

2 Week Test for Carbohydrate Intolerance

Let's summarize the basics of the Two-Week Test:

- Write down a list of all your signs and symptoms.
- Weigh yourself before starting.
- Always eat breakfast.
- Plan your meals and snacks — buy sufficient foods allowed on the test, and get rid of those not allowed so you're not tempted.
- Eat as much and as often as necessary to never get hungry.
- After the test, re-evaluate your signs and symptoms, including weight.
- Begin adding natural, unprocessed carbohydrates to every other meal or snack, and evaluate whether this causes any of your previous signs and symptoms to return.

The following sections discuss each of these steps in more detail, in order to help you through the testing process.

Before The Test

1. **Record health problems.** Includes any symptoms or ailments that you might have, such as insomnia or fatigue. This may take a few days since you might not recall them all at once. You will review these complaints after the test to see which ones have and haven't improved.
2. **Weigh yourself.** This provides another important sign of how your body is working, especially after the test. This is the only instance I recommend using the scale for body weight—it's not a measure of body *fat*, but it *is* a good pre/post evaluation. You may lose some excess water (which will show on the scale), but your fat-burning will increase and you'll start losing body fat (which won't show on the scale). I've seen some people lose anywhere between a few and 20 pounds during the test.
3. **Stock up on the right foods.** Before you start, make sure you have enough of the foods you'll be eating. (Suggestions listed below.) In addition, go through your cabinets and refrigerator and get rid of any sweets, foods containing them, and all breads and products made from refined flour. Otherwise, you'll be tempted to eat them if you get cravings during the test.
4. **Plan Correctly.** Schedule the test during a two-week period in which you are relatively unlikely to have distractions. (It's a bad idea to do the test during holidays, for example.) Don't worry about cholesterol, fat or calories, or the amount of food you're eating. This is only a test, not the way you'll be eating forever.
5. **Most importantly, eat breakfast within an hour of waking.**

Following the test for less than two weeks probably will not give you a valid result. So, if after five days, for example, you eat a bowl of pasta or a box of cookies, you will need to start the test over.

During The Test: The Menu

What makes the Two-Week Test foods acceptable aren't the foods *themselves*, but rather their properties. It's all about eating unprocessed "real" foods that are low in carbohydrates. You can assume any foods that are similar to what you find on this list can be eaten. If you see any foods on this list or the following that are disallowed (e.g. potatoes), you can assume that similar foods (sweet, russet, and gold potatoes and yams) also cannot be eaten.

2 Week Test for Carbohydrate Intolerance

YES Foods

You **MAY** eat as much of the following foods as you like during the **Two-Week Test**.

Plant Foods

- **Raw and cooked vegetables:** Tomato, onion, garlic, greens such as spinach, kale, chard, and all lettuces, broccoli, cauliflower and Brussels sprouts (for those with thyroid dysfunction, cabbage-family veggies are best eaten thoroughly cooked), carrots, zucchini, etc.
- **Tree nuts (and nut butters):** Macadamia, almond, walnut, for example. (Does NOT include peanuts or cashews).
- **Coconut:** cream, oil, milk and flour.

Animal Foods

- **Beef:** Look for organic, grass-fed varieties.
- **Turkey:** organic.
- **Lamb:** Look for organic, grass-fed varieties.
- **Fish:** Wild-caught cold water fish (tuna, salmon, etc) are best.
- **Eggs.**
- **Shellfish.**

Dairy

- **Unprocessed Hard Cheeses:** Cheddar, asiago, parmesan, etc.
- **Unprocessed Soft Cheeses:** Feta, brie, camembert, mozzarella, etc.
- **Cream:** Heavy cream, sour cream, full-fat crème fraiche.

Fats

- **Oils:** Avocado, coconut, and olive oil.

Drinks

- **Vegetable Juice.**
- **Coffee or tea:** If you usually drink it.
- **Vinegar:** balsamic, apple-cider, etc.
- **Pure, distilled spirits:** Small amounts of gin, vodka, whiskey.
- **Dry red wines:** Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Pinot Noir, Cab Franc, Shiraz/Syrah, Chianti.
- **Dry white wines:** Chardonnay, Pinot Grigio, Sauvignon Blanc.

NO Foods

You may **NOT** eat any of the following foods during the **Two-Week Test**.

PLANTS

- **All sugar products:** Includes basically anything with *honey, sugar, agave, fructose, crystals (e.g. beet crystals), cane, extract, or syrup* in its ingredient list.
- **Sweets and desserts:** Cake, cookies, ice cream, muffins, candy, gum, breath mints.
- **All non-caloric sweeteners (natural and non-natural):** Includes stevia, xylitol, erythritol, aspartame, splenda, etc.
- **Many canned and prepared veggies:** Read the labels to make sure they don't contain hidden sugars!
- **Bread:** Sliced bread or rolls of any kind (whole-grain, multi-grain, flaxseed, rye, gluten-free, etc).
- **Pasta:** All types.
- **Crackers:** Includes chips, rice cakes, and similar foods.

2 Week Test for Carbohydrate Intolerance

- **Packaged energy bars:** And all packaged foods promoted as fuel for athletes.
- **Ketchup and other sauces:** They often contain hidden sugars.
- **Corn:** Bread, tortillas, etc.
- **Rice:** Wild rice, brown rice, white rice, basmati rice, etc.
- **All wheat and wheat products:** Whole wheat, farro, bulgur, khorasan, millet, etc.
- **Quinoa:** Includes quinoa seeds and all products (e.g. quinoa pasta).
- **Potatoes:** Any kind (russet, red, blue, etc.)
- **Fruits and berries:** Bananas, apples, pears, oranges, grapefruits grapes, blueberries, strawberries, cranberries grapefruit, watermelon, cantaloupe, honeydew.
- **Legumes:** Beans, lentils, fava beans, peas, chickpeas, peanuts, etc.

MEAT

- **Processed meats:** Sausage, pastrami, salami, pepperoni, etc.
- **Smoked products:** Jerky (beef, buffalo, etc), smoked fish.
- **Many canned and prepared meats:** Read the labels to make sure they don't contain hidden sugars!

DAIRY

- **Milk:** Especially low-fat and non-fat milk.
- **Half-and-half.**
- **Yogurt and kefir:** All types, *including full-fat yogurt.*
- **Processed cheeses:** Stay away from pre-sliced, single-serving, pre-shredded, high-value corporate branding, etc.

FATS

- Avoid corn, safflower, or canola and other vegetable oils during the test and after.

DRINKS

- **Fruit Juice:** Any type — orange, berry, watermelon, etc.
- **All soda:** diet and non-diet soda.
- **All diet drinks:** Diet shakes, etc.
- **“Enhanced” Beverages:** Vitamin water, mineral water with “health” additives.
- **Sports drinks.**
- **Sweet wines:** liqueur, Champagne, rum, etc.

If it comes in a box, bag, jar or can, there's a good chance it's a no food for the Two-Week Test. Be sure to read the ingredients for all packaged foods, as some form of sugar or carbohydrate is typically added. **Better yet, simply avoid all packaged and processed foods for two weeks!**

Click [here](#) for some meal ideas to use during the Two-Week Test.

Now that you know which foods to eat, you can start the Two-Week Test!

Post Test Evaluation

What is the Post-Test?

The Post-Test is meant to determine if any of the carbohydrates you eliminated cause the return of any of the original signs or symptoms, including weight gain. At this stage, having just completed the test, your body and

2 Week Test for Carbohydrate Intolerance

brain will be more sensitive to the slightest amounts of carbohydrates. Basically, you'll become more intuitive to how your body responds to food.

Step 1: Re-evaluation of symptoms.

Re-evaluate your original list of complaints after the Two-Week Test:

- Is your energy better?
- Are you sleeping better?
- Are you feeling less depressed?
- Have you lost inches around your waist?

If you answered “yes” to any of those questions or you lost body fat, you probably have CI to some extent. People who have a high degree of CI may feel dramatically better than they did before the test, especially if there was a large weight loss.

Any fat loss during the test is not due to reduced calories, but rather to the increased fat-burning resulting from reduced insulin (many people eat more calories than usual during this two-week period). Although some of the change in weight may be due to water loss, a significant amount will be due to fat loss.

If you are on medication for high blood pressure, ask your health-care professional to check it several times during the test — and especially right after. Sometimes, blood pressure drops significantly and your medication may need to be adjusted or eliminated — something that should only be done by your health-care professional. As insulin levels fall to normal, high blood pressure typically falls as well.

If nothing improved during the Two-Week test (and it was done exactly as described above), then you may not be carbohydrate intolerant. But if the test cleared up your signs and symptoms, the next step is to determine how many carbohydrates your body can tolerate without a relapse. This is done by adding a little bit of carbohydrates to your diet.

Step 2: Re-incorporating foods into the diet.

The best way to add foods is in the following order. Each day, add one serving of one food to your midday meal, starting with No. 1 and working your way down the list. You want to try *only* one of these foods per day, meaning that on day two, you do not include servings of food No. 1.

1. **Legumes**
2. **Low-glycemic fruits (berries, grapefruit, prunes)**
3. **Medium-glycemic fruits (apple, orange, pear, strawberries)**
4. **Gluten-free grains (whole oats, brown rice)**
5. **Grains with gluten, if not intolerant**
6. **1 teaspoon of organic honey with coffee or tea (excluding agave, or any other kind of sugary substance)**

If you start seeing old signs and symptoms arise again, you know that the type of food or the quantity isn't good for you.

Since insulin production is partly influenced by your previous meal, don't add carbohydrates in back-to-back meals or snacks. During this period, make a note of any symptoms you had previously that were eliminated by

2 Week Test for Carbohydrate Intolerance

the test. In particular, look for symptoms that develop immediately after eating, such as intestinal bloating, sleepiness or feelings of depression.

If any signs or symptoms that disappeared during or following the Two-Week Test have now returned, you've probably exceeded your carbohydrate limit. For example:

- You're getting cravings again.
- You are gaining weight again.
- Your blood pressure rises significantly after it was reduced.

If any of these situations occur, reduce the carbohydrates by half. You can also experiment to see which particular foods cause symptoms and which don't. Some people return to the Two Week Test and begin the process again.

The Two Week Test is from Phil Maffetone's post [Carbohydrate Intolerance and The Two Week Test](#).