



# This Week's Tips

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### **A food allergy can drastically change your eating style.**

Foods that were once staples are suddenly on the forbidden list, leaving your diet somewhat barren. Your food choices are limited leaving you with little variety and short on essential vitamins and minerals. This is a very real dilemma for those of us who need to follow a gluten free eating plan.

Gluten is the protein part of wheat, barley, rye and other similar grains. Oats were once allowed on a gluten free diet, however, this is no longer the case due to the manufacturing process. That is, contamination can occur if the oats are processed in the same facility as wheat products. A gluten free- and wheat- free diet are not the same thing and not all gluten-free foods are wheat-free. Gluten presents a problem for people who cannot digest it. That is, gluten causes injury to the small intestine resulting in celiac disease. It can also cause a skin ailment called dermatitis herpetiformis. When gluten is removed from the diet, the intestine has time to recover and heal.

If you have been diagnosed with celiac disease you first need to assess the nutrients in your diet as you may not have been absorbing all that you need from the foods that you eat. In addition, there are some special considerations when it comes to gluten free foods. For example, some gluten-free flours are low in protein because they have had the gluten (a protein) removed. Special gluten-free flours are usually enriched with milk proteins. Other nutrients of concern are iron, vitamin B 12 and folic acid. Lentils, nuts, green vegetables, meat and poultry are all good sources of these "at risk" nutrients.

### **Following a gluten free diet requires planning and label reading. Following are some basic guidelines:**

- do not eat any food that lists the following grains: wheat, rye, and barley.
- the following can be eaten in any amount: corn, potato, rice, soybeans, tapioca, arrowroot, carob, buckwheat, millet, amaranth and quinoa.
- distilled white vinegar does not contain gluten.
- malt vinegar does not contain gluten.

The following ingredients contain gluten - check labels carefully:

- Hydrolyzed Vegetable Protein (HVP) unless it is made from soy or corn
- any flour or cereal products unless made with pure rice, corn, potato, flour or soy flour
- vegetable protein unless made from soy or corn
- malt or malt flavoring unless derived from corn
- modified starch or modified food starch unless arrowroot, corn, potato, tapioca, waxy maize or maize is used
- Vegetable gum unless vegetable gums are carob bean gum, locust bean gum, cellulose gum, guar gum, gum arabic, aracia gum, tragacanth, xanthan gum, or vegetable starch
- soy sauce or soy sauce solids unless you are aware that they don't contain wheat



**The following words mean that a gluten-containing ingredient has been used:** •stabilizer •starch •flavoring •emulsifier •hydrolyzed plant protein

Look for manufacturers that produce gluten free products and support groups such as the following: **The Food Allergy Network, American Celiac Society, Celiac Sprue Association, Celiac Disease Foundation and the Gluten Intolerance Group.**