

Growing up healthy with celiac disease

You may be feeling overwhelmed with your child's diagnosis of celiac disease. On the other hand, you may be relieved knowing that celiac disease can be treated with some changes to your child's diet.

This handout will help you and your family to start and manage a gluten-free diet and lifestyle.

Do not start a gluten-free diet until you know that your child has celiac disease. Having an intestinal biopsy is the only way to find out for sure.

What is a gluten-free diet?

To treat celiac disease you must avoid all foods that contain gluten.

Food that contains gluten will damage the lining of your child's small intestine. When this happens, your child's body cannot absorb the nutrients that he or she needs for good health. As a result, your child could develop poor nutrition that can cause other health concerns.

In order to stay healthy, your child will need to eat a gluten-free diet for the rest of his or her life. Even small amounts of gluten can be harmful. You cannot outgrow celiac disease.

There are many gluten-free food choices available. With a little planning, a gluten-free diet can be both healthy and enjoyable.

What is gluten?

Gluten is a protein found in grains such as wheat, rye, and barley and their by-products. See Table 1 for a list of grains to avoid.

Table 1

- Avoid - Grains that contain gluten	
Barley	Kamut
Barley malt/extract	Triticale
Bulgar	Rye
Durum Flour	Wheat
Farina	Wheat bran
Gluten Flour	Wheat germ
Graham Flour	Wheat based semolina
Spelt	Couscous

Are oats safe to eat?

You can eat oats only if they are free from gluten. This means that they have not been cross-contaminated with gluten. Cross-contamination is explained on page 8.

However, it is not easy to buy pure oats in Canada since most of the oats are cross-contaminated with wheat during milling and processing.

If you choose to include oats in your diet, you must make sure that the oats are free from gluten contamination. **The best way to be sure the oat product is safe, is to contact the food company.**

Hidden sources of gluten

Read all labels carefully each time you buy a product because ingredients can change at any time. Gluten may be present in products that list ingredients where the source is not given or identified. Avoid food products that list ingredients such as:

- modified starch
- hydrolyzed vegetable protein (HVP)
- hydrolyzed plant protein (HPP)

These ingredients could contain gluten and it is best to avoid them.

Check the ingredients in prescriptions and over-the-counter medications to make sure they are gluten-free such as:

- toothpaste
- mouthwash
- cough and cold medications
- nutrition supplements

Ask your pharmacist if you are not sure.

The Gluten-free diet by food groups

Grain products

Foods to include	Foods to question	Foods to avoid
<p>Breads, crackers, pasta and baked products made from gluten-free grains</p> <p>Hot cereals such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cornmeal • Cream of rice • Hominy grits • Cream of buckwheat • Amaranth flakes • Rice flakes • Quinoa flakes • Soy flakes and soy grits <p>Cold cereals (without malt flavouring) such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Puffed corn • Puffed rice • Puffed millet • Rice flakes • Soy cereals <p>Other:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corn tacos or tortillas • Plain rice cakes • Popcorn 	<p>Buckwheat:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Buckwheat flour • Buckwheat pasta (pure buckwheat is gluten-free but it sometimes get mixed with wheat flour) <p>Oats:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oats (some may be contaminated with gluten) <p>Cereals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rice and corn cereals and pablum (may contain barley malt extract or oat syrup) <p>Other:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rice cakes, corn cakes and rice crackers (multigrain often contains barley and/or oats. Some contain soy sauce which contains wheat.) 	<p>Breads, crackers, pasta and baked products made with grains that contain gluten – See Table 1</p> <p>Cereals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cereals made from grains in Table 1 including wheat, rye, triticale, barley and oats. • Cereals with added malt extract or malt flavouring <p>Other:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ice cream cones • Wafers • Waffles • Communion wafers • Wheat flour tacos and tortillas • Imported foods labeled “gluten-free”. These may still contain ingredients with gluten.

Fruits and vegetables

Foods to include	Foods to question	Foods to avoid
<p>Fresh, frozen and canned fruit and fruit juices</p> <p>Fresh, frozen, dried and canned vegetables.</p>	<p>Dried fruits (often dusted with flour to prevent sticking)</p> <p>Fruit pie filling</p> <p>Creamed canned vegetables and french-fries (often contain wheat)</p>	<p>Fruits or vegetables with creamy sauces (may contain wheat)</p> <p>Scalloped potatoes with wheat flour</p> <p>Battered vegetables including french fries</p>

Milk and alternatives

Foods to include	Foods to question	Foods to avoid
<p>Milk, cream, buttermilk</p> <p>Plain yogurt</p> <p>Cheeses, cream cheese, processed cheese, cottage cheese</p> <p>Most ice cream</p> <p>Some soy and rice beverages</p>	<p>Milk drinks and milk puddings (chocolate milk, flavoured drinks and puddings may contain wheat starch or barley malt)</p> <p>Flavoured yogurt and frozen yogurt (may be thickened with a gluten source or contain granola or cookie crumbs)</p> <p>Cheese spreads and sauces (may be thickened with wheat, flavourings and seasonings may contain wheat)</p> <p>Sour cream (low fat/ fat free may contain oat gum)</p> <p>Rice and soy drinks (may contain barley, barley malt extract or oats)</p>	<p>Malted milk</p> <p>Ice cream made from ingredients not allowed</p>

Meats and alternatives

Foods to include	Foods to question	Foods to avoid
<p>Meat, fish, shellfish, and poultry that is fresh, frozen, canned salted or smoked</p> <p>Eggs</p> <p>Lentils, chickpeas, peas, beans, nuts, seeds and tofu</p>	<p>Prepared or processed meats, luncheon meats, wieners, bologna, bacon, meat spreads, meat patties, sausages, imitation meat or fish products (may contain fillers or flavourings made from wheat)</p> <p>Egg substitutes, dried eggs</p> <p>Baked beans, soy nuts, dry roasted nuts, peanut and nut butters (may contain wheat flour)</p>	<p>Fish canned in vegetable broth containing HVP/HPP from unspecified sources</p> <p>Turkey basted or injected with HVP/HPP from unspecified sources</p>

Fats

Foods to include	Foods to question	Foods to avoid
<p>Butter, margarine, lard, vegetable oil, cream, shortening</p> <p>Homemade salad dressings with allowed ingredients</p>	<p>Some mayonnaise</p> <p>Salad dressings (seasonings may contain flour)</p>	<p>Packaged suet</p>

Other foods

Foods to include	Foods to question	Foods to avoid
<p>Soups:</p> <p>Homemade broth, gluten-free bouillon cubes</p> <p>Cream soups and stocks made from allowed ingredients</p>	<p>Canned soups, dried soup mixes (may contain noodles or barley, may be thickened with flour or contain HPP or HVP)</p> <p>Soup bases or bouillon cubes (may contain HPP or HVP from wheat)</p>	<p>Soups made from ingredients not allowed or use bouillon containing HPP or HVP from unspecified sources</p>

Other foods (continued)

Foods to include	Foods to question	Foods to avoid
<p>Beverages: Cider, cocoa powder, instant or ground coffee, soft drinks, tea</p> <p>Distilled alcoholic beverages</p>	<p>Instant tea, flavoured and herbal teas and coffee substitutes (may contain grain additives)</p> <p>Fruit-flavoured drinks, chocolate drinks and chocolate mixes (may contain wheat starch or barley malt)</p>	<p>Cereal and malted beverages</p> <p>Beer, ale and lager</p>
<p>Desserts: Ice cream, sherbet, egg custards, whipped toppings, gelatin desserts made with allowed ingredients</p>	<p>Milk puddings and pudding mixes (may contain a gluten source)</p>	<p>Desserts made with ingredients not allowed</p>
<p>Sweets: Corn syrup, honey, jam, jelly, marmalade, maple syrup, molasses, sugar (brown and white) sweeteners</p>	<p>Icing sugar, confectioner's sugar (may contain wheat starch)</p> <p>Spreads, candies, chocolate bars, chewing gum, marshmallows</p> <p>Lemon curd (may be thickened with flour)</p>	<p>Licorice, chocolate and candies made with ingredients not allowed</p>
<p>Condiments and Seasonings: Ketchup, gluten-free soy sauce, mustard, olives, plain pickles, pure black pepper, pure herbs and spices, relish, tomato paste and vinegar Monosodium Glutamate (MSG)</p>	<p>Seasonings mixes, imitation pepper (may contain wheat or HPP, HVP)</p>	<p>Regular soy sauce (made from wheat), mustard pickles (made with wheat flour) malt vinegar, worcesterchire sauce (contains malt vinegar)</p>
<p>Baking Ingredients: Baking soda, baking yeast, brewer's yeast, carob chips and powder, pure baking chocolate, chocolate chips, pure cocoa, coconut, cream of tartar, sauces and gravies made with allowed ingredients</p>	<p>Baking powder (may contain wheat starch)</p>	<p>Oat gum, sauces and gravies made from ingredients not allowed, hydrolyzed vegetable/plant protein (HVP/HPP) from unspecified sources</p>

Where do I find gluten-free products?

There are a number of gluten-free products available. Many of the big grocery store chains carry a wide-selection of gluten-free products and making a trip to a larger store may be well worth it.

Many of the food companies or manufacturers who produce gluten-free products often sell their products on site to the public.

Some manufacturers also provide mail order services. Buying products in bulk and freezing for later use will help save you money.

Other tips to help you find out if a food contains gluten:

- The Canadian Celiac Association's "**Pocket Dictionary**" will give you information if a food is gluten-free or not. Copies of this book can be ordered from their website at www.celiac.ca
- Do not assume that your favourite foods will remain gluten-free. Read the label every time you use a product as food products change all of the time. Manufacturer ingredient lists available online are not always accurate as they can become outdated.

What is cross-contamination?

Cross-contamination happens when bits such as crumbs, from foods that contain gluten by accident, contaminate gluten-free foods.

Cross-contamination can happen in restaurants, bulk food bins, and in food manufacturing plants where there are both gluten-containing and gluten-free products.

To avoid cross-contamination:

- Have a separate toaster, peanut butter, margarine and jam containers for the child with celiac disease.
 - Clean all meal preparation surfaces, cutting boards, utensils and pots and pans to make them free from gluten before you prepare a gluten-free meal.
 - For younger children, make a gluten-free cupboard that your child can choose from anytime. Everything in the cupboard will be gluten-free, so they will not have to worry about contamination. Keep their toaster and cutting board in the gluten-free cupboard. This way other family members are not tempted to use them.
 - Keep one drawer in the fridge for your child's peanut butter, jam, cheese spreads and margarine.
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Can we dine out?

If your family wants to go to a restaurant, try to pick one that offers gluten-free choices. It is no fun for your child to watch everyone else eat pizza, while he or she eats a sandwich from home.

Tips for dining out:

- Most restaurants will not understand if you ask for “gluten-free foods”. Instead, tell your server that you are allergic to anything with flour or barley in it. You can also show the chef a “Gluten-free Diet Information Card”. You can order these from the Canadian Celiac Association.
- Ask your server to have foods cooked or baked in separate pans or dishes. This will reduce the risk of cross-contamination.
- Before eating french fries, ask if they are coated with a batter or are to be fried in the same oil as other battered foods.
- Ask for freshly ground pepper. Many pepper packages contain wheat germ.
- Avoid salad bars, buffets and fondues since other people eating at these places can contaminate the gluten-free foods.

Printed restaurant guides can also become outdated so always look for the most recent restaurant guide when making choices while dining out.

Baking and cooking

When cooking or baking at home, keep your foods gluten-free. Even a crumb from bread that contains gluten can affect your intestine. **Keep baking and cooking surfaces clean and gluten-free.** Have separate baking pans, utensils and storage containers for gluten-free foods.

Bake gluten-free bread, cakes and cookies with your child. Try new recipes together and teach him or her how to read labels.

Other cooking and baking tips:

- Bake or cook gluten-free foods in bulk and freeze. Precook rice and store in freezer for use at a later meal.
- Consider buying a bread machine. Homemade gluten-free breads are much fresher and less expensive than ready-made breads. Gluten-free breads can become dry and crumbly so freeze right away. Place waxed paper between the slices so you can remove one at a time.
- Toasting bread improves the flavour and keeps it from crumbling. Make a sandwich on lightly toasted bread and refrigerate it for lunch the next day. Try open-face sandwiches and put them under a broiler.

How can I help my child follow a gluten-free diet?

It is important to teach your child about their celiac disease. Help them follow the gluten-free diet all of the time in order to stay healthy:

- place coloured stickers on the gluten-free foods in your cupboard or fridge so your child knows without label reading if a food is safe to eat
- focus on making the diet more exciting, rather than on the foods your child cannot have

Tell anyone who may offer your child food that your child has celiac disease. A person who does not have celiac disease will have trouble identifying suitable foods for your child. Give this person a list of foods your child can eat or prepare food for your child to take with him or her.

Other tips:

- Be prepared for birthdays or holidays by baking gluten-free cupcakes in advance and freezing them. You can take out a cupcake and frost it when one is needed.
 - Arrange a meeting with your child's teacher(s) to give them information about celiac disease at the beginning of the school year. The Canadian Celiac Association prints a brochure for teachers. Make sure that all of your child's teachers understand that your child **cannot share food with other classmates** at school.
 - Prepare gluten-free snacks or treats that can be kept at the school. That way if there is an unexpected party or event, your child will have a special treat and not feel "left out". Whenever possible ask the teacher to notify you of upcoming parties or events at school.
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- If your child attends a school with a cafeteria, ask the school for a copy of the cafeteria menu to highlight days that a gluten-free entrée is served. Review cross-contamination with your child and talk about label reading so that he or she can buy safe foods alone.

Talk about these situations with your child and respect his or her wishes. Some children may be more comfortable than others in telling people about their celiac disease.

Other resources

- Stay informed through The Canadian Celiac Association by becoming a member and/or attending local chapter events. There are local chapters in Hamilton, St. Catharines and Kitchener/Waterloo. Their website is: www.celiac.ca
- There are many cookbooks available offering gluten-free recipes. The Canadian Celiac Association has published several cookbooks and recipes can also be found online.
- You may find this guide helpful:
 - “Kids with Celiac Disease, A Family Guide to Raising Happy, Healthy Gluten-free Children” (2001) by Danna Korn.

