



# Diabetes and Celiac Disease

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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 problems. Untreated celiac disease can also lead to health issues in virtually any body system.

- Can cause food and medications to be absorbed poorly. This can lead to symptoms of starvation, and 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 several months or longer.
- The disease is lifelong. Intestinal damage occurs each time gluten is consumed.
- Celiac disease affects about one in every 100 people.

## Type 1 diabetes and celiac disease: The link

- There is a genetic link between Type 1 diabetes and celiac disease. (There is no connection between Type 2 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 who have Type 1 diabetes, there is a higher chance that someone in the family will have celiac disease.
- Symptoms of celiac disease vary widely, but are often absent in individuals with Type 1 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:

*The general recommendation is that people with Type 1 diabetes should be screened for celiac disease.*

*Discuss potential screening/testing with your healthcare provider.*

*Periodic follow-up screening is advised for individuals at risk.*

*A normal test does not rule out later development of celiac disease – this 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 grains and starches

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

- Amaranth
- Arrowroot
- Beans/legumes
- Buckwheat
- Corn
- Millet
- Nut Flours
- Oats that are certified gluten-free
- Potato
- Quinoa
- Rice
- Sorghum
- Soy
- Tapioca
- Teff

## Foods Containing Gluten

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

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

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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.