

Gluten-Free Diet

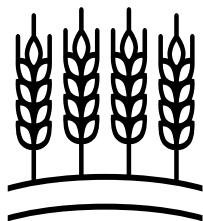
What is a gluten-free diet?

A strict gluten-free diet completely avoids these grains:

- Wheat
- Rye
- Barley
- Triticale
- Spelt
- Kamut

It also includes ingredients made from these grains, such as:

- Brewer's yeast
- Dextrin
- Malt



These grains contain a protein called gluten. Gluten can damage the lining of the small intestine in people who have celiac disease. When the lining is damaged, vitamins and minerals are not absorbed as well. This may lead to health concerns such as low iron, weak and brittle bones, itchy skin rash, and infertility.



If you have celiac disease, you should follow a **strict gluten-free diet** for the rest of your life.

Celiac disease does not go away, but it can be managed with a strict gluten-free diet.

A dietitian with expertise in celiac disease can help you with a strict gluten-free diet and ensure you are getting the nutrition you need.

With celiac disease, a strict gluten-free diet is the only way to keep your intestine healthy and reduce the risk of health concerns.

What about oats?

Oats don't have gluten but are often contaminated by other grains that have gluten in them.



Choose oats that are labelled "gluten-free".

Pure and uncontaminated oats are available. However, a small number of people with celiac disease may not tolerate oats.

Talk to your doctor or dietitian before adding oats to your diet.

Gluten-free baking and cooking

When cooking or baking at home, it's important to keep your foods gluten-free. Even a crumb from a gluten-containing food can affect your small intestine.

To avoid cross-contamination

You can use these tips to keep your foods from coming in contact with gluten (cross-contamination).

- Choose products that have a "gluten-free" claim on the label. This includes all flours.



Naturally gluten-free grains, pulses/legumes, seeds, and flours are **high risk for cross-contamination** with gluten-containing ingredients (like wheat, rye, or barley).

Choose products that have "gluten-free" on the label.

For pulses without a "gluten-free" label, do a visual inspection for any foreign grains and remove these. Rinse well with water before cooking.

- Store all gluten-free products separately. Have a separate cupboard and containers for gluten-free products. Or store gluten-free foods on the top shelves, and gluten-containing foods on lower shelves.
- Use clean equipment for making gluten-free foods. Clean pots, pans, strainers, utensils, cutting boards, and counter spaces with soap and water before using.
 - Use separate kitchen tools or equipment, like toasters, that cannot be cleaned after use with soap and water. Toaster bags can help reduce cross-contamination risk.
- Prepare and cook gluten-free foods separately from regular foods. Glass or metal dishes are best. Porous stone bakeware can contaminate gluten-free foods.
- Use separate condiment containers. Have separate containers for items such as margarine, jam, peanut butter, honey, relish, or mayonnaise. Squeeze bottles may be easier if available.
- If you use a convection oven, turn off the fan to avoid cross-contamination.

Grocery shopping

Foods labelled gluten-free or having the Celiac Canada gluten-free symbol shown here, are safe choices.

In Canada, there are 6 possible logos companies can use to show products are gluten-free.



Most grocery and health food stores carry gluten-free products.

By law, all gluten-containing ingredients must be listed on the food label. If a food isn't labelled gluten-free, it's important to check 2 places on the food label:

- The ingredient list.
- The “contains” or “may contain” list.
 - The “may contain” list is voluntary in Canada.
 - Contact the manufacturer to learn more about the food.



There are differences in food products between countries, including Canada and the USA. Some foods that are gluten-free in one country, may not be gluten-free in another. You need to follow a gluten-free diet even when you travel.

Grocery shopping tips

- **Read the label every time you buy a product.** Ingredients can change from time to time even with the same food product.
- Contact the manufacturer for more information to ask questions.
- Use only products that contain ingredients allowed on a gluten-free diet.
- Use caution with deli foods. Unpacked meats that need to be sliced, salads that may have a shared scoop, or roast chickens are at risk of cross-contamination.
- Avoid bulk food bins. Foods labelled “gluten-free” may be stored in bins that were used before for gluten-containing foods. Shoppers may use the same scoop for all kinds of foods.

Eating away from home

Some restaurants may not understand what you mean if you ask for gluten-free foods. Tell your server that you can't eat anything with wheat, rye, barley, or oats in it, as these make you sick.

Avoid salad bars, buffets, and fondues since gluten-free foods are easily contaminated by spoons, serving utensils, and small food pieces from gluten-containing foods.

Gluten-free foods that are deep fried in the same oil as gluten-containing foods are contaminated from crumbs in the oil.

Ask the server:

- To ask the chef which menu items are gluten-free.
- If there is a dedicated gluten-free deep fryer.
- If seasonings, broths, and sauces contain gluten.
- To have your food cooked or baked in separate pans or dishes that have been washed right before using.

Medicine and supplements

Check prescriptions, over-the-counter medicine, and vitamin and mineral supplements to make sure they are gluten-free.

Cough and cold medicines often have gluten in them. Ask the pharmacist if you aren't sure.

Do I need supplements?

People who follow a gluten-free diet may not get enough of certain vitamins and minerals.

- Use gluten-free whole grains as these may give you more vitamins and minerals.
- Choose gluten-free foods labelled as **enriched** when available, as these are higher in some vitamins and minerals like iron and B vitamins.




Ask your doctor or dietitian if you need to take a vitamin or mineral supplement.




More information


Check out ahs.ca/NutritionHandouts and search for “gluten-free”.


Visit Celiac Canada (celiac.ca)

- [Gluten-Free Food Labelling Guide](#)
- [Unexpected Sources of Gluten](#)

Food source	Choose	Use caution	Don't eat or drink
	These items don't have gluten in them when eaten plain or unprocessed.	These items may have gluten from cross-contamination and/or added during processing.	These items have gluten in them.
Grain foods  * Choose these whole grains more often.	Baked products, bread or bread crumbs, crackers, and pasta made with these gluten-free ingredients: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • amaranth* • arrowroot flour • buckwheat, pure* • cassava, manioc, tapioca • cereals (cold) without flavouring or malt extract such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ puffed corn, millet, or rice ○ rice flakes • cereals (hot) such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ buckwheat groats ○ cream of rice ○ grits ○ hominy/hominy corn ○ soy cereal • corn* • corn starch • corn meal, corn flour (labelled "gluten-free") • flax • legume flours (bean, chickpea, lentil, pea) • maize • millet* • nut flours • oats*, "gluten-free" • plain rice cakes • popcorn* • potato flour or starch • quinoa* • rice (black*, brown*, red*, white, wild*) • rice bran, rice flour, rice malt • sago • sorghum* • soy • tapioca • taro • teff* 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • communion wafers • corn tacos and tortillas • oats (regular) • popped corn cakes • rice and soy infant cereal 	Baked products, bread or bread crumbs, crackers, and pasta made with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • arrowroot biscuits • atta • barley, barley flakes, barley flour, barley malt, barley malt extract, barley malt flavour, barley malt syrup • buckwheat products with gluten-containing ingredients (soba noodles) • bulgur (tabbouleh) • cereals made with gluten-containing ingredients • cereals with added gluten-containing flavouring or malt extract • couscous • farina • freekeh • gluten flour • graham flour • hydrolyzed wheat protein • ice cream cones, wafers, waffles • matzoh • oat gum • oatmeal, oat bran, oat flour, whole oat groats, oat hull fibre (not labelled as gluten-free) • rye • triticale • wheat, all types including: dinkel, spelt, farro (faro), einkorn, emmer, or kamut • wheat bran, wheat germ • wheat-based semolina • wheat flour, durum flour • wheat gluten • wheat starch or modified wheat starch

Food source	Choose	Use caution	Don't eat or drink
	These items don't have gluten in them when eaten plain or unprocessed.	These items may have gluten from cross-contamination and/or added during processing.	These items have gluten in them.
<p>Protein foods</p>   <p>* Prepared or processed meats, like deli meats may contain fillers that have gluten in them. Read the label every time.</p> <p>* Meat slicers may be contaminated if used for gluten-containing products.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • beans • buttermilk • cheese, processed • cheese slices • chickpeas • chocolate milk • cottage cheese, plain • cream • cream cheese, plain • egg whites, egg substitutes, or liquid egg products • eggs • fish, plain • kefir • lentils • meat • milk • nuts and seeds, plain • peas • poultry • quark • shellfish that is fresh, frozen, or canned (unseasoned, in water or oil) • tofu, plain • yogurt, plain 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • baked beans • cheese, packaged shredded • cheese spreads or sauces • dried eggs • dried beans, lentils, and chickpeas • dry roasted nuts • fish canned in vegetable broth or sauce, seasoned or smoked fish • flavoured cottage cheese • flavoured cream cheese • flavoured yogurt • ice cream or frozen yogurt • imitation seafood such as crab or surimi • liquid eggs, seasoned • liver pate • peanut and other nut butters • prepared or processed meats*: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ beef jerky ○ bologna ○ chicken or turkey breasts, seasoned, frozen ○ ham ○ hamburgers ○ luncheon meats ○ meat patties ○ meat spreads ○ meatloaf ○ sausages ○ wieners • pudding • soy beverages, soy yogurt, coconut yogurt or soy ice cream • tofu, flavoured or seasoned 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • breaded or battered, fish, meat, or poultry • fu (concentrated wheat gluten and wheat flour used in vegetarian dishes) • malted milk • peanut butter with wheat germ • products with gluten-containing ingredients • seitan (vegetarian “wheat meat”)
<p>Vegetables and fruits</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • fruit juice or vegetable juice • plain fresh, frozen, or canned fruit and vegetables 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • dried vegetables or fruit • fruit pie fillings • seasoned frozen vegetables • vegetables or fruit with batter or sauces 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • fruit desserts such as pies • scalloped potatoes with wheat flour

Food source	Choose	Use caution	Don't eat or drink
	These items don't have gluten in them when eaten plain or unprocessed.	These items may have gluten from cross-contamination and/or added during processing.	These items have gluten in them.
Other 	<p>Alcohol:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • gluten-free beer • liqueurs (unless gluten is declared) • spirits such as: bourbon, gin, rum, rye, vodka, whiskey • wine <p>Baking ingredients:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • baking chocolate • baking gums: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ carrageenan ◦ guar • baking soda • baking yeast • carob chips and powder • chocolate chips • cocoa powder • coconut • cream of tartar • gelatin <p>Drinks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • cider • cocoa, plain • coffee, ground or instant • juice • soft drinks • tea <p>Condiments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • black pepper, pure • gluten-free soy sauce • herbs and spices, pure • ketchup • monosodium glutamate (MSG) • olives • pickles, plain • relish • tomato paste • vinegar 	<p>Alcohol:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • flavoured alcoholic drinks <p>Baking ingredients:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • baking powder • yeast (autolyzed, yeast extract) <p>Drinks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • flavoured coffee • flavoured tea • herbal tea • hot chocolate mixes • lemonade • rice/almond/oat/hemp beverages <p>Condiments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BBQ sauce • flavoured miso or tempeh • marinades • mayonnaise • meat coatings • mustard • rice vinegar • smoke flavour • soy, oyster, and fish sauces • spice mixture • Worcestershire sauce 	<p>Alcohol:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ale • beer • lager <p>Baking ingredients:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • brewer's yeast <p>Drinks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • coffee whiteners • malted beverages <p>Condiments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • malt vinegar

Food source	Choose	Use caution	Don't eat or drink
	These items don't have gluten in them when eaten plain or unprocessed.	These items may have gluten from cross-contamination and/or added during processing.	These items have gluten in them.
Other (Continued) 	Fats/Oils: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • butter • canola oil • homemade salad dressings • lard • margarine • shortening • sour cream • vegetable oil Soups: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • gluten-free bouillon cubes • soups and stocks made from gluten-free ingredients Sweets: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • corn syrup • honey • jam • jelly • maple syrup • marmalade • marshmallows • molasses • sugar (brown, white, and icing) • sugar substitutes like Equal® or Splenda® Other: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • flavour extracts, natural or artificial • maltodextrin 	Fats/Oils: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • cooking spray • salad dressing Soups: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • bouillon cubes • broth • canned soup • dried soup mixes • soup bases Sweets: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • candies • chocolate bars • custard • frostings • pudding mixes Other: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • deep fried foods • trail mixes • dextrin 	Fats/Oils: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • foods that have been fried in oil with gluten-containing ingredients Sweets: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • candies and licorice with gluten-containing ingredients Other: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • pizza crust made with gluten-containing ingredients

For support



- Talk to your healthcare team.
- Call Health Link at 811 and ask to talk to a dietitian or complete a [self-referral form](https://ahs.ca/811) on ahs.ca/811.