

YOUR GLUTEN FREE LIFE

coeliac uk
live well **gluten free**





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YOUR GLUTEN FREE LIFE

Joining Coeliac UK gives you access to nearly 50 years of trustworthy, proven expertise on every aspect of living gluten free and we're here to help every step of the way.

Changing to a gluten free diet can feel daunting at first but the following resources will help you get your life back on track and on the way to a happier and healthier you:

- your own Food and Drink Directory
- Gluten free on the Move smartphone app
- Gluten free food checker smartphone app
- email newsletters
- Helpline support
- Venue guide on our website
- Home of gluten free recipes on our website
- online publications and leaflets
- monthly Food and Drink Directory updates
- food alerts
- Crossed Grain magazine
- Local Groups
- support networks
- personalised Scrapbook on our website
- a chance to get involved in campaigning and research.





WHAT IS COELIAC DISEASE?

Coeliac (pronounced 'see-liac') **disease** is a serious illness where the body's immune system attacks its own tissues when gluten is eaten. Some people with coeliac disease may also be sensitive to oats.

Gluten causes damage to the lining of the gut, meaning that you cannot properly absorb nutrients from food. Symptoms may also affect other parts of the body, but coeliac disease is not an allergy or food intolerance.

What is gluten?

Gluten is a protein found in wheat, barley and rye.

How many people have it?

Around 1 in 100 people has coeliac disease, although many people are not yet diagnosed with the condition. Coeliac disease does run in families but not in a predictable way. There is a 1 in 10 chance that close relatives of people with coeliac disease will have the condition but this means that there is a 90% chance that a family member will not be affected.

What are the symptoms?

Everyone is different, but if you have coeliac disease you can

suffer any of these symptoms when you eat gluten:

- stomach pain, frequent bouts of diarrhoea or loose stools
- nausea, feeling sick and vomiting
- lots of gas and bloating
- severe mouth ulcers
- feeling tired all the time.

Diagnosis

Coeliac disease can be diagnosed at any age; either in childhood after gluten containing foods have been introduced into the diet, or later in life. Like many autoimmune diseases, coeliac disease is more common in women than men.

What is dermatitis herpetiformis?

Dermatitis herpetiformis (DH) is the skin manifestation of coeliac disease and affects around 1 in 3,300 people. It can appear at any age but is not often seen in children and is most common in people in their fifties or sixties. The treatment for DH is a gluten free diet, however some people also need a medication, commonly Dapsone, to help treat the condition. For more information, see our list of resources on page 31.

What does coeliac disease do?

When people with coeliac disease eat gluten, the lining of the gut where

food and nutrients are absorbed becomes damaged. Tiny, finger like projections called villi which line the gut become inflamed and then flattened, leaving less surface area to absorb nutrients from food. People with undiagnosed and untreated coeliac disease can have a wide range of symptoms and nutritional deficiencies as a result of the damage to the lining of the gut.

How to get diagnosed

The first step in diagnosis of coeliac disease is a simple blood test. This looks for the antibodies produced in response to eating gluten. It is essential that you keep eating gluten before and throughout the testing process, otherwise your body won't produce antibodies and you could get a false negative result. Gluten must be eaten in more than one meal every day for six weeks before testing.

If the blood test is positive you will be referred for a gut biopsy. This means a small camera, called an endoscope, is passed through your mouth and stomach then into the gut. Small samples of the gut are collected and then examined for signs of coeliac disease. For some children, a biopsy may not be needed. You can find out more information at:

www.coeliac.org.uk/
[coeliacdiseaseinchildren](http://www.coeliac.org.uk/coeliacdiseaseinchildren).

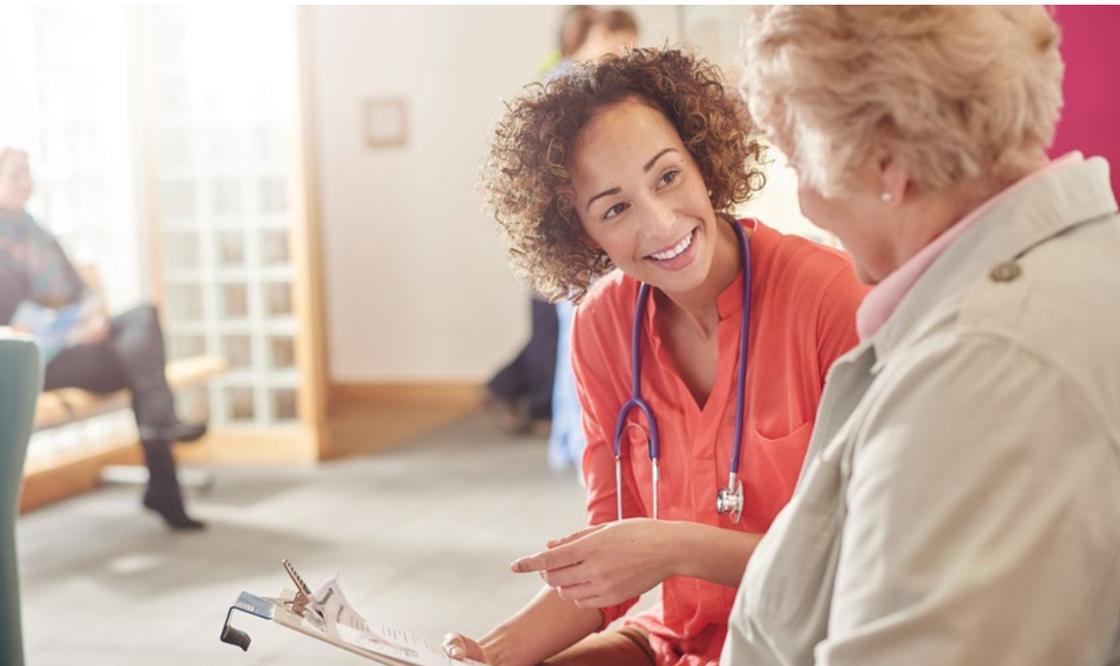
WHAT TO DO AFTER DIAGNOSIS

After a confirmed coeliac disease diagnosis, it is important to start a gluten free diet. Once gluten has been removed from the diet, the gut will begin to heal and you will usually start to feel better within a few weeks. However, it can take between six months and up to five years (and in some cases longer) for the gut damage caused by eating gluten to fully heal.

After diagnosis, it is important to see a dietitian who can provide information about the gluten free diet and advise you on changes that need to be made. You may be asked to fill in a food diary so the dietitian has a good idea of what you normally eat.

They may also discuss gluten free foods available on prescription.

Your GP or consultant can arrange a referral to a dietitian for you. Some people with coeliac disease can be deficient in important nutrients so your dietitian will also discuss ways to achieve a balanced diet. Sometimes this involves taking dietary supplements. After following a gluten free diet for some time, absorption of nutrients from food will improve so supplements may not be necessary in the long term. For advice on this speak to your GP or dietitian.





THE GLUTEN FREE DIET

Living gluten free means changing the way you shop, cook and eat out. It also means managing your health better. We will guide you through the changes you need to make and our resources listed at the front of this booklet will help you live gluten free day to day.

What is gluten?

Gluten is a protein in the grains wheat, barley and rye. Most people with coeliac disease are able to have gluten free oats, however some people may be sensitive to avenin, the protein in oats – see page 30 for more information.

Gluten is commonly found in foods such as bread, biscuits, pasta and cakes but it is also in foods that you may not expect, such as some sauces, ready meals and sausages. Our Gluten free Checklist, available in hardcopy or on our Gluten free on the

move app, is a guide to the types of foods that can be eaten, those that can't and those that need to be checked.

So, what can I eat?

There are many naturally gluten free foods such as meat, poultry, fish, cheese, milk, fruit, potatoes, vegetables, pulses, rice and corn. Gluten free 'substitute' foods including bread and pasta are also available:

- on prescription in most parts of the UK through your GP or pharmacist. Check online at www.coeliac.org.uk/prescriptions-policies
- in the free from range in supermarkets
- from health food shops
- by mail order via the internet.

SHOPPING

Using your Food and Drink Directory

Our unique Food and Drink Directory lists over 20,000 foods that can be eaten on a gluten free diet.

Our electronic Food and Drink Directory on our website and smartphone apps, Gluten free on the move and Gluten free food checker, provide information updated in real time, giving you access to the most up to date information to help you shop. What's more, our apps have handy barcode scanners so you can simply scan the item to see if it's suitable for a gluten free diet or listed in our Directory.

We also have an A5 printed version of the Directory that is published every January and is sent to all members (unless you have previously opted out of receiving one).

You will need to make sure you keep your printed Directory up to date as products can change and new ones are added each month. Monthly updates are available on our website at www.coeliac.org.uk/fddupdates and in our monthly email newsletter.



Reading labels

If you see any of the following on a food label you know that the food can be included in a gluten free diet:

- gluten free
- suitable for coeliacs
- our Crossed Grain symbol.

Gluten free

Only foods that contain 20 parts per million (ppm) or less of gluten can be labelled gluten free. Foods labelled with this term can be eaten by everyone with coeliac disease.

Suitable for coeliacs

This term can only be used when a food is labelled gluten free and contains 20 ppm or less of gluten.

Crossed Grain symbol

The Crossed Grain symbol can only be used on food that is gluten free. The symbol is a quick and easy way to help you identify foods and drinks that are suitable and is used on a wide variety of gluten free brands.

The Food and Drink Directory displays the Crossed Grain symbol next to all products that are licensed to display it. New companies are licensed regularly, so don't forget to check the monthly Food and Drink Directory updates for any additions for your paper copy. The Food and Drink Directory on our website and the Gluten free on the move app are updated in real time.



The Crossed Grain symbol is licensed by Coeliac UK and can only be used on food that is gluten free. It's a quick and easy reference for you to find food and drink that is suitable for you.

CHECKING INGREDIENTS

Look out for the words wheat, barley, rye or oats in the ingredients list. If they have been used as an ingredient, they must be listed.

Using the ingredients list

Cereals containing gluten are allergens and so must, by law, always be listed in the ingredients list of a prepackaged product. If there is no mention of any grains that contain gluten, such as wheat, barley, rye or oats in the ingredients list, then this means that gluten has not been used in the recipe.

All ingredients used in a food have to be listed in the ingredients list by law regardless of the amount used. Ingredients are listed in order of weight starting with the biggest ingredient first. Legislation that applies to manufactured foods means there is a minimum font size and allergens have to be emphasised in the ingredients list, for example, by using bold lettering.

When checking lists of ingredients it's important to know which ingredients are gluten free and which contain gluten. A comprehensive ingredients

checklist can be found in your Food and Drink Directory or your Gluten free Checklist.

May contain statements

You may see the following statements on some foods:

- may contain traces of gluten
- made on a line handling wheat
- made in a factory also handling wheat.

Manufacturers use these statements to highlight that there is a risk of cross contamination with gluten in the making or packaging of a food.

Use of the may contain statement is voluntary and varies. If you see these statements on products that you want to eat then contact Coeliac UK or the manufacturer to find out more.





PRESCRIPTIONS

Gluten free food is available on prescription for those medically diagnosed with coeliac disease in Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland and some parts of England. You might have seen gluten free prescribing being talked about in the media as it is a hot topic at the moment as the NHS is looking to cut budgets. Coeliac UK has been campaigning for gluten free prescriptions to continue as a support for people with coeliac disease for those who need it most, but we are increasingly seeing Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) in England restricting or removing the service.

To see whether your area is prescribing, see our map at www.coeliac.org.uk/prescriptions. Once you have been diagnosed with coeliac disease you may be able to get gluten free staple foods such as

bread, flour and flour mixes on prescription.

In most parts of the UK, staple gluten free foods are available to help people with coeliac disease follow a strict gluten free diet. Where prescriptions are provided, the amounts prescribed are based on the assumption that people with coeliac disease will be eating some naturally gluten free cereal foods, such as rice, and buying substitute gluten free products from the supermarket.

How do I access prescriptions?

If you live in England, Northern Ireland or Wales, accessing gluten free food on prescription and making changes to your prescription works in the same way as prescriptions for medications. The process usually involves you asking your GP for the prescription and then taking it to your pharmacist.

Check online at www.coeliac.org.uk/prescription-policies to see what is available in your area.

If you live in Scotland you will be able to obtain gluten free products directly from your local pharmacist using the Gluten Free Food Service, instead of having to repeatedly go through your GP. You will need to complete a registration form and return it to a community pharmacy of your choice. The pharmacist will be able to register you to use the service and provide more information. Find out more at www.coeliac.org.uk/pharmacyledsupplyschemes.

How much gluten free food can I access on prescription?

The tables on the opposite page represent the National Prescribing Guidelines; however, CCGs may have local gluten free prescribing policies. For more information please see www.coeliac.org.uk/prescription-policies. The first table gives you a guide to the recommended amount of gluten free foods you may get on prescription. This is calculated on a 'unit' basis.

The second table shows some common foods and what makes up a unit. Check your Food and Drink Directory or the Coeliac UK website for a complete list of gluten free foods available on prescription.

GP's are allowed by law to prescribe where there is an **individual health need**. If gluten free prescribing in your area has been removed or restricted and you are struggling to adhere to your gluten free diet, you can make your case for NHS support with your GP based on your particular needs

Prescriptions are free of charge in Scotland and Wales but if you live in England you may need to pay for your prescription. In England, some people such as children under 16, adults aged 60 or over and people on income support receive free prescriptions. To find out if you qualify, speak to your pharmacist. If you do need to pay, you may find that buying a prepayment certificate is good value for money. More details of this can be found at www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk or by calling **0300 330 1341**.

Your dietitian may be able to give you vouchers to send off for sample packs from gluten free manufacturers to help you decide which products you want on prescription. It's best to try a range of different products to know which ones suit you best.

Monthly recommendations

Age and gender	Units per month
Child 1 - 3 years	10
Child 4 - 6 years	11
Child 7 - 10 years	13
Child 11 - 14 years	15
Child 15 - 18 years	18
Male 19 - 59 years	18
Male 60 - 74 years	16
Male 75+ years	14
Female 19 - 74 years	14
Female 75+ years	12
Breastfeeding	Add 4
3rd trimester pregnancy	Add 1

Food chart

Item	Units
400g bread / rolls / baguettes	1
500g bread mix / flour	2
200g savoury biscuits / crackers / crispbreads	1
250g pasta	1
500g oats	1.5
300g breakfast cereals	1.5
2 pizza bases	1
100-170g xanthan gum	1

COOKING

Most everyday meals and snacks can be prepared with gluten free ingredients and Coeliac UK's Home of gluten free recipes at

www.coeliac.org.uk/recipes has hundreds of delicious gluten free recipes for all occasions plus lots of hints, tips and information about cooking and baking gluten free.

Simple suggestions to get you started

Use a variety of naturally gluten free foods and plan meals around them, including:

- fresh, frozen, canned or juiced fruit and vegetables
- dried or canned pulses
- dairy products
- rice or potatoes (any type)
- meat, poultry, fish, eggs.

Ingredients that contain gluten can usually be exchanged for gluten free alternatives. Use your Food and Drink Directory to find suitable options.

Use gluten free flours including:

- rice
- corn (maize)
- tapioca (cassava)
- chickpea (besan, channa, gram flour)
- buckwheat potatoes
- soya
- millet
- gluten free flour mixes.

Since the baking qualities of gluten free flours are different from wheat flour, there may be a period of trial and error.

You can use xanthan gum in baking. This helps gluten free flours to behave more like wheat flour. You can find this in some supermarkets.

Ingredients that contain gluten can usually be exchanged for **gluten free alternatives**.

CROSS CONTAMINATION

Maintaining a strict gluten free diet means you have to make sure you don't contaminate gluten free food with any crumbs of food that contain gluten. Be careful to avoid cross contamination by:

- washing down surfaces before preparing food
- using separate toasters or toaster bags for gluten free bread
- cooking gluten free foods and foods that contain gluten in separate pans and with separate utensils.





EATING OUT

We want you to be able to enjoy eating out gluten free. Follow these tips for a more relaxed experience.

Ask to see allergen information

The Food Information for Consumers Regulation means caterers have to provide you with information on any allergens in all the dishes they serve. This means that if a recipe uses cereals containing gluten in the ingredients, they have to tell you.

Caterers can provide allergen information in written or oral formats. Where the information is not provided written and upfront, there must be clear signposting to where the information can be found.

Businesses choosing to provide information orally must ensure there

is a written notice, menu, ticket or label that is clearly visible, at the point that you choose your food, to indicate that allergen information is available from a member of staff.

We are working to make things easier for you

We provide training to food venues to adhere to our Gluten free Standard, which ensures that gluten free food is prepared and delivered safely. Venues that meet this standard are awarded GF accreditation and can carry our GF symbol. Look out for this symbol when eating out.

Visit www.coeliac.org.uk/gfvenues for the latest venues we have accredited.

Check ahead when booking a venue

Although caterers have to provide allergen information for dishes they serve, they don't have to offer a gluten free meal so it is best to call ahead or check their website to see if they offer gluten free options. If you speak to restaurant staff, explain why you need a gluten free diet to ensure you don't receive food that contains gluten.

Our Venue guide has thousands of member recommended or places we have accredited where you can stay, eat out or take away food that is right for your diet. You can access this online or through our Gluten free on the Move app which has mapping technology to show our accredited venues and take you there.

Planning overnight breaks

Before booking, ring the venue to check that they can provide food for people with coeliac disease.

You may need to take your own bread and cereal. If you want your bread toasted, ensure they can use a clean grill or a toaster bag as the toaster will also be used for breads that contain gluten. Taking your own supplies such as gluten free bread and crackers means you will not go hungry if the venue's choice is limited.

When you see the **Coeliac UK GF logo** you know that the restaurant is adhering to the Gluten free Standard.

The Standard covers all aspects of gluten free preparation as well as ensuring training is in place. Find out more at:

www.coeliac.org.uk/eatingout



Look out for the GF accredited by Coeliac UK logo in eateries and on menus

MANAGING COELIAC DISEASE

The treatment for coeliac disease is a strict, lifelong gluten free diet.

You should be offered a check up, which can be carried out by your GP, consultant or dietitian. If all is going well, you should be reviewed once a year, or sooner if problems arise. During your review, the following is recommended:

- your weight and height are measured
- your symptoms are reviewed

- your diet and how you're getting on with the gluten free diet is assessed and it is considered whether you need specialist diet and nutritional advice.

If any concerns are raised in your annual review, you should be referred to a specialist for further assessment. The specialist will be able to consider the need for specific blood tests, a bone scan to test for osteoporosis and the risk of other long term complications and other conditions.

Blood tests that might be carried out include:

- full blood count
- calcium
- ferritin
- folate
- vitamin B12
- coeliac disease antibodies – tissue transglutaminase (tTG) or endomysial (EMA)
- thyroid function tests
- liver function tests.



COMPLICATIONS ARISING FROM COELIAC DISEASE

Is coeliac disease linked to other health problems?

Early diagnosis of coeliac disease and following a gluten free diet helps to minimise the risk of long term complications.

Osteoporosis

Due to decreased absorption of calcium, adults with coeliac disease are at a greater risk of low bone density (osteopenia) and osteoporosis. However, for children with coeliac disease following a gluten free diet, long term bone health is likely to be unaffected.

There is an increased risk of osteoporosis as we all get older. For women, these risks are greater after the menopause, especially in women who have coeliac disease diagnosed later in life. Bone health will usually improve after starting a gluten free diet. It is important to stick to the diet to minimise the risk of low bone density and osteoporosis.

Osteoporosis is diagnosed by having a Dual Energy X-ray Absorptiometry (DEXA) scan, which measures bone mineral density.

People react in different ways to their diagnosis of coeliac disease and starting a gluten free diet.

At diagnosis and follow up, the decision for recommendations on DEXA scanning should be carried out on an individual basis, based on assessment from your local healthcare professional. You should speak with your local GP or consultant about your case.

Coeliac disease is more common among people with other autoimmune diseases such as Type 1 diabetes and autoimmune thyroid disease.

Cancer

Long term undiagnosed coeliac disease is associated with a small risk of developing certain types of gut cancer. These types of cancer are very rare and are not associated with childhood. Getting diagnosed and sticking to a gluten free diet reduces the already low risk of developing this cancer.



Further help

People react in different ways to their diagnosis of coeliac disease and starting a gluten free diet. For those who have had symptoms for years it may be a relief that, at last, you can start to treat the problem. For those who have not had any symptoms you will usually start to see an improvement in your overall health once you've started a gluten free diet.

Most children diagnosed with coeliac disease soon adapt to a gluten free lifestyle. It's important that children fully understand the reasons for changing their diet as peer pressure, especially among teenagers, can become a real challenge. You might find it helpful to seek advice and support from other people or families with coeliac disease.

Coeliac UK has a network of Local Groups as well as a Member2Member programme. If you are online we have very active communities on Facebook and Twitter, including our popular 'Gluten free Under Thirties' (GUTs) group for 18-30 year olds (please visit www.coeliac.org.uk/guts for more information). These give you the opportunity to share experiences and seek advice whenever you need it.

They can be particularly valuable if you or your family are finding it difficult to adapt to a gluten free lifestyle.

Join our online communities:

 [facebook.com/CoeliacUK](https://www.facebook.com/CoeliacUK)

 [@Coeliac_UK](https://twitter.com/Coeliac_UK)

BALANCED EATING

It is important to eat a healthy, balanced diet to provide all the energy and nutrients your body needs. This will help to maintain health and wellbeing throughout life and help reduce the risk of other diseases. In childhood, energy, vitamins and minerals are needed for healthy growth and development.

Healthy eating for children

A child's diet is not simply about being gluten free. Childhood is an important time for growth and development and children need a good supply of protein and other nutrients including calcium, iron and vitamins A and D.

Calcium intake is particularly important because it is needed for strong bones and healthy teeth. A diet that is rich in calcium can also minimise the risk of osteoporosis (low bone density) later in life.

The best sources of calcium are dairy products, such as milk, cheese and yoghurts. All cow's milk contains the same level of calcium, but semi skimmed milk is not recommended before two years of age, and skimmed milk is not suitable for under fives.





HEALTHY EATING FOR ADULTS

After starting a gluten free diet, you may find that you put on weight because the lining of the gut heals and absorption of nutrients from food starts to improve. Your appetite may also increase because you are feeling better. Hopefully, any increase in body weight should even out after a few months as your body adapts to the change.

Eating a balanced diet and maintaining a healthy weight helps reduce the risk of diseases such as heart disease and Type 2 diabetes. Healthy eating recommendations for weight control on a gluten free diet are no different to those for people without the condition. It is important that you eat a calcium rich diet to maintain healthy bones and reduce the risk of osteoporosis.

Finding inspiration for gluten free food can sometimes be a challenge but we have an online Home of gluten free recipes that can help you. Simply log on to the website and search a range of delicious dishes and varied cuisines. Visit www.coeliac.org/recipes.

Your dietitian is best placed to assess your diet and give you tailored advice to meet your individual needs. Your GP or hospital doctor can arrange a referral to a dietitian.



Eight simple steps towards a healthy gluten free diet:

- **eat regular meals based on starchy carbohydrates** such as rice, potatoes, yams, millet, quinoa and teff, and gluten free breads and pastas. Try to choose higher fibre and wholegrain options when you can
- **aim to eat at least five portions of fruit and vegetables a day.** Include a variety as they all contain different nutrients and can have different benefits
- **cut down on foods that are high in saturated fat** which is found in animal products including butter, fatty cuts of meat and full fat dairy foods
- **limit your intake of sugary foods and drinks.** Sugar is a main ingredient in sweets, cakes, sweet biscuits and some soft drinks
- **eat plenty of fibre.** Good sources include brown rice, high fibre/multigrain gluten free breads, pulses, nuts and seeds, fruit and vegetables, and potatoes in their skins
- **cut down on salt.** Use less in cooking and read the label of ready made foods to help you choose lower salt versions
- **avoid drinking too much alcohol.** Men and women are advised not to regularly drink more than 14 units per week, and to spread these out evenly over three days or more. For more information about units of alcohol visit www.drinkaware.co.uk
- **make sure you get enough vitamin D.** 10 micrograms per day is the recommended amount, but a supplement may be necessary in the winter months.

HEALTHY EATING FOR CHILDREN

Iron is essential for growth and development. Good sources are meat, poultry, fish, green leafy vegetables, pulses (beans, peas, lentils) and dried fruit. Iron is absorbed better from animal sources.

Children's nutritional requirements vary according to their age. For specific advice speak to your dietitian.

Seven simple steps towards a healthy gluten free diet for children:

- **base your child's meals on starchy carbohydrates** such as rice, potatoes, yams, millet, quinoa and teff, and gluten free breads and pastas
- **encourage your child to try lots of different types of fruits and vegetables** and aim for at least five portions a day
- **include plenty of milk and dairy foods** such as cheese, yoghurt and fromage frais as these are a good source of calcium and protein. Provide full fat dairy foods for the under fives, but lower fat versions can be provided for older children



- **aim to give your child one to two portions of meat or fish, or two to three portions of eggs, nuts and pulses, a day.** These foods provide protein and iron
- **limit the amount of sugary foods and drinks** to encourage healthy eating from a young age
- **there is no need to add salt to your child's food.** If you are buying ready made foods always read the label to check how much salt it contains and choose lower salt versions
- **make sure that your child gets enough vitamin D.** Infants should have 8.5-10 micrograms per day, whilst children between one and four should have a daily 10 micrograms supplement. Children four and above should get 10 micrograms per day, with supplements in the winter months.

TIPS FOR PARENTS AND CARERS

It's natural for any parent or carer of a child with coeliac disease to be concerned about the possible health or dietary problems their child may encounter when away from home.

Starting school, going to parties and getting involved in more food based activities may seem daunting, but with a little forward planning, there is no reason why these challenges can't be overcome.

Nursery, playgroup or school

Starting or changing nursery, playgroup or school is a big step for you and your child. Make sure you provide the adults, childminders or teachers who are looking after your child with as much information as possible. This will help to reduce the likelihood of problems and make sure your child adapts well to each new experience.

Before your child starts, make an appointment to see the person in charge, as well as any relevant teaching and catering staff.

Let them know that your child has coeliac disease and needs to follow a strict gluten free diet.

Download our schools' pack at www.coeliac.org.uk/schools for comprehensive information on managing coeliac disease in school, to share with the school.

You can provide them with information about foods that can be eaten and those that must be avoided. Remember that young children often make mistakes or swap food with other children so it is important that staff are vigilant.

Letting the staff know what symptoms to expect if gluten is eaten is a good idea. Also explain the long term effects of not keeping to a gluten free diet, such as continued gut damage and poor absorption of nutrients.

Check out our schools' pack for a recipe to make your own play dough at:
www.coeliac.org.uk/schools



- clarify what foods can be eaten and what foods need to be avoided – it may be useful to provide them with a copy of this booklet and the Gluten free Checklist.

Playtime

Gluten has to be eaten to cause symptoms, so using paints, crayons and glues should not be a problem unless your child accidentally eats them. As young children will often put things in their mouth, using materials made with no gluten containing ingredients is a sensible option.

Preschool children will often make art and instruments with dried pasta. As this may be tempting for small children, it is advisable to use gluten free pasta or supervise the child.

Play dough is not always gluten free. However, it is easy to make play dough using ingredients that don't contain gluten.

Cookery lessons in primary school

Children often make small cakes or cookies as part of the curriculum and, with some forward planning, there is no reason why your child cannot take part.

Cookery lessons in secondary school

Food technology classes should not cause a problem for your child and

Below is a useful checklist of things to cover with your childcare provider:

- explain what coeliac disease is and once a child with coeliac disease follows a strict gluten free diet they will feel better
- highlight that coeliac disease is not contagious nor an allergy, emphasising that they will not suffer a life threatening anaphylactic reaction
- explain what will happen if your child eats gluten by mistake so they are aware of what to expect. The most common symptoms include diarrhoea, nausea, tummy ache and wind

there is no reason why gluten free foods cannot be used. Speak to the teacher about using gluten free ingredients.

Cross contamination

Before your child takes part in cookery lessons it may be useful to speak to the teacher about cross contamination. Top tips to avoid cross contamination:

- keep all utensils separate during preparation and cooking of gluten free food
- don't fry gluten free food in the same oil as foods that contain gluten
- use a clean grill pan, separate toaster or toaster bags when making gluten free toast
- be careful when preparing gluten free food in a floury environment.

School meal times

There are universal free school meal policies for certain school years in schools in England, Scotland and Wales. In addition, free school meals are available to some children depending on individual circumstances, for example the receipt of certain types of benefits.

If a child is entitled to a free school meal, they should not be excluded because they have coeliac disease.

If you want your child to have a lunch which is provided by the nursery or school, speak to the catering staff about suitable choices and providing gluten free alternatives. Discuss adjustments or alternatives that they could make to their normal weekly menu, and speak to the catering staff about cross contamination.





For packed lunch ideas, check out our website at www.coeliac.org.uk/packedlunches

Visit www.coeliac.org.uk/schools to download an information pack on school food provision where you are.

You may prefer to provide your own food which can be heated up or a packed lunch. Make sure your child knows not to swap items in their packed lunch with their friends, in

case they swap them for something that contains gluten. Encourage them to double check any food they are unsure of.

To avoid your child feeling different from other youngsters at snack times, you may need to provide gluten free snacks. Inform staff that these snacks should be stored separately to avoid contact with food that contains gluten.

If you feel you're not getting the support that you would like, have a chat with your local dietitian who may be able to speak to the school on your behalf.



School trips and special occasions

If your child is going on a residential school trip, call ahead and speak to the cook or person providing the meals and talk to the teacher in charge of the trip to explain your child's dietary needs.

Pack basic items such as gluten free bread and crackers so that your child has some emergency supplies. This is recommended for any trip away from home.

Going to a party

It's worth bearing in mind that the party organiser will probably be very busy on the day, so don't

automatically expect them to cater for your child. Discuss your child's dietary requirements with them in advance.

If they are unable to cater for your child ask what type of food is being prepared so you can substitute similar gluten free versions. Perhaps you could take along gluten free alternatives for everyone to try so your child feels included.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Can I eat oats?

Oats do not contain gluten but they have a similar protein called avenin. Many oats and oat products are contaminated with gluten from wheat, barley and rye so it is important to only eat oats and oat products that are labelled gluten free. You can find a list of these in your Food and Drink Directory. Gluten free oats may be introduced to the diet at any time. However, a small percentage of people with coeliac disease are sensitive to avenin and if you have ongoing symptoms whilst including gluten free oats in your diet, review their use with your healthcare professional.

What is gluten free wheat starch or Codex wheat starch?

This is a specially made wheat starch where the gluten has been removed to a safe level. It is added to some gluten free foods available on prescription, such as flour and bread, to improve their quality and texture. If Codex or gluten free wheat starch has been used it must be listed in the ingredients list.

Can I eat barley malt extract?

Barley malt extract is a flavouring that is often added in small amounts

to many brands of breakfast cereals and some other products like chocolate. Foods that contain barley malt extract in small amounts may be included in the gluten free diet. However, any foods that contain barley malt extract will be labelled as containing barley and you will not be able to tell from the ingredients list how much has been used. If you are unsure whether the food is suitable check your Food and Drink Directory, contact our Helpline on **0333 332 2033** or contact the manufacturer.

What if mistakes are made?

Becoming familiar with your new diet after diagnosis is a learning process and it is likely that you'll make some mistakes. The reaction to eating gluten varies from person to person. Symptoms don't tend to happen straight away; they can take hours or up to a couple of days to develop and may last several days, while other people might not get any symptoms. If gluten is eaten by accident, it is unlikely to cause lasting gut damage. The important thing is to stick to your gluten free diet to prevent further symptoms and help your gut heal.

MORE INFORMATION

Our information leaflets are designed to help you manage your gluten free diet at all stages of your life, while providing additional information about your diet and health.

Please visit our website for a full list and to download your copies. A selection of the leaflets we provide includes:

- Dermatitis herpetiformis
- Osteoporosis
- Lactose intolerance
- Coeliac disease and Type 1 diabetes.

We also have a range of services on our website to help you support your gluten free lifestyle. Log on to the website and take a look at the:

- Food and Drink Directory
- Home of gluten free recipes
- Venue guide
- Scrapbook, which you can personalise.

Don't forget our apps, **Gluten free on the move** and **Gluten free food checker**, which you can download from the App Store and Google Play Store.



ASSOCIATED CONDITIONS

OSTEOPOROSIS

When you have osteoporosis, your bones become thin and more likely to break. Your doctor will diagnose it by looking at the strength of your bones, using a measure called Bone Mineral Density. A BMD below a certain score means you have osteoporosis.

It's associated with coeliac disease because bone health relies on calcium, and people with gut damage may struggle to absorb calcium. There's another condition called osteopenia, where your BMD is lower than normal, but not as low as in osteoporosis.

Am I at risk?
Our Bone Mineral Density changes naturally through our lives – it's at its peak in our mid twenties. If, like many people, you weren't diagnosed with coeliac disease until later, you may not have been absorbing calcium properly for some time. This puts you more at risk of having a low BMD, and osteoporosis.

People with coeliac disease need more calcium than others.
If you were diagnosed with coeliac disease in your childhood or teens and follow a gluten free diet, your long-term bone health isn't likely to be affected.

Your BMD will usually improve after starting a gluten free diet. However, women diagnosed with coeliac disease after the menopause find it more difficult to improve their BMD. You're more at risk of osteoporosis as you get older and this risk increases if you have a low body weight, smoke or drink too much alcohol.

Should I be tested?
Osteoporosis is diagnosed by a bone scan, known as a Dual Energy X-ray Absorptiometry (DEXA) scan. This measures your BMD. Your GP or consultant will help you decide whether a DEXA scan is necessary.

This information is for guidance only and should not replace advice given by your healthcare professional.



KEEP IN TOUGH

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www.coeliac.org.uk

* £24 per year individual rate, £30 household rate (for those with more than one member of the household wishing to join) and £12 concessionary rate (for adults or parents and carers of a child under 16 years on a reduced income, for example, those registered unemployed, students and those reliant on state pension or benefits).