

RE: _____ Dietary Restrictions for School Field Trips
(Child's Name)

Dear _____,

Thank you for taking the time to speak with me regarding my child's medical condition and dietary needs.

As we discussed, _____ must eat gluten-free for medically necessary reasons and, in general, avoid gluten.

The school nurse has a copy of a doctor's letter that explains the medical necessity of their dietary restrictions.

Please let anyone on the staff and any adults present on the field trip or off-campus school activity know that:

1. Gluten is found in wheat, barley, rye, and their derivative products. Gluten from these grains must be avoided and not come into contact with any gluten-free foods.
2. For oats, only those certified or labeled gluten-free are safe. A certification mark or "gluten-free" statement will appear on the oats packaging, if safe. If there is no packaging available, oats must be avoided.
3. Even a very small amount of gluten can cause medical problems. During food preparation, cross-contact must be avoided (containers, serving plates, and utensils should not be used for both gluten-containing and gluten-free foods).

I am providing gluten-free meals and gluten-free snack foods so _____ can eat them as an alternative if no gluten-free options are available. Please make sure they are allowed to access their supply of gluten-free foods as needed. If additional gluten-free food options are needed, I can arrange to supply them upon request.

To reiterate, it is VERY IMPORTANT to use CLEAN plates, bowls, utensils, and hands when preparing foods. Cross-contact with gluten-containing foods is an all-too-common way to be exposed to gluten.

Please help my child speak up about their dietary needs with anyone serving food. I've included an article about reading packaging labels that may be helpful to better understand how to check for gluten. When in doubt, please stick with the gluten-free foods I have provided.

Also please make sure they have unlimited access to using the restroom as they may be experiencing stomach or intestinal upset.

In addition to the above restrictions and instructions, please note the following:

1) Soy sauce traditionally contains wheat, so soy sauce is not okay unless you can confirm that it is gluten-free. Tamari is a similar product that is gluten-free. This does not apply to soy

products that are derived from soybeans such as soy milk. If a product ingredient is “soy,” it is considered gluten-free if it is in a product that’s free from wheat, barley, or rye.

2) All malt products are derived from barley and are not safe for my child. That includes malt vinegar in salad dressing, for example. Distilled vinegar is fine. Please read the ingredients on packaged foods. When in doubt or if you cannot verify the gluten-free status of a food, please avoid.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call me at the following number:

_____.

I recognize that helping a student adhere to a restricted diet can be challenging, especially when away from school facilities. My child and I are grateful for your efforts and willingness to work with us. You can access more details about gluten-free living at Gluten.org.

Sincerely, _____

Parent of _____

3 Tips for Gluten-Free Label Reading

By the Gluten Intolerance Group

<http://gluten.org>

When you're living gluten-free, making sense of food labels can be a bit of a puzzle you must solve before you can feel confident putting that product in your cart and bringing it home to consume. We put together three tips for reading labels on packaged food products to help you figure out if they're safe for you, or anyone in your household, avoiding gluten.

Tip 1: Look for Third-Party Certification

A product that carries a third-party certification, such as GIG's [Gluten-Free Certification Organization \(GFCO\)](#) distinctive mark, is considered safe for gluten-free consumers.

The GFCO mark represents a rigorous certification process that includes:

- Ingredient analysis
- Plant audits
- Frequent testing
- Off-the-shelf product testing
- Verifying there is no more than 10ppm gluten content in tested foods

Note that the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) sets their gluten-content threshold at less than 20 ppm of gluten, making the GFCO's standard twice as strict.

Tip 2: Look for the words “gluten-free”

See the words “gluten-free” on a label, but not seeing a gluten-free certification mark? If a packaged product is regulated by the FDA and labeled “gluten-free,” it is considered safe for gluten-free consumers. The FDA regulation says that manufacturers are required to comply with the gluten-free definition detailed in their regulation.

The FDA regulation also applies to using the terms “no gluten,” “free of gluten,” and “without gluten” on product labels. If you see any of those terms, and the manufacturer is following the FDA’s gluten-free regulations, then the food should be gluten-free.

*A product that is labeled gluten-free may include the term “wheat” in the ingredient list (such as “wheat starch”) or in a separate “Contains wheat” statement, but the label must also include the following statement: “The wheat has been processed to allow this food to meet the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) requirements for gluten-free foods.”

If “wheat starch” is an ingredient in a GFCO–certified product, the wheat has been processed to such an extent that the food meets the GFCO standard of 10 ppm or less gluten.

Tip 3: Read the Ingredient List

For products that are not certified or labeled “gluten-free”, the best way to make sure you are eating or serving gluten-free packaged foods is to read the ingredient list.

What do you want to avoid? If any of the following are present on the ingredient list, the product is not gluten-free:

- Wheat (including all types of wheat such as spelt, emmer, farro, and durum)
- Rye
- Barley
- Oats*
- Malt

- Brewer's yeast

*An important thing to note about oats: Unless the words "gluten-free" or a gluten-free certification mark are on the oats packaging, oats may not be gluten-free. In the U.S., the FDA does not allow descriptions in ingredient lists, so you won't see "gluten-free oats" as one of the ingredients. Other countries do allow descriptive ingredients so you might see this on products from other countries, such as Canada. The safest oat products are those that have been certified gluten-free. While products labeled gluten-free should comply with the FDA definition of containing no more than 20 ppm of gluten, this is not third-party verified. GFCO's standard for gluten-free is 10 ppm of gluten or less.

Confused About That "*May Contain Wheat*" Statement?

Statements such as "may contain wheat" or "processed on equipment that handles wheat" are not relevant to the gluten-free status of a product that is certified or labeled gluten-free. These are voluntary statements that manufacturers may use to be transparent or to alert consumers who have wheat allergies – not gluten sensitivities.

If a product is either labeled or certified gluten-free, these statements are not relevant to the gluten-free status of a product because that product would meet the standard for gluten-free. If the product is not certified or labeled gluten-free, the product may not be safe. If you aren't sure, contact the manufacturer directly. They should be able to furnish you with the information you need to make safe food choices.

About Wheat Starch

Someone allergic to wheat should avoid wheat starch. For someone avoiding gluten, wheat starch could contain gluten unless it is in a product that is certified or labeled gluten-free. In that case, the gluten in wheat starch has been processed out. If the product is certified or labeled gluten-free, it is safe for someone avoiding gluten.

More About “*Contains*” Statements

If you see a “Contains” statement, or other indication that a USDA-regulated product is complying with FALCPA, then simply look for the word “wheat.” If there is any doubt about whether a product is complying with FALCPA labeling, the following ingredients may be derived from wheat.

Avoid these or investigate further:

- starch
- food starch
- modified food starch
- dextrin

Remember: Wheat-free is *not* the same as gluten-free. A product can be wheat-free but still contain gluten from rye or barley.