Histamine Intolerance: Supplements and Histamine-Containing Paleo Foods

Histamine intolerance is a fairly common, though poorly understood, food sensitivity. It is different from other types of food allergies in both the resulting symptoms and the way in which those symptoms are produced. Specifically, rather than being an intolerance to a specific food antigen (as seen with gluten or dairy intolerance), histamine intolerance is thought to be due to a limited ability of the body to breakdown histamine for various reasons, often due to small intestinal bacterial overgrowth (SIBO) or dysbiosis.

Histamine intolerance is cumulative, based on the total amount of histamine in your body at a given time. This cumulative response to histamine is analogous to a cup of water. If a cup of water is already very full (similar to high amounts of histamine in the body or diet), then even a few small drops of additional water will cause the cup to overflow (symptoms activated). However, if a cup is only minimally filled with water, then it would take much more water (histamine) to cause a response. This can make histamine intolerance difficult to identify, since you may not see symptoms consistently depending on the levels of histamine in your body and food at that time (or, how full your glass of water is at the start). Thus, some histamine may be tolerable for you, and it is important not to be overly restrictive in your diet since many histamine-containing foods are healthy, as long as they do not elicit symptoms.

We recommend a two-tiered approach to reducing histamine in your diet. Begin by eliminating all of the foods listed below in Tier 1. These foods are known to contain the highest levels of histamine. If you find that you still have symptoms,* then eliminate the foods listed in Tier 2 as well, and after at least two weeks, try slowly adding back some of the Tier 2 foods to see if you have improved tolerance.

In addition to a low-histamine Paleo diet, we also recommend the following supplements:

- **Quercenase:** Take one capsule three times daily, with meals.
- **Liposomal vitamin C:** Take one teaspoon twice daily on an empty stomach (for example, one teaspoon first thing in the morning, and another before dinner or before bed). Only a few minutes are needed between taking the medication and beginning your meal.
- **Pycnogenol:** Take one capsule twice daily on an empty stomach.
- **MegaSporeBiotic:** Take two capsules once daily, about 20 minutes after a meal.

	Tier 1: Often cause symptoms	Tier 2: May cause symptoms	Safe
Seafood	Shellfish Canned, smoked, or fermented fish	Frozen fish	Freshly caught fish (generally if caught and eaten the same day)
Meat and Eggs	Smoked, cured, or processed meat, including salami, sausage, and deli meats	Left-over meat (immediately freeze any left-over protein-based food since bacteria will quickly act on room- or refrigerator-temperature foods, resulting in histamine production) Bone broth Egg whites, raw	Fresh chicken (without skin) Egg yolk
Dairy	Aged cheese Buttermilk Kefir	Yogurt (depending on bacterial culture used) Soft cheeses such as mozzarella and ricotta cheese	Fresh milk and milk products Butter (without rancidity)
Legumes and Nuts		Nuts, especially cashews and walnuts Legumes, especially chickpeas	
Vegetables	Fermented vegetables including sauerkraut	Eggplant Pumpkin Spinach Tomatoes and tomato sauce	All other fresh vegetables
Fruit		Apricots Avocado Cherries Citrus (all varieties) Cranberries Dried fruit (all types) Grapes Loganberries Papaya Pineapple Plum Strawberries Raspberries	All other fresh fruits

	Tier 1: Often cause symptoms	Tier 2: May cause symptoms	Safe
Sweets		Chocolate and cocoa	
Spices and Cooking Ingredients	Vinegar and any foods made with vinegar, such as pickles, ketchup, or relish	Anise Chili powder Cinnamon Cloves Curry powder Nutmeg Yeast	
Beverages	Alcohol, including wine	Tea, including green, black, pu-erh and mate	Herbal tea (without citrus or other listed fruit)
Prepared Foods	Canned foods	Most prepared or ready-to-eat foods	
Food Additives	Benzoate Sulfites Nitrites Glutamate Food dyes Any other preservatives or artificial colorings	Many vitamins and prescription drugs contain preservatives. Check the inactive ingredients in your pills, and if needed, ask your pharmacist for additive-free alternatives.	