

Facts About Gluten-Free Eating

What is Gluten?

Gluten is a protein naturally found in certain grains such as wheat, barley, rye and some oats. Foods that are made with these grains also contain gluten - that includes foods like bagels, breads, cakes, cereals, cookies, crackers, pasta, pizza, and more.

Who Should Avoid Gluten?

More than two million Americans suffer from a serious medical condition called celiac disease. For someone with this disease, eating gluten-containing foods causes damage to the lining of the small intestine (where foods go after they have been eaten and digested). This damage makes it very difficult for the body to absorb nutrients from foods. Over time this damage can lead to malnourishment and possibly other complications. **While there is no cure for celiac disease, the good news is that eating gluten free is the best way to prevent further damage to the small intestine.** Gluten may also be avoided by those who are sensitive to it or make a personal choice to avoid it.

Healthy Gluten-Free Eating

Many foods are generally free of gluten, unless it was added in processing. People who follow a gluten free diet can enjoy a variety of foods, including:

- Plain beef, pork and lamb
- Plain fish and shellfish
- Plain chicken and turkey
- Plain fruits
- Plain vegetables
- Plain beans
- Eggs
- Milk
- Rice, Wild Rice
- Quinoa
- Lentils
- Corn
- Potatoes
- Soy
- Nuts and seeds
- Flax

DID YOU KNOW?

One out of every 133 people in the US has celiac disease.

Celiac disease runs in families. Children and siblings of someone with celiac disease often develop the disorder.

There are more than 2,000 gluten free foods in US grocery stores!



Knowing What To Look For: Reading Labels

The best way to know if a product is gluten free is to read the ingredients label. To determine if a product contains gluten, there are five main words you need to know:

- Wheat
- Barley
- Rye
- Malt¹
- Oats²

Looking for any of these five words will help you identify products that contain gluten. You need to check labels often. Ingredients can change over time, so checking the ingredients label every time is the most accurate way to identify what is in a food or beverage product. After you have read the label and determined that the product does not contain these obvious sources of gluten, you may always contact the manufacturer to confirm.

Contains Gluten

INGREDIENTS: WHOLE GRAIN WHEAT, SUGAR, CORN SYRUP, SALT, DISTILLED MONOGLYCERIDES, ANNATTO EXTRACT COLOR, NONFAT MILK. BHT ADDED TO PRESERVE FRESHNESS.

VITAMINS AND MINERALS: CALCIUM CARBONATE, VITAMIN C (SODIUM ASCORBATE), ZINC AND IRON (MINERAL NUTRIENTS), VITAMIN E ACETATE, A B VITAMIN (NIACINAMIDE), A B VITAMIN (CALCIUM PANTOTHENATE), VITAMIN B₆ (PYRIDOXINE HYDROCHLORIDE), VITAMIN B₂ (RIBOFLAVIN), VITAMIN B₁₂, VITAMIN D.

No Gluten Containing Ingredients

INGREDIENTS: RICE, WHOLE GRAIN RICE, SUGAR, SALT, MOLASSES, VITAMIN E (MIXED TOCOPHEROLS) AND BHT ADDED TO PRESERVE FRESHNESS.

VITAMINS AND MINERALS: CALCIUM CARBONATE, IRON AND ZINC (MINERAL NUTRIENTS), VITAMIN C (SODIUM ASCORBATE), A B VITAMIN (NIACINAMIDE), VITAMIN B₆ (PYRIDOXINE HYDROCHLORIDE), VITAMIN B₂ (RIBOFLAVIN), VITAMIN B₁ (THIAMIN MONONITRATE), VITAMIN A (PALMITATE), A B VITAMIN (FOLIC ACID), VITAMIN B₁₂, VITAMIN D.

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GLUTEN FREE

Frequently Overlooked Foods that May Contain Gluten

- Broth
- Candy
- Coating mixes
- Croutons
- Imitation bacon
- Imitation seafood
- Marinades
- Processed meats
- Sauces and gravies
- Seasoning
- Soy sauce
- Thickeners
- Vegetarian meat substitutes

DID YOU KNOW?

The best way to know if a food contains gluten is to read the ingredients label.

More Information

For more information about eating with celiac disease, contact the following organizations:

- American Dietetic Association www.eatright.org
- Canadian Celiac Association www.celiac.ca
- University of Chicago Celiac Disease Center www.celiacdisease.net
- University of Maryland Center for Celiac Research www.celiaccenter.org
- Children's Digestive Health and Nutrition Foundation www.celiachealth.org

For celiac support group information, contact the following groups:

- Celiac Sprue Association www.csaceliacs.org
- The Celiac Disease Foundation www.celiac.org
- Gluten Intolerance Group www.gluten.net

¹A common ingredient that is a derivative of barley
²According to ADA Evidence Based Analysis Library and NEJM, 2004; 351: 2021-2022, studies suggest that pure oats that are not cross-contaminated with wheat, barley or rye consumed in moderation can be tolerated by most people with celiac disease. Check with your health care provider to find out if this is right for you.



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