

Diabetes and Celiac Disease



**GLUTEN
INTOLERANCE
GROUP**

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What is celiac disease?

An autoimmune disease which is the result of an immune system response to the ingestion of gluten (a protein found in wheat, rye and barley) in susceptible individuals. This response to gluten damages the small intestine, leading to malabsorption of nutrients and related health issues.

- Can cause food and medications to be absorbed poorly. This can lead to symptoms of nutrient and medication malabsorption.
- The only treatment is a strict gluten-free diet. If the diet is followed, the intestinal damage will slowly heal. This can take from several months to several years.
- The disease is lifelong. Intestinal damage occurs each time gluten is consumed.
- Celiac disease affects about one in every 133 people in the United States.

Diabetes and celiac disease: The link

- There is a genetic link between Type 1 diabetes and celiac disease.
- Developing one of the diseases increases the risk of developing the other.
- The prevalence of celiac disease in people with Type 1 diabetes is about 6% worldwide.
- When a family has two children with Type 1 diabetes, there is a much higher chance some in the family will have celiac disease.
- Symptoms of celiac disease vary widely, but are often absent in persons with diabetes.
- Celiac disease can cause unstable blood sugar control.

Signs of a malabsorption problem

	Diabetes	Celiac Disease
Weight Loss	X	X
GI symptoms (abdominal pain, bloating, cramping, diarrhea, constipation)	X	X
Ketones in urine (from protein wasting)	X	
Less insulin needs (despite large food intake)	X	X
Abnormal labs	X	X

Getting tested:

People with Type 1 diabetes should be tested for celiac disease.

Initial screening should be done within 1 to 2 years of diagnosis of diabetes.

Periodic follow-up screening is advised every few years for persons at risk.

A normal test does not rule out later development of celiac disease - that is why follow-up screening is necessary.

Initial screening is done by a simple blood test.



CELIAC DISEASE

Classic symptoms...

Gas, bloating, diarrhea, constipation, vomiting, weight loss, anemia.

Other symptoms...

Chronic fatigue, bone pain, muscle cramps, balance problems, migraine headaches, seizures, behavior and memory problems, neuropathies, growth and maturation delays, infertility, bone disease, dental enamel defects, and more.

Gluten-free starches

The following grains and starches are allowed on a gluten-free diet:

Amaranth	Quinoa
Arrowroot	Rice
Beans/legumes	Sorghum
Buckwheat	Soy
Corn	Tapioca
Millet	Teff
Nut Flours	
Potato	

Foods Containing Gluten

The following foods are not allowed on a gluten-free diet. This is not a complete listing.

Barley	Malt and Malt Extract
Bran	Rye
Bulgar	Semolina
Couscous	Spelt
Durum	Triticale
Einkorn	Wheat
Farro	Wheat Germ
Kamut	Wheat Starch

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Other helpful information is available at www.GLUTEN.net.

Advances in celiac disease are fast-paced. If this document is more than 2 years old, please visit our website for updated documents.

This information should not be used to diagnose or treat anemia or celiac disease. For questions about these conditions consult with your healthcare team when considering this information.

Please consider your local GIG Branch as another resource.

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GIG is a nonprofit 501c3 national organization providing support for persons with gluten intolerances, in order to live healthy, productive lives. GIG Branches provide support at a local level.

To make a donation or become a volunteer to GIG, visit our website or call the office at 253-833-6655.