

What is celiac disease?

Celiac disease is an auto-immune disease where the body cannot tolerate gluten. Gluten is a protein found in wheat, rye, barley, and many other products.



Testing for it:

Your doctor may ask you to do some blood tests that look for specific anti-bodies as well as ask you to get a biopsy of your small bowel.

Treatment:

The only way to treat celiac disease is by following a **gluten-free diet**.

Link to diabetes:

Type 1 diabetes is also an auto-immune disease. Having one auto-immune disease makes it more likely you may have another.

Strategies for Success

1 | Go gluten-free, for good

- Eliminate obvious gluten; wheat, barley & rye
- Explore gluten-free flour options like buckwheat, millet, legume flours (chickpea, lentil, pea), potato flour/potato starch, sorghum flour

2 | Don't forget about fibre

- Plan your meals using higher fibre options like beans & legumes, amaranth, flax seed, quinoa, rice bran, brown rice, and plenty of fruits & vegetables
- Gradually increase how much fibre you are eating as well as water!

3 | The big three: iron, calcium & vitamin D

- Anemia can be common - look for **enriched** gluten-free foods (iron & B vitamins are added)
- Osteoporosis is also common - calcium & vitamin D supplements can be helpful (look for gluten-free brands!), or consider a multivitamin

Balancing Your Blood Sugars

- Checking your blood sugars often is helpful to see how gluten-free foods affect your numbers. Speak to your diabetes educator about any new patterns in your sugars that you see.
- If you are taking insulin with meals, the timing of your insulin is very important. Speak to a diabetes educator about when to take your insulin if you are unsure.

Gluten-Free Grains, Cereals & Starches

- Almond meal flour
- Amaranth
- Arrowroot
- Buckwheat
- Coconut flour
- Corn
- Cornstarch
- Flax
- Legume flour: chickpea, lentil, pea
- Potato flour (or sweet potato flour)
- Potato starch
- Quinoa
- Rice (black, brown, white, wild)
- Rice bran
- Sorghum flour
- Soy
- Tapioca



Remember that there are many naturally gluten-free foods: meat, poultry, fish, eggs, legumes, nuts, seeds, milk, yogurt, cheese, fruits & vegetables.

Hidden Sources of Gluten

- Look for certified gluten-free oats
- Malt vinegar (all other vinegars are GF)
- Soy sauce & artificial crab in sushi rolls
- Modified food starch – can be either from wheat or corn (avoiding this ingredient is best)

Restaurant Pitfalls

- Foods cooked in the same deep fryer as breaded items
- Soups that are thickened with flour
- Homemade dressings or sauces
- Always ask your server about the menu

Helpful Resources

- Gluten-Free Diet: A Comprehensive Resource Guide by Shelley Case, RD – www.glutenfreediet.ca
- Celiac Disease for Dummies by Dr. Ian Blumer and Dr. Sheila Crowe
- Managing Diabetes and Celiac Disease Together by Canadian Celiac Association and Canadian Diabetes Association
- Canadian Celiac Association – www.celiac.ca
- Celiac Disease Foundation – www.celiac.org