



Celiac Disease

Celiac disease is a condition that damages the lining of the small intestine and prevents it from absorbing nutrients. The exact cause of celiac disease is unknown. Celiac is an autoimmune condition of the lining of the intestines. The intestines contain villi, which are fingerlike projections that are responsible for increasing the surface area allowing for the absorption of nutrients to nourish the body. When someone with celiac disease eats food or uses products that contain gluten, their immune system reacts by damaging these villi, in some cases almost eliminating them. As a result making it impossible to provide appropriate nutrition to thrive and be healthy. The disease can develop at any point in life, from infancy to late adulthood.

Other Conditions and Symptoms:

Other conditions and symptoms can be abdominal pain, bloating, gas, diarrhea, and vomiting, but many times symptoms are not expressed through the GI system. Often people will seek treatment for conditions that are a secondary result of malabsorption syndromes. Because the intestines are not absorbing important nutrients patients often experience or develop:

- Rheumatoid Arthritis
- Hashimoto's Thyroiditis
- Lactose intolerance
- Diabetes
- Depression
- Fatigue
- Seizure
- Nosebleeds
- Anemia & Bruising
- Menstrual problems/Miscarriages/ Infertility Issues
- Tingling or numbness in the hands or feet
- Psoriasis, Eczema, Hair loss & other skin conditions
- Muscle cramps and joint pain

In Children :

- Defects in the tooth enamel & color
- Delayed puberty
- Diarrhea, constipation, fatty or foul-smelling stool, nausea, or vomiting
- Irritable and fussy behavior
- Poor weight gain
- Failure to thrive or Growth delay
- Slowed growth short stature

Diagnosis & Treatment:

Diagnosis - Most people get a celiac diagnosis through specific blood work that your doctor can order. Then the diagnosis is confirmed by an endoscopic biopsy. It is important not to begin your gluten free diet if you plan on having a biopsy as this may result in a false negative. Today there is also some genetic testing that is available in some areas.

Treatment - Celiac disease cannot be cured by a medical procedure or medication. But that's the good news, you are not subject to a lifetime of medication. This condition is controlled by diet and lifestyle changes. By avoiding gluten in food and other products, over time (which for some may be a few years, due to the amount of damage in your intestines), your gut will heal and your symptoms should resolve. Failure to adopt this lifestyle and avoid gluten can lead to much more serious even life threatening health issues. In some cases as a result of the damage to the intestinal tract, your doctor may decide to recommend short term medications such as proton pump inhibitors to be useful.

Gluten Free Tips:

READ labels very carefully when eliminating gluten from your diet. You need to become a proficient label reader. If something does not specially say Gluten Free on the label, you need to take out your reading glasses and proceed with caution. There are many words that mean gluten that you need to familiarize yourself with before heading out to the grocery store, such as hydrolyzed plant protein, hydrolyzed vegetable protein, modified food starch, MSG, "Natural" flavor, spice mixtures, soy sauce, teriyaki sauce, edible starch, food starch, modified food starch and many others. You also don't want your diet to primarily consist of packaged products even if gluten free because that are often not nutrient rich and you should always remember that food is meant to nourish our bodies.

When going to other people's houses you need to become comfortable with making sure friends and family are familiar with the gluten issue for your family member and make them understand that you will be happy to attend their event or gathering but you will need to bring your own food.

Medication & supplements are often an overlooked gluten issue. Nutritional supplements are usually an integral part of the celiac healing process. When taking prescription medication or nutritional supplements you need to call or email the manufacturer and specifically ask them; "I recently purchased (or have been prescribed) 'product name' and I need to know if it is Gluten free? Also, what is the process your company takes to ensure there is no cross contamination during production if your plant manufactures products that are not gluten free. Please be as specific as possible as to the processing standards you follow." Please do not rely on your doctor or pharmacist to provide this information. If you can't get an answer that satisfies you, I would find a manufacturer who is forthcoming with the information.

Traveling while gluten free is always somewhat challenging, but I find a little preparation goes a long way. Do some searching on the internet to plan your meals at locations that offer gluten free menus. You can also find companies today that prepare gluten free and organic meals for you and can ship them directly to your hotel.

Eating out while being gluten free is often difficult to avoid, nor should you. Today many restaurants offer gluten free options. You can also request to speak to the chef and let him know about your dietary issues, most places today will do their best to accommodate you. You do need to remember that even if they offer gluten free options or will prepare something special for you, it is not a designated gluten free facility and you always run the risk of cross contamination, especially if the staff has not been properly trained on gluten free or food allergy issues.

Support Groups are a way many people find helpful when initially navigating the gluten free process.; If you ever find that leading a gluten free lifestyle is a little more challenging than you thought and feel you could use some additional support? We found that the simplest, easiest, most time efficient way to do that is through our weekly telephone support group call. You can tap into the support of Dr. Randi Ross who has been in the wellness industry and coaching for over two decades by clicking here. Gluten free is the best thing that ever happened to you because this is an opportunity for you to address and embrace the process of examining as well as making better lifestyle choices. Most of us have very busy lives and for convenience we may not always do what we know is best. Along with being gluten free, stick to real living food preferably more organic foods to avoid unnecessary chemicals. Make sure to get enough rest and exercise on a regular basis, and don't forget to visit your chiropractor to keep your nervous system in check. Take this opportunity to really look at things that you and your family can do differently, and in the long run you'll be rewarded with Health and Happiness.

I'm Dr. Randi I Ross, your Healthee Gluten Free Coach. For more information on living a healthy gluten free journey click here:

www.glutenfreehealthee.com