

Smart thinking

After diagnosis is confirmed by a gastroenterologist, you should be referred to a dietitian who will give you detailed and practical advice on how to set about following a gluten-free diet for the first time.

A gluten-free diet does involve adopting a **new attitude to food**. You will have to plan your meals and think carefully before you eat anything away from home. Here are just a few suggestions and tips to help you get started.

Planning Ahead When eating away from home always check in advance the availability of gluten-free food, or take along a suitable gluten-free meal or snack.

Shopping Always remember to take an up to date copy of *The Gluten-Free Food & Drink Directory* with you when you go food shopping. If you are unsure always check the label carefully for guidance.

Eating Out More and more restaurant chains are considering the needs of people on special diets and now provide or label gluten-free dishes. If unsure, notify the restaurant in advance of your special requirements, and always confirm again when ordering your meal.

Holidays If choosing a full-board holiday check to see if the hotel provides gluten-free meals. Many airlines and other transport operators now offer gluten-free meals which must be requested at the time of booking.

Enjoying a varied gluten-free diet

A gluten-free diet can be both varied and interesting. There are plenty of recipe ideas from the websites and publications of the gluten-free manufacturers, as well as *Coeliac UK*, through its website, on-line magazine eXG, and regular publication *Crossed Grain*. So why not experiment with gluten-free cooking and discover your own favourite gluten-free dishes and recipes.

Useful information



Coeliac UK is the leading charity working for people with coeliac disease and dermatitis herpetiformis

The charity provides a free dietetic and food helpline and support for members via its 90+ local voluntary groups. For further information on the charity and its resources visit www.coeliac.org.uk or call the helpline on 0870 444 8804


How to contact us



Juvella is the leading provider of gluten-free products on prescription. This leaflet is one in a series produced by the Juvella Nutrition Centre, an information and advice service on coeliac disease and gluten-free diets.

For free copies of these leaflets and information on Juvella Gluten-Free Products and Support Services please contact us via:

Our Advice Line: The Juvella Nutrition Centre Advice Line is open Monday to Friday from 9 am to 5 pm

 **Freephone 0800 783 1992**

Our Website: Visit our website for full product information and recipe ideas
www.juvella.co.uk

E mail us at: info@juvella.co.uk

Or write to us at: Juvella, 19 De-Havilland Drive, Liverpool L24 8RN

This leaflet has been compiled with the help and advice of Juvella's panel of medical advisors. Whilst every care has been taken to check that the dietary advice published represents current opinions, Juvella strongly recommends that anyone needing to follow a specialist diets seeks medical advice first.



The dietary information in this leaflet has been checked by The British Dietetic Association

Want to know more about a **gluten-free** diet?



This information has been compiled by dietitians to help answer some of the questions you may have about what a gluten-free diet involves¹.

Who needs a gluten-free diet?

A **gluten-free diet** is the recognised treatment for coeliac disease² - a lifelong intolerance to gluten, which affects the lining of the bowel - and dermatitis herpetiformis - a serious skin condition. A gluten-free diet is different to a **wheat-free diet**.

What is a gluten-free diet?

A gluten-free diet requires the exclusion of all sources of gluten in the diet. Gluten is the protein found in wheat, rye, barley and possibly in oats.

It is possible to follow a gluten-free diet by simply avoiding all foods containing gluten (Please check out the list of naturally gluten-free foods mentioned later). Products labelled just 'wheat-free' could still contain gluten from rye and barley.

There are a number of specially manufactured gluten-free products available to make a gluten-free diet more varied, less restrictive and easier to comply with. Many of these products contain **Codex Wheat Starch**³. This is a special wheat starch that has had the gluten removed to a very low level and is known as gluten-free wheat starch. It is safe for most coeliacs and helps compliance to the diet as it improves the taste and texture of gluten-free food, making it taste more like gluten-containing food.

What is the difference between a gluten-free diet and a gluten-free/wheat-free diet?

Most people with coeliac disease are able to follow a gluten-free diet containing Codex Wheat Starch, but there are a small group of coeliacs who are **highly sensitive** to even tiny amounts of gluten and their diet needs to be wheat-free as well as gluten-free. Always check with your dietitian first to see if you require a gluten-free, wheat-free diet, as this will affect the choice of foods available to you.

(1) A gluten-free diet is a medical diet and should only be followed with medical supervision. If you are considering following a gluten-free diet for any other medical conditions, please consult your doctor first.

(2) For further information on the coeliac condition, The Juvela Nutrition Centre produce an information leaflet *Want to Know More About Coeliac Disease?* Please refer to the *How to contact us* section at the back of this leaflet.

(3) Codex Alimentarius is an internationally recognised standard for gluten-free foods. For more information www.codexalimentarius.net

What foods are naturally gluten-free?

The good news is that there are many foods that are naturally gluten free including potatoes, meat, poultry, fish and nuts, as well as fruit and vegetables. Flours, pastas, crackers and breakfast cereals made from rice or corn provide natural alternatives to specially manufactured versions. Dairy foods and fats such as milk, eggs, plain yoghurt, cheese, cooking oil, margarine and butter are also gluten free. For naturally gluten free drinks and beverages choose wine, spirits, cider, tea, coffee and fruit juices.

What foods should be avoided?

All foods made from wheat, barley, rye and their flours must be avoided. That means cutting out many of the everyday staple foods most of us take for granted, such as bread, cakes, biscuits and pasta. Most breakfast cereals are made from these grains and must be excluded too.

Many manufactured and processed foods contain gluten. The main examples here are fish fingers, chicken nuggets and all breaded and battered fish and meat. Pastry, scotch eggs and yogurt with muesli should also be avoided.

Some drinks and beverages contain gluten including malted milk drinks and barley water. Beer, lager and stout are made from barley and must also be eliminated from your diet.

What foods should be checked carefully?

Many manufactured and processed foods contain hidden gluten. Suspect ingredients to watch out for include **rusk**, **thickener** and **modified starch**. **Malt and malt extract** sourced from barley and wheat is not gluten-free, but there are many other sources of malt that are safe for coeliacs. New regulations require that the source of these ingredients must be stated on the label, so it is much easier to see which varieties contain gluten as a mixer or filler ingredient, and which are gluten-free.

The golden rule is to check the food label carefully, particularly when choosing sausages and burgers, ready meals, soups, sauces, crisps and snacks. Some drinks to watch out for include, carbonated drinks and milkshakes⁴.

(4) Coeliac UK's Food & Drink Directory provides a more comprehensive list of the foods you will need to check before eating. Please refer to the useful information section of this leaflet for details on how to contact Coeliac UK.

One important area is **medication**, including vitamins, minerals and supplements. Always check with the pharmacist that the medicine you have been prescribed is gluten-free.

How can I check what foods are safe to eat?

It is important to remember to check that the information you refer to is up to date, as the ingredients for some manufactured foods change from time to time. *The Gluten-Free Food & Drink Directory* is an annual food list available from Coeliac UK which is updated monthly on their website. All supermarkets are now legally required to label all foods that contain gluten and wheat. To help coeliacs many now clearly label which of their products are "gluten-free".

What about oats?

Although recent studies suggest that 'pure' oats may be tolerated by some people with coeliac disease, it is extremely difficult to source oats that are not contaminated. Do not include oats in your diet unless you have discussed this with your gastroenterologist or dietitian. Oats are still not recommended for children with coeliac disease.

What special gluten-free foods are available?

In order to make the gluten-free diet more adaptable and easier to comply with, a number of specially manufactured gluten-free products have been developed. These include bread, biscuits, flour mixes, breakfast cereals, pizza bases and pasta.

How do I obtain gluten-free foods?

Many staple gluten-free products are available on prescription⁵ for people medically diagnosed with coeliac disease. If you pay for prescriptions you might consider buying a prescription season ticket. Ask your pharmacist for details. Gluten-free food items are also now readily available from supermarkets, health foods shops, and via the internet and mail order.

(5) As per the Advisory Committee for Borderline Substances for Gluten Sensitive Enteropathy, Coeliac Disease and Dermatitis Herpetiformis