

Diagnosed with Gluten Sensitivity or Celiac Disease?

It is vital to make sure that you don't get even the smallest amount of gluten!

All Grains Contain Gluten! Studies show that 92% of celiacs following the traditional gluten-free diet don't get better, unless they go grain-free!

I know this may seem extreme, but crumbs and residue from gluten containing food can wreak havoc on your body.

Even the tiniest gluten crumble contains enough of the invisible gluten molecule to cause serious trouble and trigger a sensitive immune system for the next 3 months.

Remember, **gluten is a protein** – and gluey proteins are next to impossible to eradicate because they are very sticky. There's a reason why wheat is used in wallpaper paste, adhesives, and drywall compound. Even though the tiny gluten molecule is invisible to your eyes, it's not invisible to your immune system!

Even **kissing** someone whose been eating a gluten-containing food might contaminate you.

1. **Make your home cross-contamination free.**

The pantry and cupboards:

- Read through labels and identify any foods from the *Forbidden List of Gluten, Grains, and Corn*. If they are unopened, you can either return them or put them into a box for the local food bank or church. If they are partially used, dump them out and recycle the containers. From now on, keep dedicated gluten-free cupboards and pantry shelves.

The refrigerator:

- Avoid all shared condiments in your refrigerator. It's best to purchase your own everything and separate it. You can label items using a colored sticker system to show what's yours.

Kitchen utensils:

- **Porous materials.** Be aware of the protein residue problem in old cutting boards, old wooden spoons, wooden salad bowls, and anything porous that might contain old gluten residue. Give them away, sell them at a yard sale, or donate them with all your old vinyl and plastic spatulas.
- **Other Sources of Kitchen Contamination:** Refrigerator door handles, bread machine, toaster, colanders, muffin tins, cookie sheets, flour sifters, soaps, sponges and cleaning pads.

Beyond the kitchen:

- **Use alcohol wipes in all shared spaces** to clean off computer key boards, phones, remote controls, game controllers, and literally anything that the gluten eaters touch! Don't forget your car steering wheel! Carpeting needs to be vacuumed often to pick up gluten crumbs from snack foods.
- **Away from the house.** Remember to clean off grocery cart handles or after shaking people's hands. An alcohol hand sanitizer will help dissolve the sticky gluten protein off fingers, if used liberally.

2. Avoid contamination issues when eating out and traveling.

Avoid fast food restaurants!

When eating out at a restaurant or even ordering take-out, food that doesn't contain gluten can become contaminated by other gluten-containing foods unless separate workstations, grills, cookware, and utensils are used.

A perfect example is when you order **French fries**, which are normally gluten-free. However, if they are cooked in a deep fryer that is also used to fry fish rolled in flour, the gluten from the flour can contaminate the fries. For some people, this small amount of gluten is enough to cause problems. Simply taking croutons off a salad is too much contamination. **Gluten should never touch your food or plate!**

Fried foods are usually first dusted or battered with wheat flour (gluten). That's true for anything described as breaded, crispy, or crunchy.

Meatloaf and meatballs contain bread crumbs.

Soups and sauces may be thickened with wheat flour and/or cream (dairy).

Vegetables are usually sautéed with butter (dairy) and they may also use the same pan that had a gluten-containing food such as pasta.

Besides asking what ingredients a dish contains, it's best to check with the waiter or even the chef on how the food is prepared. For example, IHOP restaurants ads pancake batter

(gluten flour) to their omelets! Also remember that soy sauce contains gluten, which may go unnoticed in the kitchen.

Asian restaurants use soy sauce with wheat (gluten) and other prepared sauces that may contain gluten. Gluten is also in egg roll wrappers, wontons, and fortune cookies. Fried rice is made with soy sauce (wheat) and butter (dairy), so have them make it for you instead with sesame oil, salt, and pepper. Also, many sushi restaurants add wheat flour to their rice. Always ask the chef!!

Diet soda and artificially sweetened foods. Even though they don't contain gluten, they trigger similar symptoms as gluten including stomach pain and bloating.

It's a good idea to check restaurant menus online and then call the restaurant beforehand to ask about gluten-free options for the items that look good to you.

Realize that all restaurants and guides are still following the traditional gluten-free diet guidelines of only excluding wheat, barley, and rye. All grains including corn contain gluten!

Triumph Dining's - *The Essential Gluten-Free Restaurant Guide* - lists 6,500 GF restaurants all over the U.S.

Celiac Restaurant Guide - Free online GF menus of restaurant chains: <http://celiacrestaurantguide.com/gf-menus/chains-2/>

**Here are restaurant recommendations:
(Tell them you're gluten sensitive.)**

- **Breakfast** - Veggie omelet and a bowl of berries
- **Lunch** - Salad with grilled chicken or fish, olive oil and balsamic vinegar for dressing
- **Dinner** - Grilled chicken or fish, a few steamed veggie sides with olive oil and lemon

If you're eating at a friend's house, talk to your hosts a day or so in advance and provide ideas for preparing a gluten-free meal. If they truly care about you, they'll be more than pleased to make food that you can enjoy. Otherwise, plan to bring your own food to all social gatherings (parties & holidays). Use the ideas from the "Travel Tips" foods.

I usually make myself a large meal replacement shake to take with me before going out, as well as bringing bars and other easy snacks. I put them in a carry cooler. If you go out hungry and don't bring enough to eat, then you'll end up eating something you'll greatly regret later!

3. Avoid other hidden sources of gluten.

Brown rice syrup may not be GF unless labeled, even though brown rice is GF.

Check the labels/fine print on your vitamins, medications, and cosmetics (especially lipsticks), mouthwash, and toothpaste. If it touches your lips, it's a suspect.

Some celiacs, and especially those with dermatitis herpetiformis, may be sensitive to gluten in lotions, cosmetics, or other topical products.

Read all labels and choose appropriate brands without gluten. A **shampoo** with wheat proteins or a hand lotion fortified with wheat germ oil contains gluten. Always check labels!

See "Gluten Free Health & Beauty Products List" in the Shopping List section

The glue on envelopes and stamps may have gluten, so moisten these with a sponge instead of licking them with your tongue.

It will take about 6 months to truly eradicate all specks of gluten from your life (an herbal tea with barley, a natural lip balm with wheat germ oil, an old wooden spoon). But time and experience smoothes out the bumps of mistakes, and the gluten-free lifestyle soon becomes second nature. Every day more and more people are being diagnosed with gluten sensitivity and celiac disease, so the future will keep getting easier to find others to relate to, as well as more gluten-free products.

The internet is a great resource to find gluten-free and grain-free information and products, so use it!

Former Surgeon General Dr. Everett Koop has said, "The best prescription is knowledge." Your success in going gluten-free will ultimately get you back to good health. Don't cheat! Every single bit of gluten, even a crumb, is doing some damage in your small intestine and promoting inflammation. Remember that you are fortunate to have found out about your gluten sensitivity. Now you can heal yourself and your ailments. Help spread this information to others, so they too can heal themselves of their ailments and live happy, healthy, and lengthy lives!

4. Get the support you need.

Support is invaluable in this endeavor we call living gluten-free, especially in the first year. Don't underestimate your need for it. To stay healthy and gluten-free takes a partner, family member, or friend willing to embrace change, listen, and learn.

If you need broader support, find a local celiac support group. Both the *Celiac Sprue Association* and *The Gluten Intolerance Group* have local groups that provide support in many communities. Also, many *Whole Foods Markets* offer monthly gluten-free gatherings. There is also the *Gluten Intolerance Group* (GIG) at www.gluten.net, the Food Allergy & Anaphylaxis Network (FAAN) at www.FoodAllergy.org and www.AllergyMoms.com, which have lists of support groups nationwide. Many other support groups and organizations are popping up all the time. You are not alone!

- Find a local cooking school or instructor to help you learn how to make your favorite recipes. There are also weekend seminars to help you learn how to cook gluten-free foods. See *The Gluten & Allergen Free Expo* www.gfafexpo.com

- Find a blog you like and become a member of the online gluten-free community. You'll find a lot of support online for those on a gluten-free diet.
- Locate a few restaurants in your community that can provide you with safe gluten-free food. When you don't feel like cooking, it is great to know you can eat out safely.

Keep in mind that most support groups are still following the traditional gluten-free diet guidelines of only excluding wheat, barley, and rye. You can help educate them to the fact that all grains contain gluten, and that 92% of celiacs following the traditional gluten-free diet don't get better, unless they go grain-free!

Stay on the Eating for Vitality Gluten-Free, Grain-Free & Dairy/Casein-Free Lifestyle Path, and you'll feel great, look great and have more vitality!

NOTES
