

Brakes guide to Coeliac disease



What is Coeliac disease?

Coeliac disease (pronounced see-liac) isn't an allergy or a food intolerance, it's an autoimmune disease where the body's immune system attacks its own tissues when gluten is eaten. Gluten is a protein found in wheat, barley, rye, spelt and Khorasan wheat (commercially known as Kamut®). Oats can be contaminated with gluten so only oats labelled as gluten free are suitable for someone with coeliac disease.

Eating gluten can damage the lining of the gut and reduce the absorption of nutrients from food in people with coeliac disease. Symptoms of coeliac disease can include gastric problems such as bloating, diarrhoea and nausea, and other issues such as weight loss, tiredness and anaemia.

The only treatment for coeliac disease is to follow a gluten free diet for life. If a gluten free diet is not followed, the disease can lead to nutritional deficiencies and other complications such as osteoporosis, a rare type of bowel cancer of the small bowel and unexplained infertility problems.

How many people does it effect?

Coeliac disease affects 1 in every 100 people. However, it's thought that only 36% who have the condition, have been clinically diagnosed. This means there could be over 400,000 people in the UK who have coeliac disease, but aren't aware.

Catering for gluten free diets

Always read food labels on products to check if wheat, rye, barley, spelt, Khorasan wheat or oats are listed within the ingredients list. If present, they will be emphasised, usually in bold, underlined and/or in italic font. If a product contains one of these ingredients, then it is not suitable for someone with coeliac disease.

- Where possible, serve plain foods
- Serve meat/fish with no sauce or dressing
- Use naturally gluten-free starchy foods like rice and potatoes
- Serve vegetables with no sauce or dressing
- Ensure a variety of foods is offered
- Avoid cross-contamination with foods containing gluten

Gluten Free Foods

Foods and meals can only be called gluten free if they contain less than 20ppm (parts per million) gluten. Unless you're sure of this, you can't advertise foods or dishes on your menu this way.

Foods that don't contain gluten

- Potatoes
- Rice
- Lentils
- Plain meat, poultry & fish
- Fruits
- Vegetables
- Salad
- Milk
- Butter
- Eggs
- Plain cheese
- Plain yogurt
- Cream
- Oils
- Uncoated nuts & seeds
- Anything stating 'Gluten Free' on packaging

Foods that sometimes contain gluten

- Sausages
- Gravy
- Dressings
- Burgers
- Sauces
- Relishes

Foods to avoid

- Bread
- Crackers
- Cakes
- Biscuits
- Pasta
- Pastry
- Pies
- Pizza
- Battered and breaded products

Ingredients that don't contain gluten

- Textured vegetable protein
- Maize starch
- Modified maize starch
- Corn malt
- Maltodextrin
- Dextrose
- Modified starch
- Rice malt
- Rice rusk
- Glucose syrup

Ingredients that do contain gluten and must be avoided

- Wheat starch
- Wheat rusk
- Barley malt
- Oat bran
- Modified wheat starch
- Wheat bran
- Barley flour
- Rye flour