
Avoiding Gluten

How to happily be gluten-free

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Why Do Some People Need to Avoid Gluten?

Gluten is a water-insoluble protein fraction present in some cereal grains. One of gluten's component proteins, *gliadin*, is often the cause of an individual's allergy, intolerance, or sensitivity reactions to grains in this gluten-containing family which includes: **wheat (including durum & semolina), spelt, rye, triticale, oats, barley and kamut.**

People may need to avoid the wheat/gluten-containing family of grains because they have Celiac disease, a non-celiac sensitivity to gluten/gliadin, OR because of an allergy (IgE-mediated) response to it.

Celiac Disease

Those with Celiac disease have an intolerance to gluten. Ingestion of even very small amounts of any gluten-containing food causes damage to the small intestines. The individuals will have to avoid even trace amounts of gluten that can be found on contaminated toasters, inside contaminated food-processing facilities, or sources within personal care products like shampoo and chapstick. This hand-out should not be considered a complete Celiac resource. See: <https://nationalceliac.org/celiac-disease-resources/>

Non-Celiac Gluten Sensitivity

This relatively new condition is now a medically-recognized, diagnosable problem where an individual has an objective inflammatory response to gluten, but it is distinct from Celiac disease in terms of the damage it does to the small intestines. These individuals can suffer symptoms that range from mild to severe, and the sensitivity can be permanent or temporary. They may be sensitive to even small amounts of gluten, but usually do not have to avoid gluten to the extreme lengths that one with Celiac disease must.

Wheat Intolerance

Individuals may have an intolerance to wheat which is not their immune system reacting, but rather a digestive issue. This may be caused by SIBO (small intestine bacterial overgrowth) or other enzyme-related issue. If the cause is SIBO and the SIBO is effectively cured, their intolerance will likely also resolve.

Wheat Allergy

A wheat allergy (note this is related to wheat rather than the gluten protein specifically) often causes dermatitis, asthma, digestive issue or other “topical” response and is a result of a different part of the immune system reacting.

Allowed Foods (Foods you CAN eat)

Grains

- Rice, corn, soy, arrowroot, potato, and tapioca-containing products.
- Breads may contain flour prepared from white or brown rice, potato, tapioca, arrowroot, pea, corn, or bean.
- Cereals include those from corn meal, millet, buckwheat, hominy, puffed rice, crisp rice, and cream of rice.
- Malt or malt flavoring derived specifically from corn.
- Pasta from quinoa, rice, corn, and/or beans.
- Quinoa, amaranth, millet (other grains which can be prepared like rice).
- Oats do not contain gluten, but are commonly contaminated with gluten. It is possible to purchase gluten-free oats.

Vegetables

- Fresh, frozen, dried, or canned products whose labels indicate they are free of thickening agents (thickening agents often contain wheat flour). Fresh is preferable to frozen which is preferable to canned.

Fruits

- Fresh, frozen, dried, or canned fruits. Fresh is preferable to frozen which is preferable to canned.

Meats

- Fresh, frozen, and canned meats. Fresh is preferable to frozen which is preferable to canned.

Salad Dressings

- Caution here, as not all salad dressings are gluten-free.
- Apple, wine and rice vinegars are generally acceptable.
- Watch for soy sauce as a flavoring in salad dressings, as this contains wheat and is a common additive.

Condiments & Additives

- Soy sauce that does not contain wheat or barley (look for “gluten free tamari”)
- Hydrolyzed or textured soy and corn vegetable protein
- Corn malt
- Starch (raw or modified from arrowroot, corn or maize, potato, and tapioca). Vegetable gum from carob, locust bean, cellulose gum, guar gum, gum arabic, gum acacia, gum tragacanth, xanthan gum

Alcohols that are Usually OK

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- Wine
 - Rum
 - Tequila
 - Some vodkas
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FOODS TO AVOID (Foods you CANNOT eat)

Grains

- Anything made with or containing **wheat, barley, rye, spelt, kamut, or triticale**. **Other gluten-containing grain names include: durum, semolina, einkorn, bulgar**
- Breads or cereals containing wheat starch contain small amounts of gluten; as do cereals and crackers containing wheat and oat bran, graham, wheat germ, and bulgar.
- Oats are commonly contaminated with gluten (grown/processed in the same plants). It is possible to purchase gluten free oats. Some celiacs will still not be able to tolerate oats, but most with sensitivity to gluten will do ok with these.
- Cereals or breads containing malt flavoring of unspecified origin
- Regular spaghetti, macaroni, and noodles
- Most packaged rice mixes such as Rice-a-roni

Vegetables

- Products containing thickening agents, which may utilize food starches and stabilizers with gluten (thickening agents often contain wheat flour)
- Fresh, frozen, dried, or canned fruits. Fresh is preferable to frozen which is preferable to canned.

Fruits

- As with vegetables, avoid prepared fruits containing thickening agents found in fruit pie fillings.
- Some raisins are coated with gluten to keep them from sticking together.

Meats

- Prepared meats including luncheon meats, sausages, and canned meats containing grain and starch fillers with gluten.
- Self-basting turkey and other fowl often contain fillers with gluten

Dairy Products

- Cheese foods including spreads, soft cheeses, and dips often contain gluten
- Some ice creams may contain gluten ice cream stabilizers

Salad Dressings

- Salad dressings containing grain vinegars including distilled, white vinegar, or if the type of vinegar is not stated.
- Salad dressings containing soy sauce
- Some contain emulsifiers and stabilizers with gluten

Condiments & Additives

- Grain-derived drinks including Postum and Ovaltine
- Many soy sauces contain gluten.

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- Products with grain vinegar including catsup and mustard.
 - Soups or broths containing bouillon
 - Unspecified texturized or hydrolyzed vegetable protein, vegetable gum from oats and any other product containing an unspecified flour or cereal additive.
 - Barley malt.
 - Wheat starch.
 - Caramel candy may contain gluten. Licorice candy usually contains gluten.
 - Read labels on margarine to check for flour additives.
 - Flavorings made with alcohol.
 - Some spray coatings for "non-stick" uses have unspecified ingredients added
 - Malt vinegars
 - Alcoholic beverages that have had gluten-containing additives added after the distillation process
 - *Medications & Supplements* should all be checked for gluten/wheat

Alcohol to Avoid

- Whiskey
 - Bourbon
 - Gin
 - Rye alcohol
 - Beer (since barley malt is used)
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Cooking & Baking Gluten-Free

The following list is a non-exhaustive list of gluten-free alternative flours that work well as gluten-free substitutes in common foods. You will be able to find gluten-free pastas in almost any local grocery store or online that contain these alternatives as well:

- Rice
- Sorghum
- Amaranth
- Tapioca
- buckwheat (or kasha)
- Teff
- Chickpea/garbanzo beans
- Gluten-free Oat
- Lentils
- Organic corn
- Millet
- To help with texture and binding, these additives are useful for gluten-free baking:
- Peas
- Xanthan gum
- Quinoa
- Guar gum
- Coconut
- Methylcellulose