

Since the beginning of October, I've been on a special diet. It's a kind of diet that helps to discover food allergies and other food intolerances, or things that make me feel sick when I'm not. I've had bad allergies since I've come to Japan, so I thought it might be a good idea to try this diet. Maybe there are foods that make me feel sick and I don't know it, I thought. So I started this diet a few months ago with the hopes that I would start to feel better and have more energy.

The basis of my diet is having no sugar. On top of that, I couldn't eat any foods with yeast, either. Most sweets and breads were not allowed. At the beginning, I started with a base of vegetables and proteins, and started to add foods to the list of things that were "ok" little by little. I started trying some fruits, whole grains and Japanese foods like miso and tofu. For the most part, most foods didn't have any bad side effects. So quickly, I was able to eat a lot of different foods. I'm still in this stage of the diet, adding in new foods, and just paying attention to which foods have bad side effects. It's interesting! I've found that coffee and most pasta has bad effects on my health, but not most other things. So far, so good!

The hardest part of this diet is not avoiding sugar. I love sweets, but it really hasn't been so hard to avoid them. I can still make lots of delicious foods with fresh vegetables and other ingredients, but the hardest thing is just finding the time to make all the food. These days, I spent about 2 or 3 hours a day preparing, cooking, or cleaning up my meals. It feels like a lot of time! I also have to be careful to prepare food and bring a bento along to most social events when I go out with my friends on the weekends. I'm still not able to eat a lot of foods at some restaurants.

This diet has been life-changing for me. After the first few weeks, I noticed that I had a lot more energy. In a way, I was tired from cooking and putting a lot of effort into my meals, but I still had a lot of energy to get up early in the morning, go running or do some other exercise, do many things at work and even stay up later at night. The change was so clear that it made me realize just how much the food we eat affects the way we feel.

I won't continue this diet forever. I have a few more weeks to add in more foods like white flour, white rice, cheese, and some other things, but I will be finished with the list soon. I used to think that after that, I would eat a lot of sugar and sweet things to make up for all the time when I have had no sugar. But I realized that even though I miss sweets sometime, I would miss this new energetic lifestyle I have started so much more. I won't be getting a Christmas cake this year, that's for sure!