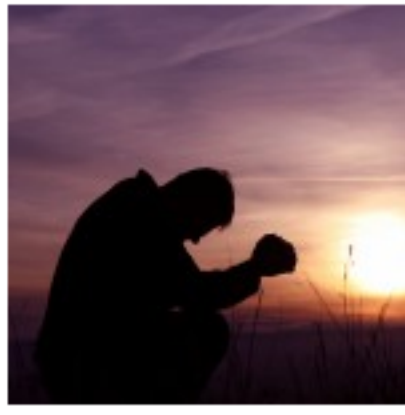




## Leading a Gluten-Free Life

by G. Bossik on August 3rd, 2012 at 3:18 pm



In the United States, many people have trouble digesting gluten, a protein found in wheat, barley, and rye.

This digestive problem is known as celiac disease. According to The University of Chicago Medicine, three million Americans are affected by this autoimmune disorder.<sup>1</sup>

Celiac disease damages the lining of the small intestines, making it difficult to absorb nutrients and leading to diarrhea, bloating, abdominal pain, weight loss, and other health problems.

However, a study from last year tests the hypothesis that there may be two different types of gluten-related disorders: celiac disease and gluten sensitivity.<sup>2</sup>

The published results show that scientists from the University of Maryland School of Medicine conducted tests on gluten-sensitive patients and patients with celiac disease.

The gluten-sensitive (GS) volunteers reacted to gluten but didn't exhibit intestinal damage. "These findings might indicate that GS is an inflammatory condition mostly supported by innate immune mechanisms," Anna Sapone and colleagues concluded in the study.

The National Foundation for Celiac Awareness lists the symptoms of non-celiac gluten sensitivity as being abdominal pain, fatigue, headaches, tingling/numbness, and "foggy brain."<sup>3</sup>

But what can be done to avoid gluten? The good news is that there are more available resources than ever before for adhering to such a diet. Among these resources are gluten-free grains such as amaranth and quinoa, recipes for using these grains in meals, and online guides to restaurants offering gluten-free food.

An historical fact sheet on Purdue University's Web site says that amaranth is a high-protein grain that was grown as long ago as the 1400s.<sup>4</sup> Orgran, a food manufacturer, even makes gluten-free multigrain pasta that uses amaranth.

For those who would like to try quinoa, look for the grain and pasta from Quinoa Corporation in your local grocery store. There are also quinoa recipes on Epicurious.com and RealSimple.com.

If you can't eat food that contains gluten, you can still dine out. The Gluten Intolerance Group offers an online guide to gluten-free restaurants on its Web site, Gluten.net. There's also a published guidebook listing gluten-free restaurants, and the book is available for purchase on TriumphDining.com.

So, dietary restrictions don't have to stop you from enjoying food. A world of gluten-free food awaits you in your local grocery stores and restaurants.

**Newsletter:** Get health news via email. Sign up for our e-mail newsletter.

**DigestAssist** promotes healthy digestion and comfort after meals.

### Sources:

1. The University of Chicago Celiac Disease Center, "Celiac Disease Facts and Figures," The University of Chicago Medicine.
2. Anna Sapone et al., "Divergence of Gut Permeability and Mucosal Immune Gene Expression in Two Gluten-Associated Conditions: Celiac Disease and Gluten Sensitivity," BMC Medicine.
3. National Foundation for Celiac Awareness, "Should You Be Gluten-Free? Celiac Disease & Non-Celiac Gluten Sensitivity," CeliacCentral.org.
4. D.H. Putnam et al., "Amaranth," Purdue University.

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