



**GLUTEN  
INTOLERANCE  
GROUP**



# One Step At A Time

*Updated November 2018*

Following a gluten-free diet is a major lifestyle modification. There is a lot to know about foods, ingredients, and changes in lifestyle and cooking, and you may be wondering just where to start. Try taking things “one step at a time” to help make your gluten-free transition more manageable.

**Step One** – Yes, you need to learn about what foods to avoid, but also realize there are many naturally gluten-free foods you can still enjoy (that also happen to be delicious and healthy!). Focus on shopping the perimeter of your grocery store: vegetables, fruits, fish, poultry, meats, and dairy products. These foods in their natural forms (i.e. without potentially gluten-containing flavorings or ingredients added) make excellent components of a gluten-free diet.



**Step Two** – When choosing packaged foods, look for those which are clearly labeled gluten-free. Thanks to increased awareness around the gluten-free diet in recent years, a large selection of gluten-free foods is now widely available. When you choose products which carry the GFCO certification seal you can rest assured knowing that the Gluten Intolerance Group has worked closely with the manufacturer to ensure that the product is safe. Packaged foods that are not certified, but are labeled gluten-free are required to comply with Food and Drug Administration (FDA) standards and should also be safe to consume. \* For products which are not either certified or labeled gluten-free, it is essential to read ingredient lists, and may be necessary to contact manufacturers. Lots of information regarding ingredients and gluten-free status of products can be found online, and many manufacturers are responsive to questions posted on social media.

*\*The FDA regulates the vast majority of packaged foods. Find more information on the FDA gluten-free labeling regulation, and gluten-free label reading here:*

<https://www.gluten.org/resources/getting-started/label-reading/>

**Step Three** – A support network of others who are living gluten-free can be invaluable. Whether sharing resources, recipes, restaurant or product recommendations, or providing moral support during difficult times, connecting with others can be very helpful. Check here to see if there is a GIG support group near you.

<https://www.gluten.org/community/local-branches/>

*Other helpful materials on the gluten-free diet are available on the Resources section of the GIG website, [www.gluten.org](http://www.gluten.org). These include:*

- *Getting Started on a Gluten-Free Diet*
- *Easy to Find & Easy to Fix Meals and Snacks*
- *Restaurant Dining – Seven Tips for Staying Gluten-Free*
- *Gluten-Free Nutrition Guide*
- *Quick Reference Ingredient Card*
- *Restaurant Card*

*Other documents may be found at [www.gluten.org](http://www.gluten.org)*

**Step Four** – Begin to explore new foods that are naturally gluten-free. There are many gluten-free grains you may not have tried before, like sorghum, teff and buckwheat (which is naturally gluten-free, despite its name). Often when some doors are closed, others are opened. Look at your gluten-free diet as an opportunity to discover new gluten-free foods and cuisines. Get inspired by Mexican and Indian spices and ingredients. Corn tortillas, salsas, guacamole and beans are naturally gluten-free. Cook with traditional Indian ingredients like cumin, turmeric and lentils.

We never stop learning if we choose to keep our eyes and minds open. Be thankful for a diagnosis, take one step at a time, learn, and grow healthy!

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Other helpful information is available at [www.GLUTEN.org](http://www.GLUTEN.org).

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 gluten-related disorders or other medical conditions. For questions about these conditions consult your healthcare team when considering this information.

Please consider your local GIG support group as another resource.

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The Mission of the Gluten Intolerance Group is to empower the gluten-free community through consumer support, advocacy, and education.

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