



Frederick Gastroenterology Associates



## Gluten-Free Diet

### What is gluten?

Gluten is a protein found naturally in most grains, such as wheat, barley, rye, and triticale (a mix of wheat and rye). Gluten is often found in bread, pasta, cookies, cakes, beer, prepackaged foods, and products such as lipsticks, toothpaste, and vitamins. Some grains such as corn, rice, and quinoa also contain gluten, but they don't seem to cause the same problems as wheat, barley, rye and triticale.

### What is a gluten-free diet?

A gluten-free diet excludes all foods containing gluten such as, wheat, barley, rye, and triticale. To follow a gluten-free diet, you must avoid gluten while choosing substitutes that provide nutrients for a healthy diet. Keeping a strict gluten-free diet is a lifelong necessity for people with celiac disease and can be temporary for some with non-celiac gluten sensitivities.

### Why order a gluten-free diet?

A Gluten-free diet is necessary for people with celiac disease, non-celiac gluten sensitivity, gluten ataxia, and wheat allergies. It is also used by people who haven't been diagnosed with a gluten-related medical condition, but use it for the claimed benefits of improved health, weight loss and increased energy, but more research is needed.

- **Celiac disease:** An autoimmune disorder in which gluten triggers immune system activity that damages the lining of the small intestine. Over time this damage prevents the absorption of nutrients from food. Symptoms include abdominal pain, bloating, diarrhea, constipation, "foggy brain," rash or headache.
- **Non-celiac gluten sensitivity:** Causes similar signs and symptoms associated with celiac disease even though there is no damage to the tissues of the small intestine. Studies show that the immune system plays a role, but the process isn't well understood.
- **Gluten ataxia:** An autoimmune disorder that affects certain nerve tissues and causes problems with muscle control and voluntary muscle movement
- **Wheat allergy:** A traditional food allergy where the immune system mistakes gluten or some other protein found in wheat as a disease-causing agent, prompting an immune system response.

## Gluten-Free Diet

### What can I eat on a gluten-free diet?

Foods to Eat	Foods to Avoid
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Grains:</b> Buckwheat, corn (cornmeal), grits and polenta labeled gluten-free, flax, quinoa, rice (including wild rice)</li> <li>• <b>Gluten-free flours:</b> rice, soy, corn, potato and bean flours</li> <li>• <b>Legumes:</b> Soy, beans, seeds, legumes and nuts in their natural, unprocessed forms</li> <li>• <b>Fresh food:</b> Fruits and vegetables,</li> <li>• <b>Dairy:</b> Most low-fat dairy products</li> <li>• <b>Eggs</b></li> <li>• <b>Meats:</b> Lean, non-processed meats, fish and poultry</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Grains:</b> Wheat, Barley, Rye, Triticale (a cross between wheat and rye), Oats</li> <li>• <b>In general, avoid the following foods unless they're labeled as gluten-free or made with corn, rice, soy or other gluten-free grain:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Beer, ale, porter, stout (usually contain barley)</li> <li>- Breads</li> <li>- Cakes and pies</li> <li>- Candies</li> <li>- Cereals</li> <li>- Cookies and crackers</li> <li>- French fries</li> <li>- Gravies</li> <li>- Malt, malt flavoring and other malt products</li> <li>- Pastas</li> <li>- Hot dogs and processed lunchmeats</li> <li>- Salad dressings</li> <li>- Sauces, including soy sauce (wheat)</li> <li>- Seasoned rice mixes</li> <li>- Seasoned snack foods, such as potato and tortilla chips</li> <li>- Soups, bouillon or soup mixes</li> <li>- Vegetables in sauce</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

### Tips

- Check the labels of all foods checking for gluten and cross-contamination to gluten
- Separate all kitchen items used for preparing gluten and gluten-free foods
- When eating out, ask how the food was prepared and if they have a gluten-free menu or dishes
- Ask your pharmacist if any of your medicines contain wheat or a wheat byproduct

References: <https://davissciencesays.ucdavis.edu/blog/gluten-probably-wont-kill-you-and-gluten-free-diet-probably-wont-either>,  
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