

a lifestyle resource from Food Equality Initiative

Free-From MAGAZINE



MICROGREENS!

Growing a miniature garden on your kitchen counter

allergen-free cleaning products

CREATIVE KITCHEN

Adapting recipes does not have to be rocket science

SPICY SECRETS

Learn all about the secret health benefits to spicing up your food

THE ZESTY CORNER

Satisfaction vs. Fullness
There is an important difference



LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Dear Readers,

Thank goodness February is over! To those of us in Kansas City, and our co-workers in Texas, it was a cold one, wasn't it? We had a solid two weeks of below freezing weather and I wasn't sure it was ever going to leave. But here we are, we made it through! It is March and, while it is still chilly, you can start to feel spring just around the corner.

With the start of spring comes the start of new, fresh and local foods being grown. That means more produce at your supermarket and the reopening of farmers' markets or street vendor stands in your neighborhood. Some of you might even grow your own food, which can be extremely rewarding, especially when it is able to feed your whole family for multiple seasons. In other words,

spring is an exciting time for food! Food is fuel for everybody; we all need it to survive. But here in the food allergy community, we have a different relationship to food than the average person. It is much more complicated. Some of us have been betrayed by food or grown to not trust it. Eating should be a joy, but sometimes it can feel like a chore when you regularly have to do a lot of work to prepare it safely.

Since there is no cure for food allergies or celiac disease, avoiding foods with allergens is the only treatment available. That means for us, food is more than fuel, it is medicine. We need safe, healthy foods to stay strong. And at Food Equality Initiative, we want to help make being in the kitchen safe AND fun, regardless of allergies.

With that in mind, we are back at it here at the Free-From Magazine.

Who says medicine has to taste bad? Quite the opposite, safe and healthy foods can taste delicious! With a spoonful of sugar, right? But really, spring is a great time to spice things up, including your diet.

We have loaded this magazine with articles about new cooking techniques, new spices to try, and new ways to use ingredients all in the name of improving your health. We even discuss the important difference between being full and being satisfied. (Some good food for thought.) So put on your gardening gloves and cooking apron, I hope you are ready to learn!

Warm regards,
Sofia Gillespie
Editor in Chief,
Free-From Magazine



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THE ZESTY CORNER

Fullness vs. Satisfaction

Kortney Kwong Hing & Shahla Rashid



zestfull

Why satisfaction should be included in healthy eating

There is no doubt that people managing food allergies can have a tricky relationship with food. Whether you are worried about eating healthy or worried about going into anaphylactic shock (or both), being anxious about food may limit your ability to enjoy food and feel satisfied.

Feeling satisfied is an important part of a healthy and happy relationship with food. When you are not satisfied after a meal, it often leads to over-eating, low mood, and body dissatisfaction. All of these are risk factors for developing an unhealthy relationship with food.

UNDERSTANDING THE SATISFACTION FACTOR

Being full after a meal is different than being satisfied. Fullness describes a physical feeling and the quieting of hunger. Satisfaction relates more to describing the joy and pleasure derived from eating.

When navigating satisfying food, it is not surprising that one of two things happens:

1. Focus on healthy: our food choices are made based on what we think is good for us. Not what we actually enjoy or find satisfying.

- OR -

2. Feelings of guilt: when we indulge in the foods that bring us pleasure, it can make us feel guilty.

SATISFACTION FACTOR AND SAFE FOOD: A COMPROMISE

Add in food allergies and you have to add safety to the mix. Finding food that makes you feel full that is also safe AND satisfying can be overwhelming, especially when diagnosed with a food allergy or celiac disease later in life.

It can feel like a constant trade-off between safe, healthy, and satisfying. In a perfect world, food allergy folks would be able to check all three boxes. The reality is 'safe' always gets priority, usually followed by 'healthy', leaving 'satisfying' to fall by the wayside more often than not.



The following tips can help you stay safe and promote a healthy relationship between food, mind, and body.

- 1. Learn to cook** – Making foods yourself that you've never been able to try in an allergy-safe way can be a fun and rewarding experience. You deserve to enjoy your food!
- 2. Ask yourself what looks good** – Next time you are out to eat, go through your regular routine of asking what's safe, then ask yourself what looks good. If you get lucky and one of your 'looks good' picks overlaps with a safe pick, absolutely go with that one! If you're not lucky, make a point of either making your own allergy-safe version at home or seek out an allergy-safe version from another shop or restaurant.
- 3. Embrace compromise** – When the satisfying choice isn't safe, try to figure out why that looks good to you and find something with similar qualities.

“Feeling satisfied is an important part of a healthy and happy relationship with food”

Food can be satisfying and safe. Food can also be satisfying and healthy! Feeling satisfied with your food is part of normal, healthy, balanced eating. Your relationship with food, mind, and body will be in a much better place because of it.

“Food can be satisfying and safe. Food can also be satisfying and healthy!”



Originally published by Alida Iacobellis, RD on Zestfull

READ HERE!

Listen to Alida talk more about disordered eating and its relationship to food allergies on The Itch Podcast

READ HERE!



HERBS 101

An introduction to the secrets of spices

Larry Enge

I am a professional artist and an amateur nutritionist and gardener.

The last two occupations were motivated by health challenges. In addition to the issues of getting older and age-related degeneration, my wife and I have had to research nutrition information pertaining to brain injury recovery.

We have found that the quest for healthier eating has led us into two main directions. First, eliminating foods containing toxins (bad things for your body; food additives fall in that category) - then concentrating on organic, nutrient-dense foods.

We are more likely to eat a healthy diet if we set aside enough time for it. This can include growing the food, fermenting it (letting it sit in its juices), and preparing and cooking meals from scratch, which requires spending more time in the kitchen.

Adding herbs and spices to our food gives our meals an “upgrade” in more ways than one. We are enjoying the extra flavor enhancement and complexity that only natural spices can bring. And second, herbs bring health benefits galore through antioxidants, minerals, and vitamins that have unique medicinal properties.



The herbs we have found to be helpful in our own food journey are rosemary, basil, tarragon, oregano, lambs quarter (a nutrient dense edible weed), parsley, thyme, lemon balm, and mint - all of which we grow each year, some of them year round!

Keeping a garden has improved our health by providing us with fresh, uncontaminated food packed with nutrients that can sometimes be difficult to find in the grocery store.

Adding herbs and spices to our food gives our meals an “upgrade” in more ways than one

Here are some of the secrets we have learned along the way:

CAPSAICIN Hot peppers are an excellent, healthy way to spice up foods. They contain capsaicin which helps regulate blood pressure and curb hunger. From mild Anaheim peppers to the powerfully spicy habanero peppers, we can reap many benefits by adding them to our diets. We grow several kinds of peppers every year.

FRUIT Eating the whole fruit is preferable to just drinking fruit juice. The whole fruit contains fiber that offsets some of the carbohydrates. Blueberries are high on the list of foods containing powerful antioxidants that help with brain cell repair and function.

CURCUMIN Turmeric contains curcumin, which is a powerful substance (food) that aids in brain cell regeneration.

CHOLINE Foods like broccoli and cauliflower are rich in choline, a vitamin necessary for improving brain function.

OMEGA 3 Walnuts and wild-caught salmon are two foods rich in Omega 3s, essential for brain repair and brain health.

HEALTHY SATURATED FATS Unrefined coconut oil is one of the best sources of healthy saturated fats, critical in the repair and maintenance of brain cells.

LUTEOLIN Vegetables like celery contain luteolin which helps calm brain inflammation (brain swelling, which is a primary cause of brain cell degeneration). In addition to celery, other spices and herbs add layers of flavor as well as essential nutrients that help decrease inflammation in the brain and digestive system. Some of these are turmeric, oregano, cinnamon, cloves, sage, and thyme to name a few.

Our exploration into foods, herbs and spices has been a rich and rewarding journey resulting in improved health and better flavor. We hope you use our secrets!



ABOUT LARRY

Larry Enge is a professional artist living in Dallas, Texas with his wife, Charlotte.

CONTRIBUTIONS

From you!

Feedback Opportunity

We hope you like what you read here and that it reflects your experience as an individual with food allergies. If it does not, then we would like to change that. This magazine is for you so we want to make sure we live up to our promise that it is tailored for you. We welcome your ideas and feedback, so send your questions and comments to:

MARKETING@FOODEQUALITYINITIATIVE.ORG

Call for Writers

Got a great idea for an article? Have some food allergy news? Want to share a wild experience from your own food allergy story? We want to hear it! The best way to make your voice heard and your experience known is to write about it! We are looking for writers from all backgrounds to contribute to this publication. If you are feeling particularly inspired to write about a topic or theme within the broad field of food allergies, contact Sofia Gillespie, editor in chief of the Living Free-From magazine at

SOFIA@FOODEQUALITYINITIATIVE.ORG

Business Deal

If you own a small (or large) business and are looking for places to market, we have space for advertisements in the following sectors: health food, allergen-friendly food, cost-efficient lifestyle, homemade goods and services, and/or sustainability. Contact us at:

MARKETING@FOODEQUALITYINITIATIVE.ORG

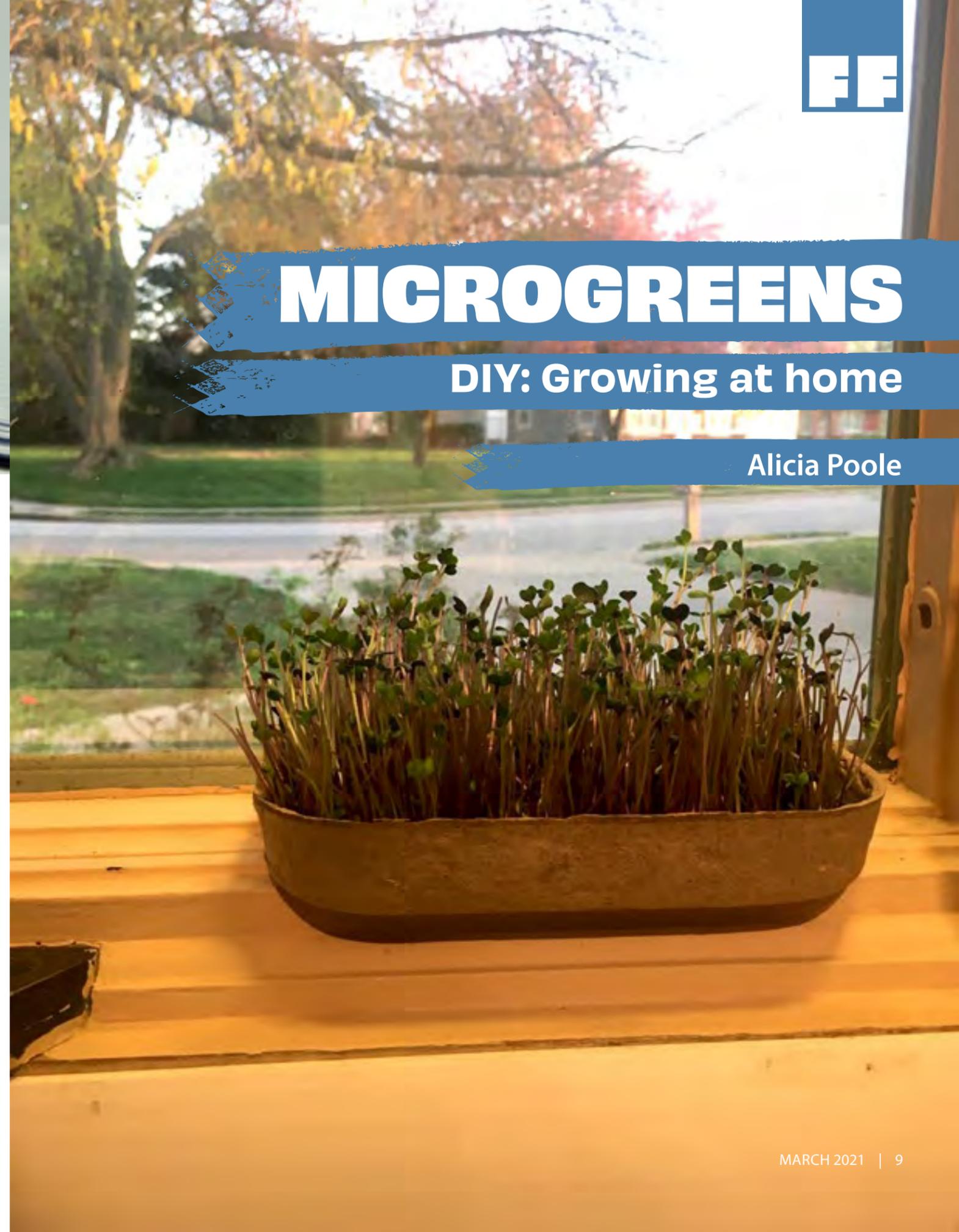
to learn how you can purchase ad space in our future publications. Feel free to pass this information along to any business owners that you know who might be interested.



MICROGREENS

DIY: Growing at home

Alicia Poole





Alicia with her microgreens in a homemade container.

I did not have a green thumb growing up, but I took advantage of the opportunity to learn whenever I could.

I spent many summers as a child exploring and working on my grandparents' farm outside of Sioux City, Iowa. My little hands, and my proximity (closeness) to the ground, were great for picking strawberries. Although my grandmother appreciated the help, I remember being scolded for eating too many strawberries right out of the garden.

Flash forward to 2010. I had just completed my health coaching certification at the Institute for Integrative Nutrition. You could say I was hooked on natural health! This led me to the activity of growing my own food, something that I just learned by doing. I started a schoolyard garden at my son's elementary school and then spent ten years working with the Kansas

City Community Gardens as a parent volunteer teaching kids how to grow their own food.

What are Microgreens?

In 2011, just one year after I started the schoolyard garden, I was diagnosed with celiac disease. Looking back, the timing was impeccable (perfect). Learning to grow and control a portion of my own food supply would be an integral (central) part of thriving with a food allergy. I know the food I grow is safe for me to eat. It is satisfying to walk into my yard, pick a squash from my garden, and hours later eat it for dinner, worry free. No trip to the store or playing nerve-wracking 20 questions with the server at a restaurant.

“I remember being scolded for eating too many strawberries right out of the garden”

As a nutritional health coach, I am often asked, “What is one thing I can add to my diet to be healthier?” My answer is always the same, “Eat more dark leafy greens!” That is the number one food missing from most people's diet today. One of the most simple ways to get started adding more greens is to grow them yourself at home in your kitchen! I love growing microgreens because it is easy, fresh, safe and ready to eat within seven to ten days. Plus it is fun to watch them come to life right before my eyes.

Microgreens are the edible seedlings (young plants) of vegetables and herbs. They are full of vitamins and nutrients. These seedlings, with their tiny leaves, have up to five times the nutrition as their grown-up version. Some common microgreens are red cabbage, cilantro, radishes, and beets. Microgreens are grown in soil, not to be confused with sprouts, which are grown in water.

As a side note, alfalfa sprouts, specifically, contain a compound called canavanine that can cause sensitivities in people with autoimmune disorders. Best to avoid alfalfa sprouts if you have celiac disease.



DIY Grow @ Home

If you want to do it yourself, all you need is a container, soil, water and seeds. I usually try to recycle items I already have at home. For example, I like to use the paper lid from an egg carton for my growing container. You may need to buy soil and seeds if you don't have them already. Choosing a vegetable seed mix is easier than separate seed packets.

First, I add between a ½ inch to an inch of potting soil to my growing container.

Second, I sprinkle seeds on the soil, generously, not in rows or with any kind of pattern.

Third, I water using a tablespoon, so I don't accidentally over-water and wash my seeds away. I water until the seeds and soil are covered, but not drenched. You could also fill a water bottle and spray the seeds to keep them damp each day. You can cover your container with a plastic wrap or leave it open. The plastic cover helps keep the moisture in. And in just three days, you will start to see the seeds sprouting.

“What is one thing I can add to my diet to be healthier? LEAFY GREENS!”

Easy Care

Caring for your microgreens is easier than taking care of a goldfish. They grow fast and need very little attention. For a smaller container, you may only need to add a tablespoon of water for the first couple days. If you use a spray bottle, it is even easier to control the watering. When you notice the soil is dry, add water. A windowsill in the kitchen is the best place to grow your greens. My favorite part about growing microgreens is the ability to grow them all year long. As long as you have a sunny windowsill, you are in business.



ABOUT ALICIA

Alicia is the current FEI Board President and has been living with celiac disease since 2011. She is a natural products marketing consultant, entrepreneur and Integrative Nutrition Health Coach based in Kansas City. Alicia is passionate about helping people thrive. Check out her website at aliciapoole.com.

Caring for your microgreens is easier than taking care of a goldfish



Greenie Genie Salad with Grilled Chicken or Black Beans



Harvest & Eat!

Harvesting your microgreens is also easy. Just take a pair of scissors and cut off what you need! I usually sprinkle my microgreens over my eggs or roasted vegetables. They turn my seemingly regular meal into a special occasion. I also like to add them to a wrap, a sandwich, a smoothie, or mix them into a green salad for extra flavor. Anywhere lettuce goes, microgreens tag-along or become a great substitute.

Here is a salad recipe from the book *Whole Detox* by Dr. Deanna Minich to try at home. Be creative and adapt it based on your allergy or taste preference. I like to add both microgreens and mixed greens to this recipe.



INGREDIENTS

SALAD:
1 cup chopped broccoli
1 large handful of microgreens, about 1 cup
½ green apple, sliced
½ avocado
4 to 5 walnut halves (optional)

DRESSING:
1 tablespoon of avocado oil
1 tablespoon decaffeinated green tea
1 teaspoon freshly squeezed lime juice
Salt to taste

DIRECTIONS

- In a serving bowl, toss together the broccoli, greens, apple, avocado, and walnuts.
- In a separate bowl, whisk together all the dressing ingredients and pour the dressing mixture over the salad.
- Warm up leftover sliced grilled chicken or black beans and toss with the salad.

THE LONG & WINDING ROAD

Jeannie & Alexy Schrankler

Sarah Guthrie

The Beatles' song The Long and Winding Road has nothing to do with food allergies; but...

The title says everything about Jeannie Schrankler's quest for answers to her 19-year old daughter Alexy's persistent health problems.

Jeannie, a paralegal with more than 15 years' experience, says it started when Alexy was two. She noticed that the toddler could not walk in a straight line. "When she walked

down the hall, she was like a ping-pong ball bouncing from side to side."

The doctors she consulted brushed off her worries. Every test she tried turned out just as they predicted – inconclusive (unsure).

Then, when Alexy was four, she enrolled her in Parents as Teachers, a voluntary program offered by Kansas City Public Schools that provides personal home visits, social activities, playgroups, parenting classes, and various health-related and developmental screenings to participating families.

"They immediately recognized that she had developmental delays and recommended early education services," said Jeannie.

Jeannie ramped up her search for answers. Then, she learned about autism.

"I was reading an article that listed characteristics of children with autism and suddenly I realized this is my kid," she says. This led her to the Kansas City Regional Office (KCRO) for Developmental Disabilities for a diagnosis and the gateway to special services.

But a diagnosis of autism still did not explain Alexy's other health problems.

- When she was seven, Alexy developed nystagmus, a condition where her eyes moved rapidly and uncontrollably. An MRI was inconclusive.
- Next Alexy developed problems with vomiting and constipation. She also had significant problem behavior at school and at home.
- Another bump in the road came at 17 when her nystagmus increased and her doctor ordered another MRI.

"This time the MRI showed a significant loss of brain tissue compared to the one that was done in 2008," said Jeannie. "There was a huge blank space where brain tissue had been just ten years ago."

"They immediately recognized that she had developmental delays and recommended early education services"

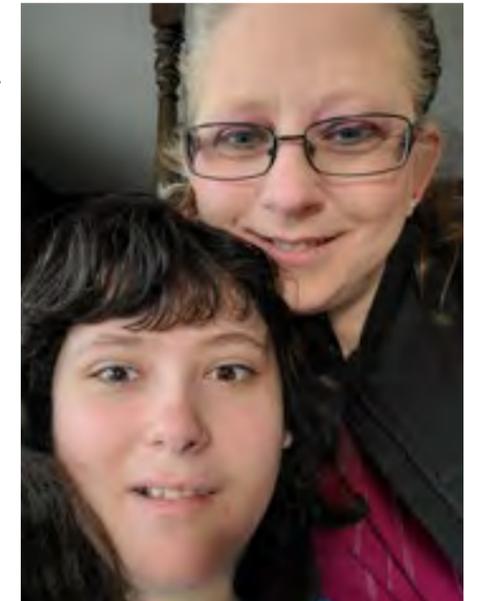
This discovery fueled more tests: DNA, gastrointestinal, and an intestinal biopsy.

Bingo. The biopsy revealed that Alexy had celiac disease, an immune reaction to eating gluten, a protein found in wheat, barley, and rye. Recent studies have shown that the

brains of people living with untreated celiac disease, meaning continuing to eat gluten, can show evidence of damage to brain matter.

For Jeannie, pieces of Alexy's life-long health problems started falling into place.

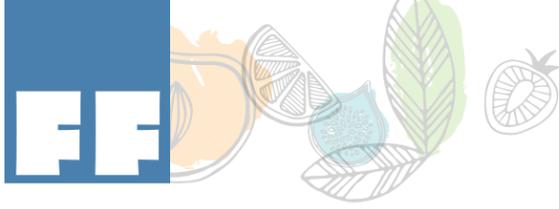
- Her issues with balance when she was 2 – studies show that celiac can be responsible for ataxia (difficulty with balance).
- Celiac can also cause cognitive impairment such as difficulty remembering things, learning new things, concentrating, or making decisions that affect everyday life.
- Although there is no confirmed link between celiac disease and autism, a recent study from the University of Sheffield (UK) has found that people with celiac disease have a higher risk of neurological damage.
- Vomiting and constipation are very common symptoms of celiac disease, but by themselves, no one thought much about it.



Although learning about possible causes for the issues that had plagued Alexy for most of her life was reassuring, it also presented a huge challenge: getting Alexy to change her diet.

"I kept thinking of that blank space where brain tissue had been – and it was so frightening," Jeannie said. "As a mom, I wanted to knock it (anything containing gluten) out of her hand; to protect her from the monster (gluten) that was out to get my child."

Alexy, however, was a stubborn teenager and did not want to give up her favorite, gluten-filled foods, especially pasta. Always a picky eater, her diet consisted of bread, pasta, meat, and occasionally corn or potatoes. It wasn't because of taste as much as it was because she did not like the way certain foods felt in her mouth – or texture aversion.



“Trying to find pastas that she would accept was really difficult,” Jeannie said. “Most gluten-free pastas are rice based, so it gets very, very mushy. With her aversion to soft-textured food, that was not going well.”

Home became a battleground.

“At first I was ‘NO, you can’t have that. It’s poison to your body,’” said Jeannie. “But it caused so much animosity (extreme dislike) in our home. I had to let go, to remove the power struggle – to let her experience what happened when she ate food with gluten.”

Jeannie says it took a good year for her daughter to understand and accept that what she ate made her sick.

Besides the fights over food, the other problem was finances. Jeannie works full time, but her husband is disabled and receives Social Security disability. Their adult son and his daughter are currently living with them as well.

“There are five people in the house and we can’t afford to keep trying gluten-free foods that Alexy might not eat,” Jeannie said. “That is where FEI has been a life-saver.”

Jeannie learned about FEI from a gastrointestinal specialist at Children’s Mercy Hospital. The variety of foods available from FEI gives Alexy a chance to try foods

that her mother either can’t find at the grocery store or that are prohibitively expensive. Certain items, like pancake mixes, are now favorites.

“Alexy is the only one who eats food from FEI,” said Jeannie, which makes up “about 25% of the food she eats.”

The journey has been difficult for Alexy and her family, but they see the benefits of Alexy’s gluten-free diet such as:

- Better behavior at home and school
- A recent MRI that showed no evidence of additional brain tissue loss
- Fewer episodes of vomiting and constipation
- A recent GI biopsy that showed no evidence of celiac disease



ABOUT SARAH

Sarah Guthrie is an award-winning writer and seasoned development professional. She began volunteering for FEI in 2019, where she helps with fundraising and communications. Sarah is also a dedicated food allergy mom.

Jeannie knows the journey is not over. Helping Alexy stay on a gluten-free diet will be a life-long challenge, but thanks to FEI the financial burden is lighter. She offers these words of wisdom for other parents whose children have celiac disease:

“Hang in there – there will be difficult days, especially if your child is super picky or has an aversion to certain textures. Be as patient as you can. In our case, Alexy has so many other challenges that dealing with a food allergy, too, is really difficult. But we have seen that this diet does work to help your child stay healthy. You can’t give up. And you will learn, as I have, that you never know how strong you are until being strong is the only option you have.”

“You can’t give up”



SPRING CLEANING

Allergy-Free Products

Zoë Slaughter

Invisibly Allergic

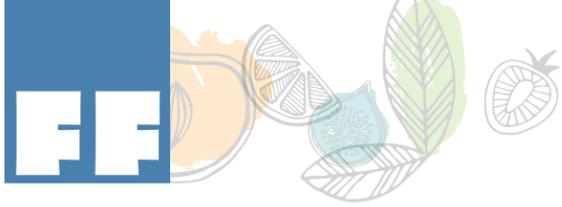
It’s March and I’ve got more spring in my step as we approach the end of winter.

I am even in the mood to, dare I say it... clean! Those of us dealing with food allergies know that sometimes even things like your average household cleaning product can contain hidden allergens. From walnut-shell cleaning sponges to ingredients in your dish detergent labeled with cryptic “all natural” scents and ingredients, it can be hard to know what’s inside our cleaning products.

To anyone reading this who is new to dealing with food allergies, non-food products are not required to be labeled to the same standards as food products, since they aren’t meant to be ingested. Sometimes this can make finding out what’s inside of a product tricky.

For many, an all-purpose spray or laundry detergent is just a household item you buy every so often as it runs out, but it can suddenly become much more when you have an allergy. Here are some points to consider:

- Learn your allergen’s latin name- Did you know things such as peanut oil and almond oil often aren’t listed this same way in non-food products? They typically are listed as their latin term instead. Peanut is known as groundnut oil or arachis oil, while the latin words for almond include amygdalum and amygdale, with sweet almond oil being prunus amygdalus. I have a notepad page of the various terms for my allergen, and I suggest jotting those down and keeping it someplace handy to reference.
- Cleaning products & detergents with heavy fragrance - These ‘fragrances’ can often set off someone’s asthma and/or cause varying allergic responses. I suggest using fragrance-free & dye-free



products if possible to eliminate a potential allergic reaction.

- Check the label, even on non-food products - Many cleaning products contain natural ingredients which are listed right in the ingredients label, but we may not think to look there since we aren't eating it. Natural ingredients can be great for the environment, but potentially deadly for those of us with allergies to natural ingredients such as: almond oil in wood cleaners, cleaning sprays, and fabric softeners, or crushed walnut shells, which can be found in exfoliant products like scrubbing soaps and sponges.

Because of this more lax labeling, I believe less is more when it comes to the household products and cleaning supplies I use at home. I also don't shop around very often, if I find a product that I don't have a reaction to, I become a tried and true buyer and will try to stick to it forever. That's not to say I don't read the ingredients each time, I still do in case they've changed the recipe.



I've found that not only is it easier to know what is inside a product when you can pronounce and identify the ingredients, but making my own household supplies is a lot cheaper and just as effective! Using

simple ingredients around my house to do chores feels satisfying, and I love being able to clean worry-free. I've even found sometimes the more basic the cleaning product, the better it cleans! That's the case with my 3 favorite allergen-free cleaning products below! Cheers to some good old fashioned spring cleaning! Happy spring!

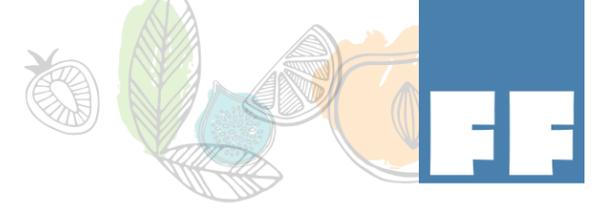
Baking Soda & Vinegar Scrub

Baking soda and white vinegar are the only ingredients you need! Depending on how much cleaning you're doing, mix a cup or two of baking soda in a bowl, and add 1 tablespoon of vinegar bit by bit, stirring with a spoon until it forms a thick paste! Use this mixture with a sponge, rag, or old toothbrush, and give your tub, toilet, sinks, counters, any surface a rub to a sparkling clean finish! An added tip: I throw 1/2 a cup of baking soda down our kitchen drain every other month followed by a 1/2 cup of white vinegar. This will help unclog the sink & keep things smelling fresh. Let it sizzle for about 5 minutes as it breaks down and foams, and then run cold water down the drain for about 15 seconds, and you're all done! If white vinegar isn't your thing, you can use lemon juice or apple cider vinegar instead.

non-food products are not required to be labeled to the same standards as food products

Bed Linen Spray

Sometimes I sit and wonder what I did before I spritzed all my linens with this magical spray! Clean out an old spray bottle or mist bottle and add in: 4 tbsp rubbing



alcohol, 3 tbsp plain witch hazel, 20 drops of lavender essential oil, and top the rest of the bottle off with distilled water or filtered water. If you don't have it, you can use tap water as well, just boil it first and let it come to room temperature, then add it into your bottle. (Boiling your water will decrease the amount of calcium build up around the spray nozzle overtime.)

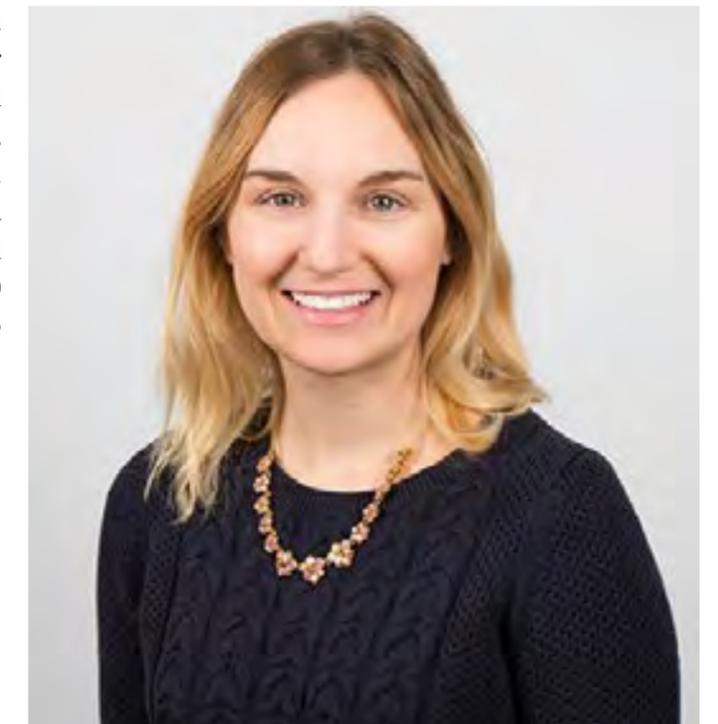
I spray this on my throw blankets, in my dog's bed (when he's not in it), and spray our bed linens with it each morning before making the bed to keep them fresh for longer. Lavender is naturally antimicrobial, insecticidal and antifungal! If you can't use lavender or don't have it, there are other essential oils that could be used instead, such as: peppermint, tea tree, eucalyptus, lemon, and more. I've never used it, but instead of rubbing alcohol you can also use everclear or vodka, as long as it's 120 proof alcohol. If it's 80 proof, that's too low, so just keep that in mind!

making my own household supplies is a lot cheaper and just as effective!

Carpet Deodorizer

I love using this on our carpet in our bedroom and on area rugs throughout the house. Grab any blender you have and whiz up a combination of: 1 cup baking soda, 3-5 whole cloves, and 1-2 bay leaves. The product will be dry in consistency, and you can lightly sprinkle it evenly onto your carpets, trying to get a thin layer. I usually will start at the far end of one room, sprinkle it down, then lightly massage it into the surface with my fingers (you can use gloves or not, your preference!) Then I keep walking backwards across the room while sprinkling it, so that I can exit the room without walking on the treated

surface. Let it sit for 20-30 minutes and vacuum it up afterwards! The clove and bay leaf provide a lovely smell in addition to their natural anti-microbial properties. I personally can't get enough of this comforting scent & it will leave my carpets smelling fresh for weeks! If you wanted you could do this every 2 weeks, monthly, or every 6 months - it's up to you and how often you use the spaces you're deodorizing.



ABOUT ZOË

Zoë Slaughter resides in Louisville, KY and has a severe airborne and cross-contact reactive peanut allergy. In her free time she enjoys spending time with her rescue beagle, reading, painting and creating art, and recently started playing tennis. She started a blog called Invisibly Allergic in 2017 that is dedicated to living with severe food allergies. You can check it out here: invisiblyallergic.com

CREATIVITY IN THE KITCHEN

Adapting recipes for health and safety

Cindy Kaplan

Have you ever read an article outlining the foods you should eat to maintain a healthy diet,

only to find that the “healthy” diet doesn’t work with your allergies? Swapping out red meat for more fish isn’t something you can do if you’re allergic to seafood. And incorporating healthy protein and fats from nuts into your snack routine just isn’t possible if you can’t have nuts! Not to mention, it’s exhausting to try to shop for pre-packaged healthy snacks only

to find they contain an allergen or are processed alongside a cross-contaminant -- it’s so much easier to reach for that comforting bag of chips you know and love.

I’m allergic to 35+ foods, primarily healthy diet staples like fish, nuts, leafy greens, broccoli, brussel sprouts, cauliflower, avocado, flaxseed, and many fruits. But I’ve learned that eating healthy with food allergies doesn’t have to be boring or difficult, at least once you get the hang of it. All it takes is a few simple cooking tricks and some innovation to prepare the foods you can eat in healthy ways.

The key to cooking with food allergies is learning how to adapt recipes. Not every recipe you find is going to be tailor-made to your diet, and many “allergy-friendly” recipes try to accommodate all top 8 (or 9) allergens, which may not be the best for you if, say, you need the protein from eggs in your nut-and-legume-free dishes, or want to use nut milk as your dairy substitute. Instead of reading a recipe as an unchangeable rule of law, read it as a general baseline. Swap in foods you can eat for the ones you can’t, paying attention to the techniques outlined and the flavor profiles of the spices. Once you know a general ratio of ingredients -- like how many vegetables go in a stew compared to how much liquid -- and the basic preparation method -- are you cooking on a stovetop or in the oven, at what temperature, and for how

long -- you can add, remove, or swap ingredients as needed.

Sometimes, though, the foods we’re drawn to or are familiar with are just too far removed from our allergy needs. That’s when you can start thinking outside the cultural box.

In American diets, salads tend to take center stage as the health food of choice. Even if you’re not allergic to leafy greens like I am, salad bars and chain restaurants with build-a-bowl options are stressful and potentially dangerous if you’ve got cross-contact allergies. And preparing your own salad day after day, meal after meal, with the same basic ingredients can get way too repetitive. But salads aren’t the be all and end all of healthy dieting in most other cultures!

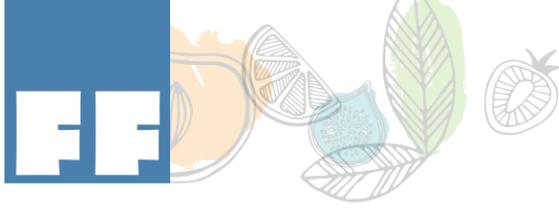
Consider what types of cuisine might work better for your allergy needs (this could take some research) and try recipes from other parts of the world! In my case, peppers, eggplant, carrots, and squash are some of the primary veggies I can eat, so I experiment with a lot of Latin American, Filipino, Asian, and South Asian dishes. I still have to adapt

many of the recipes I find, but it’s fun to draw inspiration from another culture -- it makes eating dinner on a Tuesday night feel like attending a world food festival!

Most importantly, don’t be afraid to break some rules. My favorite rule to break is that fruit isn’t really a side dish. For some reason, we believe veggies make a good side and fruit is too sweet to be more than a snack or dessert. I’ve found that repeating the same handful of vegetables as a side dish every meal gets tiresome, as does eating the few fruits I can have (mostly apples, pears, pineapple, and

“The key to cooking with food allergies is learning how to adapt recipes”





grapes) as standalones. But once I decided to shed these unofficial rules, I realized that roasted apples and pears make a great savory side with some tarragon and ginger sprinkled on, as do pineapples grilled with a dash of cayenne. Though I haven't found a great way to cook grapes, adding raisins to a stew or roasted chicken adds a touch of sweetness, especially when boosted by savory-sweet spices like saffron, cinnamon, and coriander.

The bottom line is, it's okay if your version of healthy eating doesn't look like the mainstream diet plans. It doesn't mean you're trapped into a boring, repetitive diet; in fact, I've found that my weekly menus are more varied than my non-allergic peers', even though I'm more limited in my ingredients.

“don't be afraid to break some rules”

Another important thing to remember is that cooking is an experiment. When creating new recipes, sometimes you win and sometimes you lose. As long as you learned something from the experience, that's a win in my book. Just keep trying! Having food allergies forces you to get creative in the kitchen and explore what healthy means for your body! There is no one-size-fits-all, and thank goodness for that!



“it's okay if your version of healthy eating doesn't look like the mainstream diet plans”



ABOUT CINDY

Cindy Kaplan is a writer, producer, and entrepreneur navigating life in Los Angeles. She blogs about life with 35+ allergies at www.allergyepisodes.wordpress.com and <https://medium.com/@cindyf.kaplan>



Want to get started with some healthy allergy-friendly recipes that you can adapt for your own needs? Here are two of my favorite.





GRANOLA - THE HEALTHY SNACK!

Cindy Kaplan



Packaged granola often contains common allergens and looks more complicated than it is. But you can make granola at home with whatever healthy morsels you want!

INGREDIENTS

4 cups of gluten-free oats
 ½ tsp Cinnamon
 ½ cup Oil (of your choosing)
 ½ cup Syrup (maple, honey, agave)
 1 tsp Vanilla Extract
 Optional Toppings:
 Nuts, Seeds, Dried Fruit, Chocolate Chips, etc.



DIRECTIONS

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees Fahrenheit.

Take about 4 cups of old fashioned rolled oats (certified gluten free if necessary) and mix them with ½ tsp of cinnamon (or nutmeg or allspice).

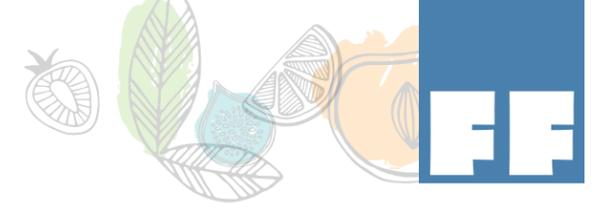
If you can/want, add in 1 ½ cup raw nuts or seeds of your choice -- feel free to use multiple types of nuts/seeds if those are in your diet. (They aren't in mine, so I keep it to just oats and cinnamon!)

Pour on ½ cup of oil (I use coconut or canola, but you can use any vegetable oil of your choice), and if you can, ½ cup of maple syrup, honey, or agave and a tsp of vanilla extract. Mix until the oats are completely covered.

Pour the oat mixture onto a cookie sheet lined with parchment paper in an even layer. Bake in the oven about 20-25 minutes until golden brown. Let it cool (10 - 40 minutes; the cooler it is, the less gooey the next step will be, but I like my granola gooey and can get impatient!).

Top with the toppings of your choice - dried fruit, berries, and/or chocolate chips.

Enjoy!





CUSTOMIZABLE SWEET POTATO & EGGPLANT CURRY

Cindy Kaplan

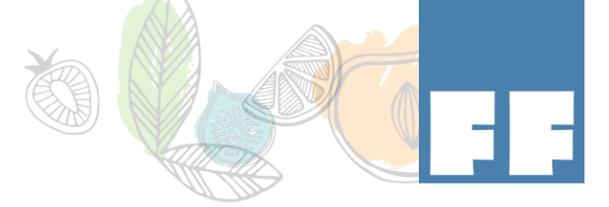


For this recipe, feel free to swap the sweet potato and/or eggplant for other vegetables, and add in spinach at the end if you want more greens! The below is about 6 servings; modify as needed for you and your family.



INGREDIENTS

1 Large Yellow Onion
 1 Medium Eggplant
 Garlic
 1-2 Medium Sweet Potatoes
 Oil (of your choice)
 Optional: Tomatoes, lentils, chickpeas, hot peppers
 Optional Seasonings: paprika, cumin, coriander, turmeric, cayenne pepper, red pepper flakes, allspice, cinnamon, giner, nutmeg, suman, garam masala, lime juice, etc.



DIRECTIONS

Cut one large yellow onion into strips and sauté in saucepan with a tablespoon of oil (I prefer olive) until just translucent

While the onion is heating, slice 1 medium size eggplant and dehydrate by adding salt and covering with a paper towel (skip the dehydration if you are short on time)

Add 2-4 sliced cloves of garlic to the saucepan to sautee with the onion

Slice 1 large or 2 medium sweet potatoes or yams

When onions and garlic are just translucent, add eggplant, yams, and 4 cups water

OPTIONAL: add a can of diced tomatoes

OPTIONAL: add 1 cup red lentils or chickpeas

OPTIONAL: add 1 jalapeno, serrano, or red chili pepper

Add seasonings to taste -- swap as needed for spice tolerance/allergies -- I use paprika, cumin, coriander, turmeric, cayenne pepper, and red pepper flakes;

allspice, cinnamon, ginger, nutmeg, sumac, garam masala, lime juice, fish sauce, and red curry paste are all options, too.

Add salt and pepper to taste

Boil and then reduce heat for simmer for about 20 minutes

OPTIONAL: add 1 can coconut milk and stir

Continue simmering for another 10-15 minutes, until sweet potatoes reach desired softness

Serve alone, or over the grain of your choice (rice or millet are my favorites) or mashed potatoes





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