

DR. CHRISTOPHER'S Herbal Legacy Newsletter

August 14, 2013

Gluten-Free Tara Pierce, Herbalist

Celiac disease is an autoimmune disorder of the small intestine. It is a reaction to gluten which causes inflammation and damages the villi of the small intestine. This in turn can cause vitamin deficiencies due to the reduced ability to properly absorb nutrients, resulting in fatigue and anemia in some sufferers. Other symptoms can include pain and discomfort in the digestive tract, chronic constipation and diarrhea and failure to thrive (in children).

Gluten is a protein complex found in wheat (including kamut and spelt), barley, rye and triticale (a cross between wheat and rye). The most popular treatment for celiac is a gluten-free diet. Here are some general “Do’s” and “Don’ts” when going gluten-free.



Do's

Beans, seeds, and nuts; natural and unprocessed.

Fresh eggs

Fish and poultry (avoid breading and marinades)

Fruits and vegetables

Gluten-free grains; amaranth, arrowroot, buckwheat, corn (hominy), flax, millet, quinoa, rice, sorghum, soy, tapioca, teff

and gluten-free flours made of rice, soy, corn, potato or bean (Don't confuse gram flour made from chickpeas for graham flour which is made from wheat).

Don'ts

As well as the grains listed above, avoid wheat products that can go by other names including bulgur, durum flour, farina, graham flour and semolina.

Also avoid these products unless labeled gluten-free; Beer, breads, cakes and pies, candies, cereals, cookies and crackers, croutons, french fries, gravies, imitation meat or seafood, matzo,

pastas, processed luncheon meats, salad dressings, sauces (including soy sauce), seasoned rice mixes, seasoned snack foods, self-basting poultry, soups and soup bases, vegetables in sauce, food additives such as malt flavoring, modified food starch etc., and medications/vitamins that use gluten as a binding agent.

The biggest “if” in the gluten-free world is oats. Oats are naturally gluten-free but the problem comes in the field or in the processing facility. Crops of oats are often rotated with crops of wheat making it impossible to separate them entirely and if the facility that processes the oats also processes wheat products there will be cross contamination. For this reason it is generally recommended to avoid oats unless they are labeled gluten-free and come from a source you can trust. (Check with your local Health Food stores to find the best gluten-free companies).

Here at the School of Natural Healing we recommend using Dr. Christopher’s Soothing Digestion formula to reduce inflammation and help heal the villi and lesions in the small intestine, the Immucalm formula to help keep the immune system in check and the mucusless diet (without the gluten grains of course). In doing this you can be assured of the best nutrient absorption to avoid vitamin deficiencies while adjusting to your new diet.

Tara Pierce is a Certified Herbalist and Master Herbalist Student at *The School of Natural Healing*.