

Gluten-Free

So, you've been told to stop eating gluten. Whether you have celiac disease or gluten sensitivity, cutting gluten out of your diet can be daunting. Here's a guide that we hope will make your transition a bit easier to navigate.

What is gluten? Gluten is a protein that is found in wheat, barley, and rye. It can be found in lots of foods like bread, dough, baked goods, snack foods, cereal, pasta, and more. It's important to not eat food with gluten-containing ingredients. Let's start with some ingredients to avoid:

- Wheat
- Wheat starch
- Wheat berries
- Dextrin
- Maltodextrin
- Barley
- Rye
- Malt
- Malt vinegar
- Malted barley
- Malt flavor
- Malt extract
- Brewer's yeast
- Couscous
- Durum
- Farro
- Matzo flour
- Orzo
- Panko
- Seitan
- Semolina
- Spelt

This list is not all-inclusive and there are gluten-containing ingredients that are not listed here.

It may sound like all of your options for grains, flours, and starches are gone, but there are still plenty to choose from. Here are some gluten-free alternatives:

- Arrowroot
- Buckwheat (It's gluten-free!)
- Cassava
- Chia
- Corn
- Flax
- Millet
- Oats (If certified Gluten-Free)
- Quinoa
- Rice
- Sorghum
- Soy
- Tapioca
- Yucca

All of these are naturally free of gluten. Some of them, however, are processed on the same equipment as wheat, barley, or rye. This occurs often with oats. When buying oats, or any other grain or starch, always make sure they are certified gluten-free. Confirming the gluten-free status of these ingredients is necessary to prevent exposure to gluten due to cross-contamination.

What is cross-contamination? Cross-contamination or "cross-contact" is when a gluten-free food comes into contact with wheat, barley, or rye. This usually occurs when foods containing gluten are processed on the same equipment as gluten-free foods. It can also occur during the growth or preparation of these foods, in restaurants, and even at home! To ensure that a food is gluten-free, it cannot come into contact with any surface or object that has been in contact with gluten. Here are some household items that have most likely come into contact with gluten:

- Toaster
- Cutting board
- Sponge
- Condiments
- Dish towels
- Grill/Griddle
- Utensils

It is usually recommended that gluten-free people have their own dedicated gluten-free household items. Gluten-free food should also be stored separately from foods containing gluten. When cooking gluten-free, whether it be at home or a restaurant, cross-contamination can be a big threat. Most restaurants now have a much better handle on accommodating allergies and intolerances than they did a few years ago. When eating out, always inform your server about your gluten-free status. You should also tell your server that your food needs to be prepared separately from gluten-containing food. That means no shared surfaces, utensils, frying oil, water, gloves, etc. This also applies to home cooking. Avoiding cross-contamination seems tedious, but it can be very necessary, especially for those with Celiac disease.

There might be times that you assume certain foods are gluten-free and eat them without checking the label. If those foods contain gluten, it could be a big problem. There are a lot of foods that one might assume are gluten-free, but they actually are not. Let's go over some things that can have sneaky gluten in them:

- Soy sauce – Look for gluten-free soy sauce, tamari, or coconut aminos.
- Candy – A lot of chewy candies contain wheat, like Twizzlers or Haribo gummies.
- Oats – Cross contamination!!!

- Cereal – Rice Krispies seem like they would be gluten-free, but they are not.
- Seasoning – Lots of seasoning packets have wheat in them.
- Soup – Even soup without noodles can contain gluten.
- Hot dogs – Always make sure to be careful with processed meats.
- Anything labeled "wheat-free" – Could still contain barley or rye.
- French fries – Potatoes are gluten-free, but shared frying oil isn't.
- Medication/Vitamins – Make sure to confirm ingredients with the pharmacist.
- Sauces – Sauces of all varieties can contain sneaky gluten.

There are definitely more items with sneaky gluten in them, but these are some of the more common ones. To avoid accidentally ingesting gluten, **ALWAYS CHECK THE INGREDIENTS!!!** Check them twice, check them three times. Always check the ingredient list for the words “**may contain**”. Avoid products that say “may contain traces of wheat”. This goes for barley and rye as well. There can be trace amounts of gluten, even if it's not in the main ingredient list.

Let's go over some of the gluten-free brands and products that patients have recommended:

- Udi's – Lots of delicious options, including bread, usually found in the freezer.
- Glutino – Snacks galore!
- Canyon Bakehouse – A good bread, found on the shelf and in the freezer section.
- Schär – Many options, including bread and snacks.
- Mikey's – Found in the freezer. Tortillas, pizza pockets, and more!
- Ian's – Breadcrumbs, frozen snack foods, meatballs.

Gluten-free product recommendations from patients:

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| • Jovial gluten-free pasta | • Snyder's of Hanover GF pretzels |
| • Le Veneziane pasta | • Late July tortilla chips |
| • Annie's gluten-free macaroni and cheese | • Van's gluten-free waffles |
| • Tate's Bake Shop gluten-free cookies | • Popcorners chips |
| • Udi's Blueberry Muffins | • Bob's Red Mill 1 to 1 GF baking flour |
| • Freschetta gluten-free pizza | • Canyon Bakehouse bread |
| • California Pizza Kitchen gluten-free pizza | • Mary's Gone Crackers |

There are many more amazing products, so experiment and find what you like!

Pinterest is a great resource for finding gluten-free recipes.

Medications and vitamins can contain gluten so always make sure to confirm the gluten-free status with the pharmacist or the manufacturer. Here is a good resource:

<http://glutenfreedrugs.com/newlist.htm>

Remember, **ALWAYS CHECK THE INGREDIENTS!!!!**

Look out for these symbols on packaging:



Helpful links:

<https://celiac.org/>

<https://glutenfreemall.com/>

<https://www.beyondceliac.org/>

<https://nimapartners.com/> - A gluten detector sensor

https://blog.feedspot.com/gluten_free_blogs/

<https://www.fda.gov/food/food-labeling-nutrition/food-allergies>

<http://glutenfreedrugs.com/newlist.htm>

The Chronic Fatigue (ME/CFS) Clinic at Johns Hopkins

Peter Rowe, MD

Alba Azola, MD

Samantha Lemmon, CRNP

Renee Swope, RN

Meghan Swope, CCMA

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