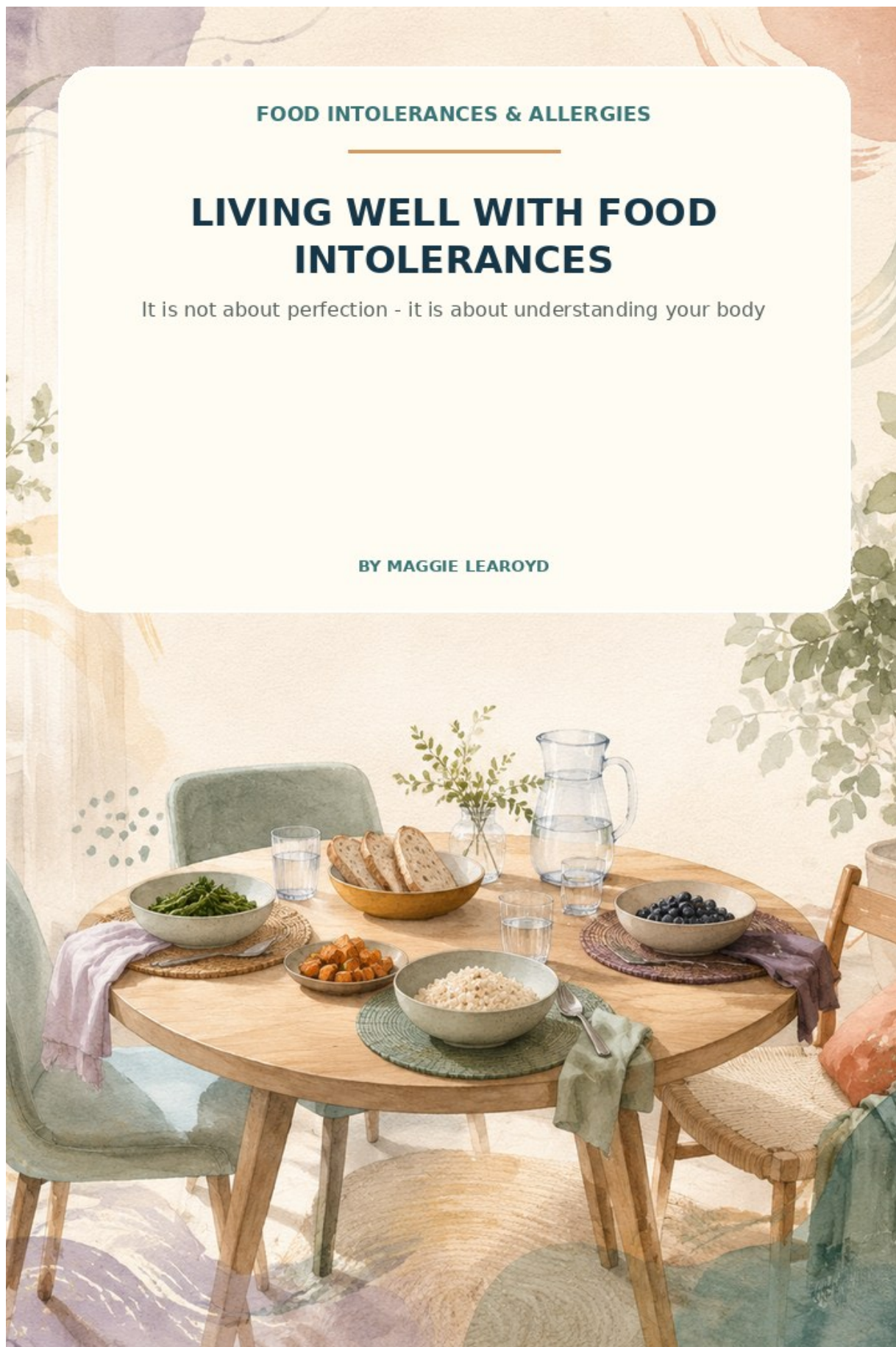


FOOD INTOLERANCES & ALLERGIES

LIVING WELL WITH FOOD INTOLERANCES

It is not about perfection - it is about understanding your body

BY MAGGIE LEAROYD



Living Well with Food Intolerances

It is not about perfection - it is about understanding your body

When people first discover they have food intolerances, one of the first emotions they often describe is overwhelm.

"What can I eat now?"

"Will I ever enjoy eating out again?"

"Do I have to read every food label?"

"How do I explain this to family and friends?"

I completely understand those questions because I've asked many of them myself.

When I discovered my own food intolerances, I remember standing in the supermarket looking at food labels and thinking, "Where do I even begin?"

At first, it felt as though everything contained something I was trying to avoid.

But over time, something changed.

Instead of focusing on everything I couldn't eat, I began focusing on everything I could.

That simple shift in mindset made a huge difference.

Living with food intolerances isn't about creating a life filled with restrictions.

For me, it's about creating a life where I feel healthier, have more energy and understand my own body a little better.

Let Yourself Learn

One of the biggest mistakes I see people make is trying to change everything overnight.

They clear out their cupboards.

Throw away half their food.

Read endless information online.

Become frightened of eating.

I've learned that our relationship with food should never be driven by fear.

It should be guided by understanding.

You don't need to have all the answers immediately.

Give yourself permission to learn.

Your body will often teach you far more than the internet ever can.

Reading Food Labels

I won't pretend that reading labels becomes exciting!

In the beginning it can feel exhausting.

Ingredients you've never heard of.

Different names for the same ingredient.

Unexpected additives.

Foods you thought were safe suddenly aren't.

The good news is that it becomes easier.

The more familiar you become with the ingredients that don't suit you, the quicker those decisions become.

Eventually, reading labels becomes part of your routine rather than something you dread.

Eating Out Without Anxiety

People often worry that life will become smaller once they start avoiding certain foods.

That hasn't been my experience.

It has simply required a little more planning.

I've learned not to feel embarrassed about asking questions.

Most restaurants genuinely want to help.

Many have allergy information readily available, and staff are often happy to discuss ingredients.

There have been occasions where I've taken my own food or chosen somewhere different because it felt easier.

Years ago I would have apologised for that.

Now I simply see it as looking after my health.

There's no shame in that.

Family and Friends

This can sometimes be the hardest part.

Food brings people together.

Celebrations.

Birthdays.

Christmas.

Family meals.

When your eating habits change, other people sometimes feel uncomfortable too.

I've learned that not everyone will understand.

And that's okay.

The people who care about you usually want to support you—they just might need a little guidance.

Rather than expecting everyone to know exactly what you need, I've found that honest conversations often make things much easier.

Planning Ahead

One thing that has helped me enormously is planning.

If I know I'm travelling, I'll think about food before I leave.

If I'm visiting family, I'll offer to bring something I know I can eat.

If I'm out for the day, I'll pack snacks that work for me.

Planning isn't about anxiety.

It's about reducing unnecessary stress.

When I know I've got suitable food available, I can relax and enjoy whatever I'm doing.

It's Okay If You Get It Wrong

This is something I wish someone had told me earlier.

You won't always get it right.

There will be times when you accidentally eat something that doesn't agree with you.

There will be meals that don't go to plan.

There will be occasions when you simply decide something is worth it.

Life happens.

That doesn't mean you've failed.

It means you're human.

I've stopped aiming for perfection because perfection doesn't exist.

Instead, I focus on understanding my body a little better each day.

What I've Learned Along the Way

Living with food intolerances has taught me far more than which foods suit me.

It's taught me patience.

It's taught me to listen to my body.

It's taught me to stop comparing my journey with anyone else's.

Most importantly, it's taught me that health isn't about following rigid rules.

It's about understanding what helps you feel your best.

What works beautifully for me may not work for you.

And that's perfectly okay.

Our bodies are wonderfully individual.

Before You Go...

If you've recently discovered food intolerances, please be kind to yourself.

You don't need to change everything today.

You don't need to become an expert overnight.

You don't need to feel guilty because your body responds differently to someone else's.

This is a journey.

One that takes time, patience and curiosity.

Every meal is another opportunity to learn.

Every symptom is another piece of information.

And every small change you make is a step towards understanding yourself a little better.

For me, living with food intolerances hasn't made my world smaller.

If anything, it's made me appreciate my health more deeply and helped me build a relationship with food based on understanding rather than frustration.

I hope, in time, it can do the same for you.

Maggie Learoyd

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Founder of Space to Breathe Therapy

YorkTest: Available Tests and Practitioner Discount

YorkTest offers a wider range of home-to-laboratory options, including: Premium Food Intolerance Test; Food Allergy Test; Food Intolerance & Allergy Bundle; Junior Food Intolerance Test; Gut Microbiome Test; Annual Health Test; Essential Health Check; Stress (Cortisol) Test; Female Hormones Test; Female Fertility Test; Menopause Test; Male Hormones Test; Thyroid Test; Liver Function Test; Cholesterol Test; Inflammation (CRP) Test; Vitamin D Test; Metabolic Health Test; and couples, parent-and-child, family and complete health-and-nutrition bundles.

If you decide that a YorkTest product is appropriate for you, visit www.yorktest.com/products/ and enter my practitioner discount code PLEAROYD at checkout for an additional £5 off.

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Testing should be considered alongside symptoms, clinical history and appropriate professional advice. A food allergy can be serious: suspected immediate allergy symptoms require medical assessment. IgG food-reactivity testing is different from diagnostic IgE allergy testing and remains debated, so results should not be used alone to diagnose illness or begin a highly restrictive diet.