



# Gluten

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*Are you getting sick more than once per year? A comprehensive blood analysis includes many markers in the blood that can determine how severe an illness may be, if there are conditions developing and what exactly the body needs to help it fight off infections. Underlying causes of inflammation, infection, and environmental exposures can also be recognized with a complete metabolic analysis. Some dosages for supplements will vary according age, weight and severity of condition. Getting tested lends objective guidance to developing a lifestyle program and supplement recommendations unique in each individual person.*

## *What is gluten?*

Gluten is a protein which is found in wheat, rye, and barley. Other grains, like oat and spelt, as well as processed foods can contain gluten as well without being labeled as such. The properties of gluten are what hold the bread and cake together. However, these same properties are what interfere with the breakdown and absorption of other nutrients. The undigested gluten can trigger your immune system and affect the intestines, which in turn can cause abdominal pain, diarrhea, constipation, and other systems that are gastrointestinal related.

## *Gluten Intolerance vs. Celiac Disease*

A medical history along with clinical tests can diagnose celiac disease and/or wheat allergy. Blood tests for Celiac disease measure the amount of particular autoantibodies in the blood, specifically the IgA class and IgG class. These autoantibodies are produced as part of the immune response. A tissue biopsy of the small intestine is performed to confirm a diagnosis. Although there is a definite classification of Celiac disease, those with non-celiac gluten sensitivity is relatively poorly understood. This leaves gluten sensitivity a very troublesome diagnosis to make.

Certain criteria need to be met before gluten sensitivity can be confirmed. The spectrum of conditions that arise with gluten sensitivity is rather broad and includes everything from energy to brain function. Daniel Leffler, M.D., a gastroenterologist and assistant professor of medicine at Harvard Medical School states that "Gluten is fairly indigestible in all people." He also estimates that half of the 60 million people in the U.S. who suffer from irritable bowel syndrome are probably sensitive to gluten<sup>1</sup>.

## *Will a gluten-free diet work for you?*

First, for the serological testing, you must currently be on a gluten containing diet for the tests to be accurate because the antibodies are produced by the immune system in response to substances that the body perceives as threatening<sup>2</sup>. If there is no gluten in the diet, then there is no response that can be measured. If Celiac is confirmed by a biopsy of the small intestine, then a lifelong commitment of a gluten-free diet must be made.

Those who think they have gluten sensitivity should try cutting gluten out of the diet for a week or so and see if they feel better. However, there is nothing essentially healthier about a gluten-free diet. Dee Sandquist, a registered dietician and spokesperson for the American Diabetic Association describes that "Much of the gluten-free products can be

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Federal Law requires that we warn you of the following:  
1. Your individual health status and any required health care treatments can only be properly addressed by a professional healthcare provider of your choice.  
2. *The information provided in this newsletter has not been evaluated by the FDA.*

unhealthy and junk due to the added sugar and fat to stimulate the texture and satisfying fluffiness that gluten imparts<sup>1</sup>.” These products are also found to have less Iron and Vitamins B and D in them as well. However, sales of gluten free products increased 16% in 2010.<sup>1</sup>

The rapid increase in gluten sensitivity is no surprise considering the modern Western diet consists of mostly grains. In the past years gluten was mixed with other grains, beans, and nuts. The use of gluten in products today has increased and pure wheat flour is now milled into refined white flour. Most people, in general, benefit from limiting or avoiding grains whether you have gluten intolerance or not. Grains break down into sugar which raises insulin. The rise of health problems related to insulin resistance is well known and has also influenced other health problems such as obesity, high cholesterol, high blood pressure, and cancer.

Gluten may be hidden in foods under labels such as hydrolyzed vegetable protein, texturized vegetable protein, natural flavoring, malts, and starches.<sup>3</sup> Just because a food is labeled as gluten-free doesn't mean you can eat as much of it as you want. Eliminating processed foods, white breads, white pasta, corn, potatoes, and snack cakes will reduce gastrointestinal symptoms one might be experiencing. Naturally gluten-free products include brown rice, quinoa, and buckwheat.

Remember, carbohydrates are good for nothing but burning. If you are not burning them off with active daily activity and/or exercise then the body is storing them for future energy requirements. When eating gluten-free you need to be careful that you're replacing the gluten-containing foods with healthy choices, like vegetables and other whole foods. If you instead go for gluten-free processed foods, like gluten-free cookies, pasta and breads that are now commercially available, there's a good chance that you will actually gain weight and develop malnutrition. In one study of celiac diagnosed individuals, 81% actually gained weight over 2 years<sup>4</sup>.

Avoiding gluten does not replace a healthy diet. In fact, it is very common for gluten sensitive individuals to lack important vitamins and minerals due to the anatomical inflammation causing improper breakdown of nutrients.

It is important to know where start by consulting with a nutritional expert. Getting a comprehensive blood analysis will not only define your state of health but will allow an expert to advise you on specific amounts of vitamins and minerals you need to be healthier. Don't hesitate. Call us today to schedule your appointment.