

EATING OVER OTHER'S HOUSES WHILE ON AIP

Eating over friend's or family's houses while on AIP can be one of the easiest things - or one of the hardest. It all depends on how supportive your friends and family are, how much they care to understand what you're doing, whether it's a big party or a small gathering, and whether they have the time to accommodate you.

The following are some things you can do to help eat a meal (or meals) that won't make you sick:

If possible, when making plans, see if your friends or family can come to YOUR place to eat, because then you can control everything. No worry about cross-contamination or eating non-AIP ingredients.

If that's not an option though, the first thing to do is call your host/hostess and have a conversation letting them know that you're on a special diet. It's best to make sure you let them know you are doing this for YOU to feel better. Sometimes people feel like you're judging the way they eat, so by totally owning it (and not making any comments about the way they eat or that anything they may eat is "unhealthy"), things will go smoother.

Ask if it's ok for you to bring over some dishes - either just for yourself or to share. What you offer and bring may depend on how many other people will be there and how a dish would fit in. For example, if you plan on bringing mashed butternut squash and brussels sprouts, it may not fit in in a Hawaiian luau-themed party. But that's perfect for Thanksgiving. And if the meal is a party for 50 people, your host/hostess may be appreciative if you just bring your entire meal so they don't have to think about it.

When the meal is just for a few people, and maybe you're the guest of honor, the host/hostess may want to make as much of the meal as possible for you. After all, this is a way of giving you a "gift", and by totally refusing that, you'd be rude as well. So you could send over some recipes that wouldn't be difficult to make and that don't include weird, Paleo-only ingredients like coconut aminos or tigernuts that most people don't have in their pantry. Instead, simple is best here, like roast sweet potatoes with salt and cinnamon.

Do be sure if your host/hostess is making meals for you that you provide them with the "YES" and "NO" foods lists, as well as the "SPICES" list so they can easily refer to it to make sure they aren't going to give you something wrong. But if they follow your AIP recipe(s) you sent them, they should be ok.



If you accidentally get served and eat non-compliant food:

If your host/hostess accidentally serves you something that isn't AIP-compliant, it's best not to get angry with them. It unfortunately happens (I had this happen to me with butter on a Thanksgiving turkey), but getting mad won't help anything. Instead, smile, be gracious, and perhaps not even mention it - they'd probably feel TERRIBLE if they knew. The whole point of having you over was to spend time with you and provide for you, and if they knew that they messed that up - well just put yourself in their shoes. You'd probably feel really bad too, right? It's not their job to remember all of your dietary restrictions, so be gentle.

If this DOES happen to you though, you may suffer some ramifications with your health. It's best to remain, or go back to, the Elimination Diet portion for several weeks after, do not introduce new foods, drink lots of healing bone broth, and focus on getting a lot of sleep.

HOWEVER - if you'd been on the Elimination portion of AIP for at least 30 days prior to eating the non-compliant ingredients and after a week you feel NO negative effects from the contaminant(s), you may choose to treat this as a reintroduction and include it back in your diet. It's best to just do this with a Stage 1 or 2 reintroduction food however, unless you're already on Stage 3 or 4 reintroductions. Otherwise you may have a really hard time trying to figure out if any reactions are from the contaminant food or any new reintroductions you are doing (Stage 3 and 4 foods sometimes take longer than a week to show reactions and sometimes have a tolerance level, so a small amount may not be a problem but more will be).

See the reintroduction videos/guides for more info on what reactions might include and the notes on Stage 3 and 4 reintroduction items for more information.

When talking about how you eat:

One of the most common mistakes people make when on a healthy diet is to think that everyone wants to hear about it, or that you should be the one to educate others about their unhealthy choices.

This couldn't be further from the truth. When people are stuffing their faces full of food, the last thing they want to hear is how "grains cause leaky gut" or that "those tomatoes in that sauce might be the reason you have so much arthritis pain". They want to enjoy their food.



So if while you are dining with others, someone asks you why you're eating differently than them, you can explain that you are trying a diet to feel better from your autoimmune disease symptoms. Leave it there. If the other person is interested they ask more questions, but again, explain it in the context of autoimmune disease. "I am avoiding tomatoes because nightshades can be problematic for many people with an autoimmune disease. I'm trying to figure out if they affect me too".

If that person has an autoimmune disease or knows someone who is suffering, they may ask more questions, and then it's fine to explain it. But again, avoid making any judgement or sweeping condemning statements on the way they are eating. Instead of "gluten is so bad" it's better to say something like "If you're really suffering, it might be worth trying a gluten-free diet for a month to see if you feel better. I say this because gluten sensitivity has been connected with all autoimmune disease cases where it's been studied and I definitely noticed a huge difference when I took it out".

You'll find that the other person is way more receptive to hearing what you have to say, and you may help change someone's life for the better. Lead by example and you'll be surprised by how much better that works.

Dealing with Drinking:

Often social occasions center around alcohol, and peer pressure is real. It doesn't seem to matter what age you are, your friends and family will wonder why you aren't drinking and try to get you to partake as well.

The easiest way to navigate this - and to avoid any comments - is to always have a drink in your hand or in front of you. Now... this can be an AIP-approved mocktail, some kombucha, sparkling water, juice, etc that you sip on, OR it can be an actual alcoholic drink that you don't drink. The latter definitely can be tricky with temptation if you like to have that drink, but people never really seem to notice or care that that drink isn't actually being drunk, they just want to know that you have something with you. (Isn't this sad commentary on our mature adult society?)

So for example, you are sitting at a table and someone hands you a glass of wine. Put the wine down in front of you and leave it there. If someone comments that you're nursing it, just laugh it off and say you'll get to it or that you just don't feel like having any at that moment.

Now this is all for larger parties where people don't know that you're on a special diet - if it's just you and a friend or two having dinner, they'll usually understand that you're not drinking and you can just say that. But for a party or larger gathering situation it's best to just bring an AIP-approved drink with you.

If everyone comes over YOUR place:

If you do have the fortune of having everyone come to your place, it's best to serve a meal that doesn't cry AIP! So no liver pate, carob powder, or strange recipe you've never made before, etc. Instead, serve something that's more universal.

An example meal might be:

- pulled pork (pork shoulder seasoned with salt and cooked in the crockpot all day)
- baked plantains (yellowish black plantains peeled, sliced, laid flat on a baking sheet and drizzled with avocado oil and salt and then baked at 425 F for 25 min, flipping once)
- roasted peeled and diced sweet potatoes (roasted with avocado oil and salt)
- mango salsa (diced mangoes, diced red onion, cilantro, lime juice)
- avocado slices
- lettuce wraps (or provide your guests with corn tortillas and you have lettuce wraps or cassava flour tortillas)

You could also make a dessert that's not explicitly "Paleo" or "AIP" like:

- Baked apples ([I've got a recipe at Thriving On Paleo](#) you can use)
- Baked Ginger Pears ([also a recipe at Thriving On Paleo](#))
- sliced Bananas fried in a pan with some coconut oil, cinnamon, and salt
- fresh berries with coconut whipped cream (or give them a can of regular and you eat coconut whipped cream)

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