

# Care Gram

## Gluten-free Diet

A gluten-free diet excludes the prolamin and gluten proteins found in wheat, rye, and barley. If you have celiac disease or gluten intolerance, consuming gluten-containing grains or foods will cause unwanted symptoms. Symptoms vary, but may include:

- Diarrhea, constipation, gas, bloating, or heartburn
- Skin rashes (a condition called dermatitis herpetiformis)
- Bone or joint pain/arthritis
- Liver or biliary tract disorders
- Fatigue
- Unexplained iron-deficiency anemia
- Vitamin B12 or folic acid deficiencies
- Depression or anxiety
- Peripheral neuropathy (weakness, numbness, and pain in the hands and feet from nerve damage)
- Seizures or migraines
- Osteopenia (loss of bone mineral density) or osteoporosis (severe loss of bone mineral density with weak and brittle bones)
- Missed menstrual periods, infertility, or recurrent miscarriages

The only way to avoid these symptoms is to follow a strict gluten-free diet for life. However, there are plenty of naturally gluten-free foods and substitutes available.

### Dietary Guidelines for a Gluten-free Diet

- Avoid anything with **wheat, barley, rye, malt, or triticale.**
- Read labels. Avoid foods that contain gluten such as:
  - Barley
  - Brewer's yeast
  - Bulgur
  - Couscous
  - Durham
  - Einkorn
  - Farina
  - Farro
  - Graham flour
  - Kamut
  - Malt (also malt syrups, malt vinegar, malted milk, and sweeteners)
  - Orzo
  - Seitan
  - Semolina
  - Spelt
  - Triticale
  - Wheat bran
  - Wheat germ
  - Wheat flour
  - Wheat gluten
  - Wheat starch
  - Wheat berries



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- Consume grains and foods that do not contain gluten, such as:
  - Amaranth
  - Arrowroot
  - Beans, legumes, and bean flours (fava, garbanzo, etc.)
  - Buckwheat
  - Corn and cornmeal
  - Meat (plain), poultry, fish, seafood, and eggs (in the shell)
  - Milk, buttermilk, creamer, half & half, sour cream, and plain yogurt
  - Millet
  - Nuts (plain), seeds and nut flours (almond, hazelnut, etc.)
  - Potato and potato flour
  - Popcorn (plain)
  - Quinoa
  - Rice
  - Sweet potato
  - Soy and plain tofu, edamame, gluten-free soy sauce, and soy miso
  - Sorghum
  - Tapioca
  - Teff
  - Taro
  - Vegetables/fruit (plain, fresh, frozen, or canned) and pure juices
  - Veggie burgers and meat substitutes that are labeled gluten-free
  - Yucca
- Buy certified gluten-free oats, such as Bob’s Red Mill®. Gluten often is found in processed oats even though such do not naturally contain gluten.
- When reading such labels, remember that “wheat-free” does not mean “gluten-free.” The food may still contain barley or rye. Check the ingredient list for hidden gluten.
- Salad dressings, soups, lunchmeats, sauces, and candy may contain “hidden” gluten. Check labels to be sure that these foods are gluten-free.
- Vitamins and medications may also contain gluten. Talk with your pharmacist to be sure that your supplements and medications are gluten-free.
- If possible, choose whole-grain, gluten-free grains or review the label for vitamin-fortified, gluten-free grains.
- If you have family members who eat gluten, use separate items and label each to avoid cross contact. This includes both food items and the items used to prepare your food. For example:
  - Use a separate toaster, cutting board, and colander
  - Use squeeze bottle condiments, such as ketchup, mustard, and mayonnaise
  - Use separate peanut butter, jelly, and butter dish
- When dining out, tell your server that you cannot have gluten. Ask them to prepare your food on separate, clean surfaces using fresh pots, pans, and utensils.
- Use caution at buffets and when buying food items in bulk. It only takes one utensil shared between gluten-free and gluten-containing foods to add gluten by accident.
- A gluten-free diet may not provide an adequate supply of some B vitamins, calcium, phosphorous, and zinc. You may need an age-appropriate gluten-free vitamin and mineral supplement.

A gluten-free diet may seem hard at first, but there are many resources to help you. Your dietitian can also help answer any questions that you may have.

**Internet Resources for Celiac Disease**

- Celiac Disease Foundation  
[celiac.org](http://celiac.org)
- National Celiac Association  
[nationalceliac.org](http://nationalceliac.org)
- Gluten-free Living  
[glutenfreeliving.com](http://glutenfreeliving.com)
- Gluten Intolerance Group  
[gluten.org](http://gluten.org)
- Beyond Celiac  
[beyondceliac.org](http://beyondceliac.org)
- Gluten Free Watchdog  
[glutenfreewatchdog.org](http://glutenfreewatchdog.org)

**Book Resources for Celiac Disease**

- *Gluten Free: The Definitive Resource Guide – Revised Edition* (2022)  
Shelly Case, R.D.
- *Celiac Disease: A Hidden Epidemic (Updated 4<sup>th</sup> Edition)* (2020)  
Peter H.R. Green, M.D., and Rory Jones
- *Celiac Disease Cookbook for the Newly Diagnosed: Guidance and Recipes for an Easy Transition to the Gluten-free Diet* (2020)  
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