
DEEPER THAN SYMPTOMS · THE PROTOCOL LAB

Hashimoto's 90-Day Reset Guide

A printable, staged elimination and reintroduction protocol — baseline first, one variable at a time, and an honest way to measure whether it worked.

DURATION	FORMAT	PAIRS WITH
90 days · 4 phases	Print and write on it	The full protocol post

[START HERE](#)

How to use this guide

Print it. Write on it. The whole point of this reset is that you end up with something written down — because "I think I have a bit more energy?" is not data, and memory is a poor witness after ninety days.

THE ONE IDEA THAT CHANGES EVERYTHING

In the randomised trials on gluten-free eating in Hashimoto's, and again in a 12-week trial of the Autoimmune Protocol, people reported feeling clearly better **while their TPO antibodies went up**. Antibodies reflect immune activity. They are a slow, noisy signal, and a poor report card for food changes. **What you track in this guide — energy, fog, digestion, pain, mood, sleep — is the honest scoreboard.**

The four phases

PHASE	WHEN	WHAT HAPPENS
0	Week 0	Baseline. Change nothing. Record what normal currently is.
1	Weeks 1–2	Absorption & nutrient floor. Medication timing, then the nutrients with evidence behind them.
2	Weeks 3–8	Structured elimination. Gluten, then dairy, then refined sugar and alcohol. Two weeks apart.
3	Weeks 9–12	Reintroduction. One group at a time. Keep only what earns its place.

Three rules that matter more than any food list

- 1 • Fix absorption before you fix inflammation.** A thyroid diet that ignores how your medication and nutrients get absorbed is building on sand.
- 2 • Remove in sequence, not all at once.** One variable at a time is slower. It is also the only way you learn something you can keep.
- 3 • Reintroduce deliberately.** Elimination is a diagnostic tool with an expiry date. A permanent restriction you never tested isn't a protocol — it's anxiety with a grocery list.

BEFORE YOU START — ONE GENUINELY IMPORTANT THING

If celiac disease has not been ruled out, **get tested before you remove gluten**. The test needs gluten in your system to be accurate. Going gluten-free first makes it unreliable, and getting it back means weeks of eating gluten again. This trips up a large number of people.

PHASE 0 • WEEK 0

Build your baseline

Seven days. Change nothing about how you eat. You are only measuring where you start — this is the highest-leverage page in the guide, and the one people skip.

Daily symptom scores — 1 (worst) to 10 (best)

SYMPTOM	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
Energy							
Brain fog							
Digestion							
Joint / muscle pain							
Mood							
Sleep quality							
DAILY AVERAGE							

Your one biggest complaint

The single symptom you would most want gone in 90 days. Be specific — "asleep by 10 but wrecked at 3pm" beats "tired".

Baseline labs — copy your most recent results

Bring these to any practitioner conversation. Note the date drawn: results older than six months are context, not a baseline.

MARKER	UNITS	YOUR RESULT	DATE DRAWN
TSH	mIU/L		
Free T4	ng/dL		
Free T3	pg/mL		
TPO antibodies	IU/mL		
Thyroglobulin antibodies	IU/mL		
Ferritin	ng/mL		
Vitamin D, 25-OH	ng/mL		
Vitamin B12	pg/mL		

A result inside the reference range is not automatically optimal for you. That is a conversation to have with your practitioner, not a number to self-interpret.

PHASE 1 • WEEKS 1–2

Absorption and the nutrient floor

Nothing else in this protocol works well if this layer is broken. Two weeks, no food eliminations yet.

If you take levothyroxine — medication timing

MEDICATION ROUTINE — TICK WHEN IT'S CONSISTENT	
☐	Taken on an empty stomach, at the same time every day
☐	Gap left between the tablet and the first food or drink of the day
☐	Calcium, iron and magnesium supplements kept at least four hours from the dose
☐	Coffee not taken immediately with the tablet
☐	Routine kept identical for the full two weeks — an erratic schedule makes labs unreadable

The nutrients with real evidence behind them

Food first. Test rather than guess. Discuss any supplement with your practitioner before starting one.

	NUTRIENT	FOOD SOURCES	WHAT THE RESEARCH SAYS
☐	Selenium	Brazil nuts, sardines, eggs, sunflower seeds	Meta-analyses of randomised trials found selenium lowered TPO antibodies. It also has a narrow safe range — too much is harmful.
☐	Vitamin D	Sunlight, oily fish, egg yolk — plus testing	Supplementation reduced antibodies meaningfully only in people who started out genuinely deficient. If yours is adequate, more won't help.
☐	Iron / ferritin	Red meat, lentils, pumpkin seeds	Low ferritin drives fatigue that gets misattributed to thyroid function. Worth knowing your number.
☐	Iodine	Caution — not a target to push	More is not better in autoimmune thyroid disease. High-dose iodine supplements can worsen thyroid function. Discuss before touching it.

A NOTE ON DOSES

This guide deliberately contains no dosages. Selenium, vitamin D and iron all have ranges where more becomes harmful, and the right amount depends on your labs, your medication and your body. Take the research to your practitioner and decide together.

PHASE 2 • WEEKS 3–8

Structured elimination

Now — and only now — start removing foods. One block at a time, two weeks apart, everything else held identical.

WHEN	WHAT COMES OUT	WHY THIS ONE, IN THIS ORDER
Weeks 3–4	Gluten only	Keep everything else exactly as it was. This is the most-studied change in the literature, and the one most likely to reveal something real.
Weeks 5–6	Add dairy	Milk proteins are a common secondary trigger, and lactose can interfere with levothyroxine absorption in some people.
Weeks 7–8	Add refined sugar & alcohol	Both drive blood-sugar swings and inflammation. Both are far easier to test than the exotic cuts people jump to first.

WHAT IS DELIBERATELY NOT ON THIS LIST

Nightshades, eggs, legumes, grains. The full Autoimmune Protocol cuts all of them, but the evidence for that much restriction in Hashimoto's is a single small study of 28 people. It may turn out to be right for you — that's a later conversation with a practitioner, not a starting point.

Weekly symptom average — carry your daily scores across

Score the same six symptoms daily as in Phase 0, then average each week here. You are looking for a trend across weeks, not a good Tuesday.

SYMPTOM	BASE	WK 3	WK 4	WK 5	WK 6	WK 7	WK 8
Energy							
Brain fog							
Digestion							
Joint / muscle pain							
Mood							
Sleep quality							
HOW THE WEEK FELT OVERALL							

Expect this: weeks 1–2 can feel worse before better, especially if you're cutting sugar. Digestive changes usually show first, around weeks 2–4. Energy and brain fog tend to shift later, closer to weeks 6–10. Healing isn't linear — a bad week isn't failure.

PHASE 3 • WEEKS 9–12

Reintroduce, one at a time

This is the phase that separates a protocol from a punishment. Eat a normal portion, twice a day, for three days. Then wait four days before testing the next one.

WHY THE FOUR-DAY GAP MATTERS

Delayed reactions are common. A Tuesday reintroduction can surface as a Thursday headache. If you stack tests back to back, you will attribute the reaction to the wrong food and carry that mistake for years.

Reintroduction log

FOOD GROUP	DATE STARTED	WHAT YOU ATE	REACTION – DAYS 1–7	VERDICT: KEEP OUT / BRING BACK
Gluten				
Dairy				
Refined sugar				
Alcohol				

Deciding what stays out

Keep a removal only if the evidence in your own log is clear — a symptom that reliably worsens on reintroduction and settles again on removal. Everything else comes back.

A Hashimoto's diet you can sustain for ten years beats a perfect one you abandon by March. Dietary variety is not a luxury; your gut microbiome depends on it.

THE MOST COMMON FAILURE MODE

Never reintroducing. Restriction quietly becomes permanent, the food list keeps shrinking, and fear replaces evidence. If you reach week 9 and don't want to test anything, that is worth talking through with someone.

BEFORE YOU FINISH

Retesting, mistakes, and when to get help

When to retest

Standard practice is to recheck thyroid function about three months after any meaningful change, with your practitioner. If you corrected a low vitamin D or added selenium in Phase 1, those levels move on their own timeline — usually 8–12 weeks.

Don't retest antibodies at 90 days, and don't panic if they've risen. Remember what the trials found: people felt better while TPO went up. Antibodies are the slowest and least reliable marker here.

Four mistakes that derail this

MISTAKE		WHY IT COSTS YOU
✗	Changing medication timing and food in the same week	You lose the ability to attribute anything to anything.
✗	Chasing antibody numbers	They lag, and they're noisy. A poor guide to whether your food changes are working.
✗	Going gluten-free by substitution	Swapping bread for packaged gluten-free bread usually means more refined starch and fewer nutrients.
✗	Never reintroducing	Restriction becomes permanent and dietary variety collapses.

Bring in a practitioner if any of these apply

GET SUPPORT IF...	
☐	You're pregnant or trying to conceive
☐	You have another autoimmune diagnosis
☐	You're losing weight without meaning to
☐	Celiac disease hasn't been ruled out
☐	Your symptoms worsen at any point during the protocol

Your body isn't broken. It's responding to something — and this is how you find out what.

Read the full protocol, the research behind each phase, and the citations at deeperthansymptoms.com/hashimotos-disease-diet-protocol

MEDICAL DISCLAIMER

For educational purposes only. Not intended to diagnose, treat, cure or prevent any disease, and not a substitute for individualised medical advice. Always consult a qualified healthcare practitioner before changing your diet, supplements or medication — particularly if you take thyroid hormone replacement. Last reviewed August 2026.