotation diet and a rotary diet is basically some plan or format for eating your foods such that you are not eating the same foods every day or eating too much of a food on a given day. Rotary diets involve eating one food per meal and rotating the foods until you run out of foods in which case you start over. This type of diet is hard for many consumers to adhere to because it is counter to how we are used to eating. In a rotary diet, for example on day one, we could pick one of our foods, say potatoes, and eat that for breakfast. That is the only food that we would eat for breakfast. Then, we would have a different food for lunch, say beef, and we would only eat beef for lunch.

We would follow the same pattern until we have finished eating for the day. A rotation diet is different from a rotary diet in that you set up your rotation days of different foods and you eat from the foods available for the day. Typically rotation diets are done for four or more days. The wider your array of foods, the longer and wider your rotation diet can be.

In the "olden" days, some of your grandmothers or great-grandmothers followed a weekly meal plan that was some variation of the following:

Sunday-Dinner = Pot Roast (Beef)
Monday Dinner = Chicken
Tuesday Dinner = Pork Roast or Loin
Wednesday Dinner = Turkey
Thursday Dinner = Pasta
Friday Dinner = Fish of sorts
Saturday Dinner = Lamb chops or Venison

What your grandmother and great-grandmother did was cook a big meal for dinner with just enough for lunch the next day. So the family ate a beef pot roast on Sunday night for dinner and also for lunch on Monday. But Monday night's dinner was a different meal. Thus from dinner one day to lunch the next day constituted a 24 hour period. Thus, this was the norm up until the 50's and early 60's when women more Mothers began to work and less time was spent devoted to meal preparation and planning. This was a rotation diet. Many if not most families stopped doing this in the 1950's and 1960's.

In the days before refrigerated rail cars and refrigerated trucking, people ate the foods that were grown locally and the foods that were in season. During the spring, summer and fall they ate fruits and vegetables that were perishable. During the winter months, people ate pumpkins, squash, potatoes, beets, turnips and other root vegetables that would keep in their root cellars. This was another form of a rotation diet. They would eat a food for a period of a few months, and then not again for months and months. Most people abandoned this philosophy and way of life with the introduction of modern conveniences like the grocery store!

I'll be perfectly frank and say that I resisted the finer points of the rotation diet until it was proven to me that it was a necessity. So, I don't fault anyone who resists doing a rotation diet. However, there is a huge payoff for those individuals who are willing to stay the course and stick with a rotation diet; these are the patients who will get better faster. What I have provided here is a 4 Day rotation diet. This particular rotation diet includes no fish, shellfish, or seafood of any kind. If you can have fish, shellfish, or any seafood, you could add that. This 4 day rotation also does not include every fruit or vegetable that is available such as grapefruits, kiwis, cherries, plums, lettuce, zucchini, asparagus, and greens like collards, arugula and Swiss chard to name a few.

This 4 day rotation diet is based on plant families which are identified in parentheses. To help you, a list of foods and their plant families follows the 4 day rotation diet along with more directions on how to calculate your own rotation diet.