LIVING GLUTEN-FREE
BASICS & BEYOND

2022-2023

gluten.org



GIG GLUTEN INTOLERANCE GROUP.

Living Gluten-Free Basics & Beyond

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Recently Diagnosed

Recently diagnosed with Celiac Disease or Gluten Sensitivity?

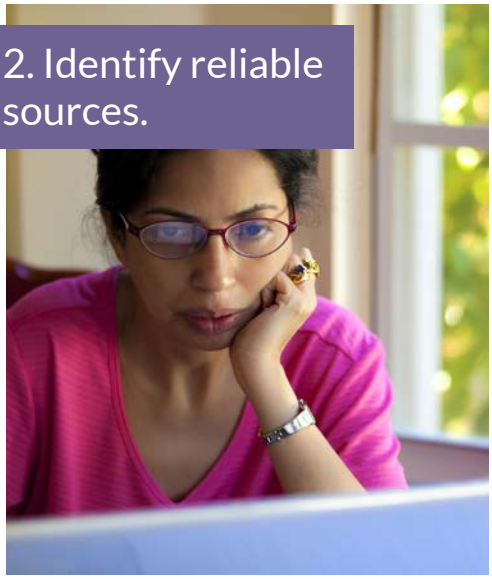
Here are some ways GIG can help you as you transition to eliminating gluten from your life.

1. Ask the experts.



A Registered Dietitian Nutritionist (RDN), as an example, can help you with dietary, nutritional, and lifestyle changes.

2. Identify reliable sources.



Start at Gluten.org. The more you learn about gluten-free living, the easier it gets.

3. Become an expert label reader.

CERTIFIED GLUTEN FREE GFCO.ORG

Look for the GFCO certification mark for peace of mind.

4. Seek out support groups.



GIG Support Groups connect you with others living gluten-free in your community.

5. Find Gluten Free Safe Spots.



GFFS validates local restaurants and other food service establishments to help them safely prepare gluten-free food.



GOING GLUTEN-FREE
GETTING STARTED EASILY

WHAT IS GLUTEN?

glu·ten
GLU-ten

Gluten refers to the proteins found in wheat, rye, and barley that cause an adverse reaction in people with gluten-related disorders, including celiac disease and gluten sensitivity.

In order to remove gluten from your diet, start by avoiding:

- Wheat (such as durum, emmer, spelt, farina, farro, bulgur, couscous, and einkorn)
- Rye
- Barley, including malt

Also avoid oats unless they are labeled or, preferably, certified gluten-free. We can only vouch for food certified by GFCO.

How else can you stay safely gluten-free? Read on!



IDENTIFY FOODS WITH GLUTEN

Foods that commonly contain gluten are typically the first to go when you're removing gluten from your snacks and meals. Those include:

- Cookies, cakes, donuts, and pastries
- Breads and other baked goods
- Cereal, pancakes, and waffles
- Crackers, croutons, stuffing, and dressings
- Flour
- Pastas

The good news is there are gluten-free versions of these foods that are widely available. There are also many naturally gluten-free foods including vegetables, fruit, nuts, seeds, fish, poultry, and meat.

Note: If affording gluten-free food is a challenge, for you or someone you know, check out GIG Cares at gigcares.org.

WATCH FOR OTHER POTENTIAL SOURCES OF GLUTEN

Not everything that contains gluten is obvious. Gluten can be used in foods and non-food items as a filler, binder, or thickener.

Here are a few other places to check for gluten:

- Imitation or "fake" meats or seafood
- Some specialty deli meats
- Some soup bases, bouillon, and thickeners like roux
- Some marinades, sauces like soy and teriyaki, gravies, and salad dressings
- Seasoned rice mixes, breading, coating mixes, and panko
- Some candy and energy bars
- Some prescribed or over-the-counter medications and supplements

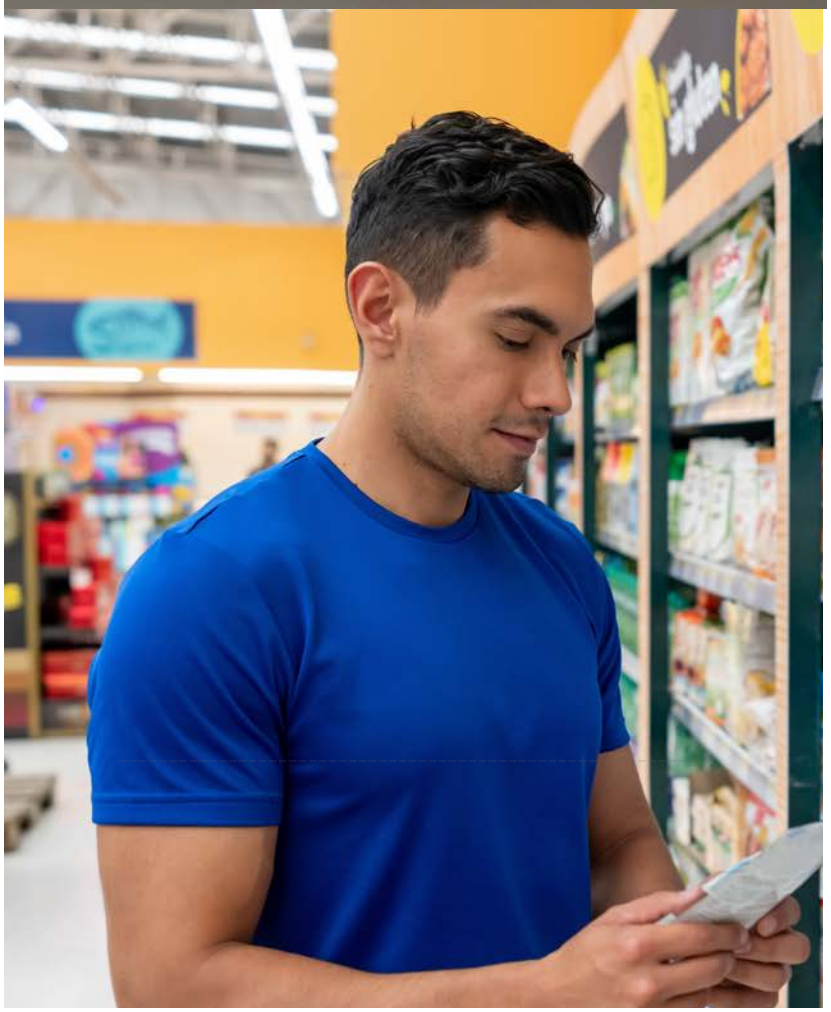
Read packaging labels carefully to identify wheat, barley, and rye or their derivatives. Better yet, look for the words "gluten-free." For assurance that a product has been checked for gluten and certified gluten-free, look for the GFCO gluten-free certification mark.



AVOID CROSS-CONTACT WITH GLUTEN

When gluten gets into gluten-free food, that's cross-contact. There are many ways that cross-contact can happen, such as during the manufacturing process or when food is being prepared without procedures to ensure that gluten doesn't get into your gluten-free food.





Cross-contact can even happen in your home. Here are some tips to avoid it in the kitchen:

- Use separate toasters, strainers, and flour sifters.
- Cutting boards and other kitchen tools should be cleaned carefully between uses. If a kitchen tool or appliance cannot be easily cleaned, purchase dedicated gluten-free cookware instead.
- Avoid deep-fried foods cooked in oil that's also used to cook breaded items.
- Spreadable condiments in squeeze bottles are safer than jars.

Consider labeling gluten-free products with stickers or oven safe tags to help prevent cross-contact, especially if you're living with, or sharing a kitchen with, anyone who eats food containing gluten.

LEARN TO READ LABELS

Getting savvy about spotting gluten on a food product label is an important skill to have when you're eating gluten-free. Ingredient lists and food labels can be confusing. Here are a few quick tips for checking something before you buy and consume it.

1. Look for the GFCO certification mark to know it contains 10ppm or less of gluten.
2. Look for products labeled "gluten-free." Those should contain less than 20 ppm of gluten according to FDA regulations.
3. For products not certified or labeled gluten-free, read labels carefully or contact the manufacturer with questions.
4. When in doubt, avoid the product.

See our article, *3 Tips for Gluten-Free Label Reading*, later on in this publication.

As you can see, while there are many things to learn and to look out for when you're leaving gluten behind, there are also some quick and easy ways to check if what you're about to consume is safe.

Gluten-Free Myths vs. Facts

MYTH: "Eating gluten-free is always healthier."

Fact

People with celiac disease, non-celiac gluten sensitivity, or other gluten-related disorders avoid eating gluten entirely to improve their health, but it is not necessarily a healthier way for everyone to eat.

For the general population, a healthy dietary pattern is not based on the presence or absence of gluten alone. A healthier eating pattern includes a balanced diet from all the major food groups, whether or not someone is eating gluten-free.

Anyone can make their diet healthier by relying less on foods like breads, pastas, and baked goods – especially those made with refined flours – to an eating pattern with more vegetables, fruits, beans, and other nutrient-dense foods.

MYTH: “A gluten-free diet is good for weight loss.”

Fact

A gluten-free diet is not a weight loss diet. Whether a gluten-free diet leads to weight loss, gain, or maintenance is related to the overall nature of the diet. A gluten-free diet can include plenty of fruits, vegetables, and nutritious foods. It can also include high-fat, high-sugar gluten-free foods. Having a balanced diet – regardless of gluten – can help you maintain a healthy weight.

A person with undiagnosed celiac disease may experience weight loss due to intestinal damage caused by gluten, but this generally normalizes once a gluten-free diet is adopted.



MYTH: "Surely a few crumbs of bread can't hurt."

Fact

For individuals with celiac disease, trace amounts of gluten can damage the intestinal cells, even if there are no obvious immediate symptoms. Tiny amounts of gluten can also be problematic for people with non-celiac gluten sensitivity. As it is less understood than celiac disease, it is unknown if those with gluten sensitivity can tolerate small amounts of gluten. If you do not have celiac disease but are on a gluten-free diet for other medical reasons, avoid even tiny amounts of gluten to be safe.

MYTH: "Once I feel better, I can start eating gluten again."

Fact

If you've been diagnosed with celiac disease, you must remain on a strict, life-long gluten-free diet — even if no symptoms are present. Continuing to eat gluten after diagnosis will cause adverse reactions that can damage intestinal cells and may lead to serious health problems. There is currently no cure for celiac disease. For those with gluten sensitivity, gluten should continue to be avoided in order to avoid symptoms.



MYTH: "Symptoms for celiac disease and gluten sensitivity are obvious and easy to diagnose."

Fact

There are over 200 symptoms of gluten intolerances, including celiac disease and gluten sensitivity. Symptoms include recurring abdominal pain, chronic diarrhea/constipation, tingling/numbness in hands and feet, chronic fatigue, joint pain, unexplained infertility, and low bone density (osteopenia or osteoporosis). These symptoms could also be signs of other conditions, making gluten intolerances difficult to diagnose. To add to the challenge of diagnosis, different symptoms can appear at different life stages. Signs that an infant may exhibit could be vastly different from what a teenager, middle-aged person, or senior might show.

MYTH: "If you think you might be intolerant to gluten, regardless of the cause, it is okay to just stop eating gluten."

Fact

Eliminating gluten from your diet without guidance from a healthcare provider or dietitian can be problematic. If you and your healthcare provider suspect celiac disease or gluten sensitivity, a blood test should be done as the first step to a potential diagnosis. To get accurate test results, it is essential that you have been consuming gluten over time and continue to do so throughout the testing process. If you have stopped eating gluten, test results may not be accurate. In addition, once you've eliminated gluten, it may be difficult to go back to consuming gluten for testing later.

MYTH: "A blood test is the only way a celiac diagnosis is confirmed."

Fact

The first step for diagnosing celiac disease is a blood test that looks for an antibody response to gluten. If these tests are positive, the next step is an endoscopy. If the endoscopy shows intestinal cell damage, a characteristic of celiac disease, this is considered the gold standard for a celiac disease diagnosis. While some within the medical community may consider relying on bloodwork for a diagnosis, most are still advocating an endoscopy to be sure. For young children, a diagnosis may be made without an endoscopy.

There is currently no specific diagnostic test for non-celiac gluten sensitivity. Instead, it is considered a "rule out" diagnosis, meaning once celiac disease, wheat allergy, and other potential causes of symptoms are ruled out, a gluten sensitivity diagnosis is considered.

MYTH: "Celiac disease and other gluten-related disorders are rare."

Fact

Approximately 1 in 100 people worldwide have celiac disease. The prevalence of non-celiac gluten sensitivity is not established but may be significantly higher. It is estimated that approximately 50% of people with gluten-related disorders remain undiagnosed.

MYTH: "Sticking to a gluten-free diet means you'll never be able to eat bread, pasta, or baked goods again."

Fact

While you won't be able to consume wheat, rye, or barley anymore, you can find a wide variety of gluten-free bread, pasta, and other baked goods made from gluten-free sources such as rice, corn, potato, and tapioca. When choosing foods made with oat flour or oats, look for certified gluten-free or labeled gluten-free versions. While oats are naturally gluten-free, there could be cross-contact issues with with gluten-containing grains during growing and/or processing. Search Gluten.org for "oats" for more information.





3 Tips for Gluten-Free Label Reading

When you're living gluten-free, making sense of food labels can be a bit of a puzzle to solve. Before you put that product in your cart and bring it home, we put together three tips for reading labels on packaged food products to help you avoid gluten.

Tip 1: Look for the GFCO Certification Mark

CERTIFIED GLUTEN FREE GFCO.ORG

GFCO is GIG's product certification program meaning that every product bearing its certification mark is thoroughly reviewed to ensure that they are safe for those living gluten-free. GFCO is the only third-party gluten-free certification body that is owned and operated by a non-profit organization.

The GFCO certification mark stands for an 80-step independent verification process developed as the Gold Standard of gluten-free certification. All ingredients within a product must be evaluated and tested at or under 10 ppm of gluten before certification is awarded.

Tip 2: Understand the Words "Gluten-Free"

Do you see the words "gluten-free" on a label but don't see a gluten-free certification mark? If a packaged product is regulated by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and labeled "gluten-free," it is considered "safe" for gluten-free consumers.

The FDA says that manufacturers are required to comply with the gluten-free definition detailed in their labeling regulation when adding "gluten-free" to a label, but they do not require product testing.

The FDA regulation also applies to using the terms "no gluten," "free of gluten," and "without gluten" on product labels.



Tip 3: Read the Ingredient List

For products that are not certified or labeled "gluten-free," the best way to check that the packaged foods you're eating or serving do not contain gluten 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 note about oats:

Unless the GFCO gluten-free certification mark or the words "gluten-free" are on the 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 it listed on products from other countries, such as Canada.

The safest oat products are those that have been GFCO-certified gluten-free. While products labeled gluten-free are expected to comply with the FDA definition of containing less than 20 ppm of gluten, this standard is not third-party verified. Oats certified by GFCO contain 10 ppm of gluten or less. Search Gluten.org for "oats" for more information.

About Wheat Starch

A product that is labeled gluten-free may include the term "wheat" in the ingredient list, most commonly "wheat starch," or in a separate "Contains wheat" statement. 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" to be considered gluten-free by FDA standards.

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 of gluten.

As mentioned before, the FDA sets their gluten threshold at less than 20 ppm of gluten, making the GFCO's standard twice as strict.

Someone allergic to wheat should avoid wheat starch. For someone avoiding gluten, wheat starch likely contains gluten and should be avoided unless it is used in a product that is certified or labeled gluten-free. In that case, the gluten in wheat starch has been processed out. If a product with wheat starch is GFCO-certified or labeled gluten-free, it is safe for someone avoiding gluten but not safe for someone with a wheat allergy.

Looking for "Wheat" and Related "Contains" Statements

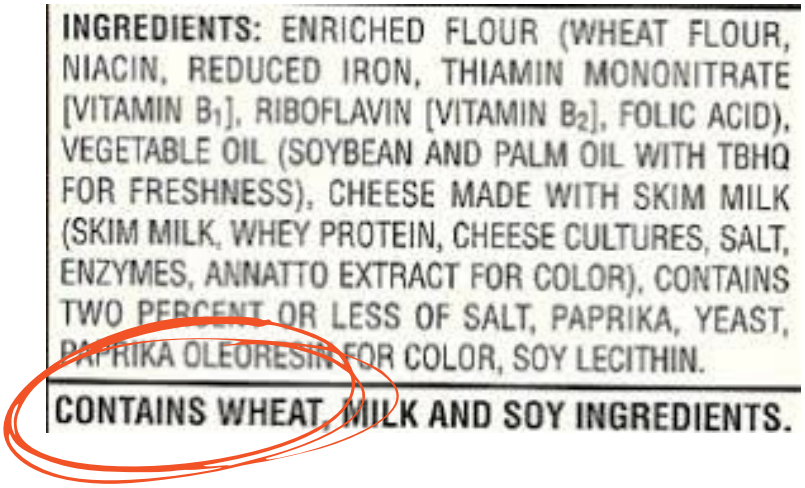
If a product contains wheat, the Food Allergen Labeling and Consumer Protection Act (FALCPA) requires that the word "wheat" appear either in parentheses following the ingredient that contains it or in a "Contains" statement.

For example:

Modified food starch (wheat)

or

Contains wheat.


INGREDIENTS: ENRICHED FLOUR (WHEAT FLOUR, NIACIN, REDUCED IRON, THIAMIN MONONITRATE [VITAMIN B_1], RIBOFLAVIN [VITAMIN B_2], FOLIC ACID), VEGETABLE OIL (SOYBEAN AND PALM OIL WITH TBHQ FOR FRESHNESS), CHEESE MADE WITH SKIM MILK (SKIM MILK, WHEY PROTEIN, CHEESE CULTURES, SALT, ENZYMES, ANNATTO EXTRACT FOR COLOR), CONTAINS TWO PERCENT OR LESS OF SALT, PAPRIKA, YEAST, PAPRIKA OLEORESIN FOR COLOR, SOY LECITHIN.

CONTAINS WHEAT, MILK AND SOY INGREDIENTS.

You'll find the "Contains" statement either immediately after, or next to, the ingredient list. If there is any doubt about whether a USDA-regulated product (such as packaged meat or a mixed product with meat like canned chili) is complying with FALCPA labeling, the following ingredients may be derived from wheat so investigate further by contacting the manufacturer or avoid:

- 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.

About That *"May Contain Wheat"* Statement

Statements such as "May contain wheat" or "Processed on equipment that handles wheat" are not relevant in determining the gluten-free status of a product that is GFCO-certified or labeled gluten-free.

These are voluntary statements that manufacturers use to alert consumers who have wheat allergies – not gluten-related disorders – or to be transparent about their manufacturing processes.

If a product is either GFCO-certified or labeled gluten-free, these statements do not have an impact on the gluten-free status of a product because it should meet a gluten-free standard as described previously. If the product is not GFCO-certified or labeled gluten-free, the product may not be safe. If you aren't sure of a product's gluten-free status, contact the manufacturer directly. They should be able to furnish you with the information you need to make safe food choices.

BONUS: SAVE SOME TIME READING LABELS

Reading packaged food labels is a critical step for assessing food safety. You can save some time you might spend reading labels by seeking out GFCO-certified products either at the grocery store or online.

Search the GFCO Product Directory to identify the products and brands that have gone through GFCO's detailed testing, auditing, and review processes and have been approved to put the official GFCO certification mark on their packaging.

Look for the updated GFCO mark on product labels to be assured that the food item is safely gluten-free. You may still see the old GFCO mark on products as it continues to be phased out. You can also check if the mark is still valid and current with a quick search through the GFCO Product Directory.

Figuring out if the food you're buying off the shelf is gluten-free and safe to eat does not have to be confusing. We are here to help you live safely gluten-free.

Gluten-Free & Nutritious Too



For people diagnosed with celiac disease or gluten sensitivity, the first step after diagnosis is to avoid gluten. Read on for some of the basic aspects of a healthy diet, along with some things to consider when you're eating gluten-free.

Basic Characteristics of a Healthy Dietary Pattern

Balance is important, meaning you should consume the right mix of protein sources, fruits, healthy fats, vegetables, and grains. A good guide is the USDA MyPlate and USDA 2020-2025 U.S. Dietary Guidelines. Think about variety as you make choices within each food group since each one may provide different nutrients. Variety can keep your diet appealing and tasty, too!

You may not always eat full meals, or even eat your meals on a plate. When you're on the go, it's likely you're grabbing what you can, like a hand-held snack or a breakfast bowl. Look at the illustration of a nutritious plate on the next page to get a sense of the mix of food groups you should be eating daily.

Vegetables & Fruits

Fill about half your plate with vegetables, especially non-starchy choices like broccoli, bell peppers, dark leafy greens, onions, cabbage, carrots, tomato, cauliflower, and cucumber. Include fruits as snacks and healthy desserts. Vegetables and fruits provide fiber, many vitamins and minerals, and phytonutrients, too. Vitamins and minerals are essential for numerous functions in the body. Phytonutrients may provide protection against chronic disease.

Grains

Fill about a quarter of your plate with gluten-free grains. Gluten-free grains include amaranth, quinoa, buckwheat, rice, teff, millet, and corn. Grains are good sources of energy in the form of

carbohydrates and provide many vitamins and minerals that are essential to your overall health. Eat at least half of your gluten-free grains in their whole grain form because they will contain more vitamins, minerals, protein, and fiber than their more refined counterparts. Increased fiber will help keep you feeling full longer and help prevent blood sugar spikes.

Protein Sources

Fill about a quarter of your plate with protein sources. Protein can be found in foods from animal sources like beef, pork, poultry, fish, eggs, and dairy, as well as plant sources such as beans, legumes, nuts, seeds, and soy. Animal protein provides a highly absorbable form of iron, a mineral that is necessary for the formation of red blood cells. Red blood cells are responsible for nutrient and oxygen distribution throughout the body. Plant proteins provide many nutrients, including B vitamins, magnesium, copper, vitamin E and K, and potassium, all of which are necessary for DNA replication, cell replication, and bone health.

Healthy dietary patterns can be either vegetarian, vegan, or contain foods of animal origin.* If you do eat foods of animal origin, it's good to include fatty fish twice a week.

** B12 is found only in foods of animal origin. Those who do not consume animal products need to obtain vitamin B12 from either fortified foods or in supplement form. Consult with your personal healthcare provider on how to best supplement nutrients you might miss.*

Dairy

Dairy products including milk, yogurt, and cheese can contribute calcium, protein, and various other nutrients. Choose low-fat options to reduce intake of saturated fats.

Healthy Fats

Choose unsaturated fats for anti-inflammatory benefits, as well as support for your heart and brain. Unsaturated fats are found in nuts, seeds, olive oil, avocado, salmon, and other fatty fish such as mackerel, anchovies, and sardines. Fish are a source of healthy fats and provides a good source of vitamin B12, integral for DNA and cell replication and for normal brain and nervous system function. Limit saturated fats by cutting back on fatty meats, poultry with skin, and higher fat dairy products.

Special Dietary Considerations When Gluten-Free

If you have been diagnosed with celiac disease, the damage that gluten causes to the small intestine can lead to malabsorption of nutrients. Until your intestines have had a chance to heal, you may experience deficiencies in various vitamins and minerals. After your intestines heal, nutrient deficiencies may still occur due to characteristics of the gluten-free diet: many processed gluten-free grain products are not enriched or fortified with vitamins and minerals, unlike their gluten-containing counterparts.





You may also not get enough fiber when on a gluten-free diet. In fact, most Americans – gluten-free or not – don't consume sufficient fiber. People with non-celiac gluten sensitivity don't experience intestinal damage, but they may still have deficiencies due to inadequate or unbalanced dietary intake. Specific dietary needs vary by individual, influenced by age, gender, health status, and other factors. It is important to have your own unique needs assessed by your personal healthcare provider or team.

Including plenty of nutrient-dense foods in the gluten-free diet is a good place to start. Try whole gluten-free grains, vegetables, beans, fruits, nuts, and seeds. For those who are not vegan or vegetarian, add meat, poultry, fish, and dairy products. At times, a supplement may be necessary, however, be sure to discuss supplementation with a dietitian and/or physician first. The right supplement may help improve your nutrient status if you cannot get the nutrients you need from diet alone. Keep in mind that supplementation should never take the place of a healthy, varied diet.

Tips for Maintaining Good Nutrition

1. Eat a variety of foods.
2. Select foods with color.
3. Choose whole gluten-free grains.
4. Go for nutrient dense foods.
5. Limit salt and sugars.
6. Drink plenty of water.



LIVING IN HARMONY WITH GLUTEN-EATERS



Here's your guide to living in harmony with your gluten-eating loved ones and some tips for making your kitchen more gluten-free friendly.

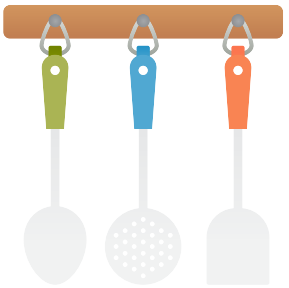
Being diagnosed with celiac disease or gluten sensitivity can be daunting, but most people feel a sense of relief just to know why they've been feeling badly. Swapping out gluten-containing foods with their gluten-free counterparts is easier now than in the past. Many familiar brands are producing gluten-free versions of their offerings, and many other brands produce a wide variety of solely gluten-free fare. The hard part? Making sure your family or roommates understand what it means to live gluten-free, and to prepare food that is safe to eat.

Your kitchen could be a danger zone if everyone isn't careful. The risk of cross-contact – when gluten crumbs accidentally get in your gluten-free food — is real, and not everyone understands how to avoid it.



Talk About It

Have a conversation with members of your household about cross-contact. Explain how easily gluten can be transferred onto gluten-free items and ask that everyone be aware of how food is prepared, what utensils are used, and all the ways gluten could get into otherwise gluten-free food. Most people don't intend to create an unsafe cooking environment, but it is easy to overlook a few crumbs on the counter or grab the wrong cutting board to slice that crusty whole wheat bread. Even a few misplaced gluten crumbs could make you sick. Knowledge is power, so talking to anyone who shares a kitchen with you about ways to avoid cross-contact is key to keeping you safely gluten-free.



Consider Buying New Cookware

Cutting boards, scratched nonstick pans, wooden spoons, and toasters, among other appliances and utensils, can be difficult to clean and could harbor gluten from previous use. Examine anything you might use for cooking and baking to evaluate whether you need to replace it. If you can wash it thoroughly with soap and water and are confident that there are no crumbs or residue that could contain gluten, you might be able to keep the ones you have.

If you have items in your kitchen that are difficult to clean, you might consider buying new ones. If you do, keep the old cookware for others to use if not everyone in your household is eating gluten-free. Use your best judgement when it comes to assessing your kitchenware. Reserve any new items you opt to purchase for exclusively gluten-free food prep and serving. Store the items separately and inform everyone which ones to use.

Note that when it comes to appliances that you can't easily wash out – like a toaster – it is advisable to invest in a second one to use only for gluten-free toasting. More expensive appliances, like mixers and blenders, typically have removable and washable parts. A thorough scrubbing with soap and water or a run through the dishwasher for dishwasher-safe appliance parts should be enough to remove gluten particles. See our article on kitchen tools you might want to replace on p. 13.



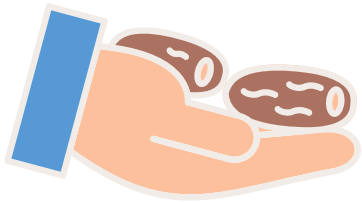
Make Gluten-Free Labels

Label your gluten-free items so they are not confused with the gluten-containing ones. From the cookware listed above to typically shared condiments like butter, mayo, nut butters, and jams, if there's a gluten-free label on it, gluten should not go near it. For example, if a jar of peanut butter has a gluten-free label on it, it should only be used with gluten-free bread. Knives should not be dipped into the jar after spreading on any items that are not gluten-free. Labeling is an easy way to help household members remember to keep gluten out of anything gluten-free in the kitchen.



Claim the High Shelf

Put your gluten-free food on a high shelf, above the food with gluten, to lessen the chance of crumbs falling into them. By designating a shelf as solely gluten-free, you'll know what to grab and others will know what to avoid. Do this for the pantry, cupboards, and even the refrigerator and freezer. Don't forget to label everything if stored in a shared space!



Share Gluten-Free Goodness

You don't always have to live separate lives in the kitchen! Make naturally gluten-free meals. Show off your gluten-free cooking and baking skills to your family or housemates. Share some of your favorite gluten-free snacks. The more others learn how delicious gluten-free foods can be, the easier it is to share a meal.

For maximum harmony, keep lines of communication open, be patient, be willing to educate others, and look for easy ways to clearly designate what needs to be gluten-free. And there is no such thing as too many labels!





HEY TEENS

Talk to Your Friends About Living Gluten-Free

Having a gluten-related disorder is life-changing. Not only do you have to learn how to live without gluten, but you also have to talk about it. Explaining your gluten-free needs to your friends might feel awkward. Some friends may be supportive, but others might not be as understanding. These conversations can be tricky to navigate, but we have some ideas for what you might say to make them easier. Let's dig in!

THE BASICS

Timing, setting, and tone can make all the difference in the world when explaining to your friends why you avoid gluten. Consider the following:

1. Start these conversations before you're in a situation where food is being served.
2. Try to find a quiet time when nobody is rushing around to share information about your condition and eating gluten-free.
3. Be yourself, but while you may want to be totally casual and even lighthearted, don't make too much of a joke about eating gluten-free or your friends may not take your condition seriously.
4. Focus on the positives of living gluten-free. You are taking control of your health by eating foods that make you feel good!
5. Let your friends know what they can do to help you avoid gluten anywhere food is served.

No matter how many times you explain your condition to someone, they may still not fully get it. Be prepared to explain more than once and know that it is okay. Every person is different, and every situation is different, so stay alert and keep explaining what others need to know about your gluten-free needs.

WHAT TO SAY

Here are some common questions you may hear from your friends along with some quick and easy ways to answer.

Why would you choose to avoid gluten? Isn't "gluten-free" a fad diet?

If you are diagnosed with celiac disease:
I have celiac disease, and the only treatment for it is avoiding gluten. Celiac disease is a serious autoimmune condition, like type 1 diabetes, lupus, or multiple sclerosis. There aren't any medicines I can take for celiac disease. Some people do choose to go gluten-free for other reasons, but for me, it is the only way to keep me from getting sick.

If you have gluten sensitivity:
I am sensitive to gluten, which means that eating even small amounts can make me feel sick (add in your personal symptoms if you want, like migraines, stomach pain, joint pain, and skin issues, etc.). There still isn't a lot of research about my condition, but I feel better when I don't eat gluten. Some people do choose to go gluten-free for other reasons, but for me, it is the only way to keep me from getting sick.

Going gluten-free sounds awful! Don't you miss eating bread and pasta? I could never do that.

It was hard at first, but there are actually a lot of delicious gluten-free bread and pasta products out there! I've even found gluten-free versions of some of my favorite foods and snacks. Lots of restaurants have gluten-free menus. Sometimes I do miss eating whatever I want, but I don't miss being sick.

Can't you just cheat every now and then? A little bit won't hurt you too much, right?

The truth is even the tiniest amount of gluten can really affect me. I have to watch out for cross-contact with gluten, too. That means crumbs from foods that contain gluten could get into my gluten-free food and make me sick. I also have to look out for gluten that isn't obvious, like in some sauces, salad dressings, and even some candies and chocolates. If I get exposed to small amounts of gluten over time, I could end up with other health problems.



I want you to be able to eat something at my house when you come over for dinner tonight but I know you can't eat gluten. What can I do?

Thank you for thinking about me! The easiest thing is to make something that is naturally gluten-free, like roast chicken simply seasoned with salt and pepper or a hamburger without a bun. If you make a gluten-free option, please make sure it hasn't touched any gluten-containing food. I have a lot of great recipes that I can share with you, too. To keep it really simple, I can bring over a frozen gluten-free pizza to pop in the oven or bring a gluten-free dish that I've prepared at home. Let me know what works for you!

Wow, eating gluten-free sounds boring. How can you stand it?

Actually, eating gluten-free just means being careful to avoid gluten, but there are so many foods I can eat that are amazing. A lot of Mexican food is gluten-free, as long as I avoid things like flour tortillas and some enchilada sauces that contain wheat flour. A lot of Indian food can also be safe to eat. There are many countries that don't use as many gluten-containing grains as we do in the U.S., or they are only used in specific dishes that are easy to avoid. I get to try a lot of new cuisines, so I'm definitely not bored!

Remember: You may have these conversations with the same people more than once, but talking about your need to eat gluten-free should get easier over time. Need more advice? Connect with a local GIG support group to learn how others who eat gluten-free navigate these kinds of conversations.

Written with contributions from Madison Service, Bastyr University Dietetic Intern, 2019



Hey, Kids: Let's Talk Gluten-Free From A-Z

Check out these fun gluten-free tips for you and your family!

A is for Always double-check before you eat! When in doubt, ask a trusted adult to help you make sure anything you're served is gluten-free.

B is for Barley. Barley is a grain that contains gluten. It can be found in soups, cereals, and other foods. (Do not eat. Go for gluten-free!)

C is for Chat with your friends. Let them know that you eat gluten-free and why it's important!

D is for Do your homework. Learn all you can about eating gluten-free so you can feel good and stay healthy.

E is for Eat plenty of fruits and vegetables. Fruits and veggies are naturally gluten-free. Veggies can be cooked in lots of different ways. Get creative, get cooking, and enjoy!

F is for Find your favorites. Show your friends how yummy gluten-free foods can be by sharing your favorites with them!

G is for Generation GF. Sign up for our special program for gluten-free kids, and get a cool magazine filled with fun articles and activities.

H is for Help others understand. If you have worries about eating gluten-free, talk to your friends to help them understand how you're feeling.





J is for Just ask. Ask whatever questions you need so you can check the safety of a snack or meal.



K is for Keep it simple. You don't always have to go into a lot of detail when telling someone what you can and can't eat. Simply say: "I can't have that."



L is for Learn to cook. It's never too early to learn your way around the kitchen, and making your own snacks and meals means you know what's in them!



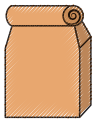
M is for Malt and malted things. Malt comes from barley and is found in some foods you might be surprised to learn are not gluten-free – like chocolate malt balls, malted milkshakes, and malt vinegar! (Do not eat. Go for gluten-free!)



N is for Nuts and gluten-free snacking. There are lots of yummy snacks that have no gluten at all – like nuts, corn chips, popcorn, and cut up raw veggies!



O is for Offer some snacks. If you're going to a friend's house, offer to bring along gluten-free snacks – and bring enough to share!



P is for Prepare, prepare, prepare. Keep gluten-free snacks in a bag or backpack when you're out and about so you always have something safe to eat.



Q is for Quiet your worries. Don't worry about what others think when you eat gluten-free food. Real friends will understand!



R is for Rye. Contains gluten and is used to make rye bread, and even pumpernickel. (Do not eat. Go for gluten-free!)



S is for Support. Get the support you need from family and friends to stay safely gluten-free.



T is for Talk about it. Talk with anyone who is making food for you about what you can and can't eat.



U is for Understanding. Not everyone will get why you eat gluten-free, so be patient and understanding as you explain it.



V is for Validated Safe Spots. Our Gluten-Free Food Service Validation program (GFFS) makes sure that restaurants and other food service businesses know how to prepare gluten-free food. Check out GFFS.org/safe-spot to find some near you!



W is for Wheat. Wheat contains gluten and is used to make many foods including bread and pasta. (Do not eat. Go for gluten-free!)



X is for (E)Xamine the label. Look for the GFCO certification mark to know for sure that packaged foods are gluten-free. If you don't see the mark, ask a trusted adult to check the food label and ingredient list.



Y is for You can do it! Eating gluten-free can be tricky sometimes but feeling good is worth it!



Z is for Zoodles. Make fun, green, gluten-free noodles with zucchini and a spiralizer. Ask a trusted adult to help you make this.



Gluten Intolerance Group

www.gluten.org
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GLUTEN-FREE ENTERTAINING







It's a holiday or a special occasion or simply a casual dinner party at your place with family or friends. If you're living gluten-free, how do you and your gluten-free guests stay safe when you're also entertaining people who eat gluten?



PREPARE ALL GLUTEN-FREE FOR EASE

The simplest way to entertain and ensure there is no gluten getting into gluten-free meals or snacks you're serving is to decide from the outset that you're preparing only gluten-free food. People less familiar with gluten-free eating might think you have to go with specialty foods and limited choices, but that is not the case. Going exclusively gluten-free might seem limiting at first – or even off-putting for gluten-eaters – but it doesn't have to be.

Start by choosing appetizers and meal courses that are naturally gluten-free – like a salad with homemade dressing, roast chicken with roasted vegetables and rice, and baked apples topped with vanilla ice cream for dessert. Tortilla chips and salsa or a homemade dip with cut raw veggies are easy, naturally gluten-free appetizers.

You could take this opportunity to showcase your favorite gluten-free dishes and introduce your friends to the wide array of gluten-free culinary options.

If you're cooking and baking for your get-together, go for recipes you've tried before with great success rather than experimenting with something new. This can help reduce stress so you can serve your gluten-free offerings with confidence.

Pasta, bread, and baked goods are the most common foods where you need to go with gluten-free versions. You could introduce guests to these gluten-free foods that will often be new to them. Offering these items may elicit a reaction from your guests, whether positive, negative, or surprised. This can be a good way to increase awareness and enter a conversation about eating gluten-free, but if you prefer to avoid this scenario, offering naturally gluten-free dishes is the way to go.

BUT WHAT IF FOOD WITH GLUTEN IS ALSO SERVED?

There are two main challenges when serving both gluten-free food and food with gluten at the same get-together: cross-contact during preparation and cross-contact when serving. Depending on how strictly gluten-free you've made your kitchen, prepping food with gluten may be easier if left to others. Invite others to bring dishes to share for the non-gluten-free invitees. Another option is to purchase pre-prepared food or have certain dishes delivered from a local restaurant. If your event is catered, work with a caterer who is knowledgeable about safe gluten-free food prep and serving and is capable of accommodating food restrictions.

While buffet or potluck-style are common ways of entertaining, both present additional challenges for gluten-free guests. If you're offering mixed fare, lay out your gluten dishes far from the gluten-free ones on entirely separate tables or even different rooms such as gluten-free in the kitchen and gluten-containing in the dining room.

Make both gluten-free and gluten-containing tables or counters completely contained by equipping both with their own serving utensils, plates, eating utensils, napkins, etc. The less someone needs to go from one table to the next to fill their plates, the better.



PUT OUT SIGNS AND LABELS

Even if you establish clear guidelines – and spaces – for keeping gluten-containing food away from the gluten-free, it isn't always easy in a party setting to be sure they are followed. No matter how many times you mention to people your rules about keeping gluten away from gluten-free, someone is bound to forget. Use signs and labels to clearly designate which table – or end of a table — is for which type of food as well as what is in each dish.

Putting a little card next to self-serve dishes with a list of ingredients is helpful to anyone who needs to know. Get creative and print out menus for your guests with gluten-free designations or ingredient lists. Ask guests to label any food they bring as well to avoid any mix-ups.

WHAT IF THE HOST/HOSTESS GIFT CONTAINS GLUTEN?

Often guests bring a gift to thank the host or hostess of a dinner party or event. Try to make it clear when you send out the invitations that you eat gluten-free or are preparing a gluten-free meal. Not everyone understands what gluten-free means. What should you do if someone shows up with a loaf of warm, homemade loaf of bread, brownies, or pie that contain gluten?

You have several acceptable options for how to handle a gluten-containing gift depending on the situation, your relationship with the person, and if you have a gluten-free home or not.

1. Thank them graciously and do not make an issue of it. If you are serving gluten-containing foods, place it on the designated gluten table for others to enjoy.
2. Thank them and set it aside in a safe location away from your gluten-free kitchen and food. Give it to a friend or neighbor later.
3. Thank them and explain that you eat gluten-free/your home is gluten-free for health reasons and politely decline.

Educating and informing your guests prior to a get-together can help avoid awkward situations and those gluten-laden gifts.

CHECK WITH GUESTS ABOUT FOOD RESTRICTIONS

As you're inviting guests to your home, a courteous thing is to ask if they have any dietary restrictions. As someone who is living gluten-free, you can probably relate to showing up at a dinner party or celebration only to find you can't eat anything there. Always ask invitees if they have any restrictions. Adjust your menu, as much as possible, to accommodate them. Let them know if there will be some items present that are not safe for them to eat. Offer to prepare a separate dish or encourage them to bring along something they know is safe to eat.

As you can see, preparation and communication can alleviate any possible concerns about getting "glutened" when entertaining and allows you to focus more on what matters: being with friends and family and having a great time!

GIG COVID Disclaimer:
We offer tips that might mention cooking for multiple people or for holidays, events, and celebrations. As with any gathering, we suggest that you keep them small and limited to your immediate household. See the CDC's current guidance on gatherings or refer to your local/regional health department guidelines.



One Tortilla, 10 Ways

With all the things we have going on, finding time to come up with ideas for gluten-free meals can be a challenge. Sometimes, we just need one pantry staple that can provide us with multiple options.

Prevent breakfast burnout and lunch bag ruts with these 10 easy options starting with one gluten-free product: corn tortillas or a gluten-free tortilla substitute or wrap. Look for gluten-free tortillas to be the basis for a variety of delicious meals to save you time – and tickle some taste buds. Here are some ways you can prepare them!



1. Quesadilla

Pick your favorite cheese, place between two tortillas, add meat or beans if you'd like, then heat on a skillet until both sides are crispy and the cheese is melted. Optional: Add Mexican, white, or brown rice to the mix. Salsa on the side is a must! A dollop of sour cream, guacamole, or sliced avocado make nice toppings.



2. Taco Lasagna/Mexican Lasagna

Add tortillas across the top, followed by a layer of the filling (ground beef, shredded chicken, beans). Spray a 9x13 pan with cooking spray. Spread one layer of the filling across the bottom. Add a tortilla on top, followed by a layer of shredded cheddar cheese. Repeat these steps and customize it to your liking! Try other cheeses such as Monterey Jack or mozzarella. Bake at 425 degrees until cheese is melted and edges are crispy.



WHAT IS WHEAT ALLERGY?

Wheat allergy is an immune reaction to any of the hundreds of proteins in wheat. This reaction happens very fast – from within minutes to hours – and can involve nausea, abdominal pain, itching, swelling of the lips and tongue, difficulty breathing, or anaphylaxis. In the United States, the FDA lists wheat (but not gluten) as one of the eight most common allergens.

For wheat allergy, strict adherence to a wheat-free diet is the only treatment currently available. A person with a wheat allergy must avoid eating any form of wheat, but they do not have trouble tolerating gluten from non-wheat sources such as barley or rye.

COMMON FOODS WITH GLUTEN

- Breads & other baked goods
- Cookies, cakes, donuts, & pastries
- Cereal, pancakes, & waffles
- Crackers, croutons, & stuffing
- Flour
- Pasta

This list is not exhaustive. See the article on page XX for other potential sources of gluten in foods.

LABEL READING

We developed a guide to help you determine whether packaged food is gluten-free:

See “3 Tips for Gluten-Free Label Reading” on page XX.

Home Environment & Cross-Contact

When one family member adopts a gluten-free diet, should everyone else in the home do so, too? The answer is different for every household. If there are family members who will not be following a gluten-free diet, take the following precautions to avoid cross-contact (gluten particles getting into gluten-free food):

- Keep preparation surfaces clean and free of crumbs.
- Do not share hard-to-clean utensils such as wooden spoons and cutting boards used for non-gluten-free foods.
- Do not share toasters used for non-gluten-free bread. They can't be completely dismantled to clean thoroughly.
- Use squeeze bottles to avoid contamination of condiments.
- A thorough washing with soap and water should remove gluten from certain utensils and most pans and dishes unless they are hard to clean (like toasters mentioned above).
- Store gluten-free foods above gluten-containing foods in the pantry and refrigerator.
- Also see “How to Live in Harmony with Gluten-Eaters" on page XX.
- Check out our 4-Week Gluten-Free Meal Plans.

WEEK 1	BREAKFAS
Monday	Scrambled eggs, M… add in sautéed onl… spinach, and chee…
Tuesday	ch… milk a…
Wednesday	Arepas fil… scramble… arepas f…
	Greek… …t topped with

Check out our 4-week meal plans on gluten.org

Week 1 Shopping List

PRODUCE	MEAT & DAIRY	DRY GOODS	CANNED/SHELF STABLE/FROZEN
…u)	Greek yogurt (Th, D)	GF all-purpose flour (Sa)	Chickpeas (W)
…u)	Feta cheese (W)	Corn tortillas (M, Tu, F, Sa, Su)	Cannellini beans (M, Th)
…per (W)	Whole chicken (W)	Pre-cooked white corn meal (for arepas) (M)	Black beans (Tu, Sa)
…W, Su)	Eggs (M, W, F, Sa, Su)	Almonds (Tu)	Corn (Tu)
…Th, Sa)	Boneless chicken breasts (Tu, Th, F)	Brown Rice (Tu, W, Su)	Navy beans (Th)
…outs (F)	Shredded cheese (M, W, F, Su)	GF granola (Th)	Chickpeas (Th)
…Sa)	Tilapia (Sa)	Quinoa (Sa)	Diced green chiles (Th)
Onions			Kidney beans (M)
			Crushed tomatoes (F)



Get Started with this EASY 4-Week Gluten-Free Meal Plan

GLUTEN-FREE BASICS

Recently diagnosed with celiac disease or gluten sensitivity? We've put together some information to help you navigate the first months of your diagnosis. We cover terms, definitions, and general information about gluten-related disorders and dietary treatment to familiarize you with the basics. Let's get started!

WHAT IS CELIAC DISEASE?

Celiac disease (CD) is a chronic autoimmune disease which is the result of an immune system response to the ingestion of gluten (a protein found in wheat, rye, and barley and their derivatives) in susceptible individuals.

This response to gluten damages the small intestine, leading to malabsorption of nutrients and related health issues. To develop celiac disease, a person must inherit the genetic predisposition, be consuming gluten, and have the disease activated. Common activation triggers include stress, trauma (surgeries, etc.), and possibly viral infections. The disease is permanent and damage to the small intestine will occur every time gluten is ingested, regardless of whether symptoms are present.

WHAT IS NON-CELIAC GLUTEN SENSITIVITY?

Non-celiac gluten sensitivity (NCGS), or gluten sensitivity, is not as well-defined as celiac disease.

In NCGS, an individual experiences adverse symptoms after consuming gluten. Symptoms may begin up to 48 hours after consumption and can last for much longer. NCGS may be diagnosed when celiac disease, wheat allergy, and other possible causes of symptoms have been ruled out, and the individual's symptoms resolve when a gluten-free diet is adopted.

DIETARY TREATMENT

For celiac disease and NCGS, the only treatment currently available is strict adherence to a gluten-free diet. This means eliminating foods that contain wheat, rye, barley, and foods made with these grains or their derivatives. A gluten-free diet will always be necessary until another form of treatment is discovered.



9. Breakfast Burrito

Load up your favorite tortilla with cooked eggs, beans, bacon, or sausage — and roll it into a burrito by folding all the edges in and around your fillings. You can warm the tortilla briefly in the microwave or on a skillet before adding the ingredients or after it's filled up.



10. Dessert Cups

Spray one side of a smaller tortilla with cooking spray and sprinkle a mixture of cinnamon sugar on top. Repeat on the other side. Place tortilla in a cup of a muffin tin, pressing it into the edges to fit the cup. Bake at 350 degrees for ten minutes or until crisp and lightly browned. Allow it to cool completely and fill with ice cream, pudding, whipped cream and fruit, or another favorite filling.

As you can see, you can have a tortilla in many ways. The only limit is your imagination!





3. Baked Tortilla Chips

Lay corn or corn tortilla substitute flat on a cookie sheet. Melt butter and baste onto each round. Top with sea salt, ground pepper, and a touch of cumin or even garlic powder for a savory treat — or give the chips a sweet twist by using cinnamon and sugar instead. Cut into chip-sized pieces. Bake at 450 degrees until golden brown and crispy.



4. Nachos

Starting with the savory version of the Baked Tortilla Chips recipe above, place baked chips on a microwave-safe plate. Top with shredded cheese, beans, peppers, and any other toppings you love. Heat up in the microwave on high for 20 seconds or until cheese is melted.



5. Sandwich Wrap

Virtually anything you put between two slices of bread will fit nicely in a tortilla! Depending on the size of your tortilla, you can wrap and roll or fold in half like a taco to keep things together. Ham and cheese? Check! Peanut butter and jelly? Why not! Anything goes if you treat the tortilla like sandwich bread.



6. [Really] Thin Crust Pizzas

Top the tortillas as you would any pizza crust – marinara, cheese, pepperoni, even peppers, mushrooms, and olives! Bake at 425 degrees until cheese is melted and edges are crispy. It's easy to make individual ones with custom toppings for each member of your household.



7. Sandwich Flats

Mix up your gluten-free bread rotation and try a tortilla open-faced sandwich instead! Cooked or cold, you'll enjoy this lunchtime remix. Try tuna with melted cheese on top or spread hummus and top with sliced deli meat and cucumber slices. Eat with a fork and knife.



8. Banana Sushi

Spread nut butter on a tortilla, covering the entire surface. Place a banana close to one edge and roll, roll, roll. Use a sharp knife to cut into "sushi-like" rounds. Chopsticks are optional!

