

# Living Gluten-Free

FOR  
**DUMMIES**<sup>®</sup>  
A Wiley Brand

## Learn to:

- Get the right diagnosis for your symptoms
- Enjoy a healthy, balanced, gluten-free diet
- Decipher food labelling
- Cook tasty meals and snacks

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***2nd Australian Edition***

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**by Margaret Clough and Danna Korn**

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# Foreword

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**L**iving *Gluten-Free For Dummies* provides an excellent introduction to coeliac disease and the gluten-free diet, all of which can be quite overwhelming for the newly diagnosed (you are probably nodding as you read this!) Changing to a gluten-free diet dramatically alters your most social and daily activity — eating — so the information provided in this book is invaluable, and it's easy to understand and put into practice. No matter your age or social situation, this book provides you with tips and ideas on how to stay gluten-free. Whether you're newly diagnosed, an old hat at gluten-free, or a friend or family member of somebody who needs to be gluten-free, this book provides vital information and the assurance that you're doing the right thing.

For the uninitiated, I cannot stress enough the importance of being medically diagnosed prior to commencing a gluten-free diet. With the advent of the internet and vast quantities of information available at the fingertips, it's tempting to self-diagnose and commence a gluten-free diet without undergoing the appropriate medical investigations. However, a self-guided trial of the gluten free diet 'to see if it works' isn't recommended. Any suspicion of coeliac disease must be confirmed through blood tests and a bowel biopsy while your diet still contains adequate levels of gluten to obtain accurate results. A self-diagnosed gluten-free trial may provide a reduction in symptoms, but other serious health conditions may go undetected.

Australia has the strictest standard for gluten-free products in the world and, therefore, an Australian edition of *Living Gluten-Free For Dummies* is crucial. The Codex Alimentarius, which is the international food standard, is based on the best available science and consultation with the FAO (Food and Agriculture Organisation) and WHO (World Health Organization). Codex defines gluten-free as having less than 20ppm gluten, and Europe and the United States have adopted this standard — as recently as January 2012 (Europe) and August 2013 (US), from a previous standard of less than 200 ppm. In 2012, Argentina introduced a gluten-free standard of less than 10 ppm. In contrast, since early 2000 Food Standards Australia New Zealand (FSANZ) defines gluten-free as no detectable gluten — hence the need for country-specific information. Being aware of this difference is important, because information found on the internet from other countries in regard to coeliac disease, gluten-free products and recipes is based on different standards.

If ever in doubt, Coeliac Australia provides support to patients, health-care professionals and the food industry through membership of a state coeliac organisation. State offices are in Adelaide (servicing SA and NT), Brisbane, Melbourne (servicing VIC and TAS), Sydney (servicing NSW and ACT) and Perth.

I wish you well as you embark on your gluten-free journey. I know that *Living Gluten-Free For Dummies* will assist in a smooth and easy transition.

**Annabel Mackenzie**  
**BSc(Hons) Biochemistry, BSc (Med) Hons Nutrition & Dietetics,**  
**M Nutrition, APD & AN**  
**Coeliac Australia Technical & Endorsement Officer**

# Introduction

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**N**ot so many years ago, the gluten-free diet was reserved for an obscure cluster of people who often found themselves missing out or ‘making do’ whenever food was being consumed.

Today, the gluten-free diet is sweeping many parts of the world faster than the latest celebrity slimming diet, and the benefits are huge. Gluten-free products abound (and are a far cry from the foods we used to choke down), food labels tell you all you need to know and people no longer look at you as though you have four heads when you ask for something gluten-free.

Being gluten-free isn’t as simple as it sounds. Whether you’ve been gluten-free for decades or are only starting out on the diet, this book is loaded with information that covers many aspects of your life, from the obvious — your health and how you shop, cook and eat — to more subtle facets, like finances, socialising, dealing with friends and family, and managing various emotional ups and downs.

Your authors live a gluten-free lifestyle and have for years. We know what it’s like to ‘go without’ when others are tucking into delicious food. We’ve been on the receiving end of the occasional odd look or rolled eyes. We’ve learnt to eat whatever is available at the time rather than what we might like to eat and we know all about carrying little packs of food with us when we go out or away on holidays. Over the years, we’ve gathered a lot of knowledge, made many discoveries, come to terms with the realities of living gluten-free and learnt that living on a gluten-free diet is really not so difficult. It’s all a matter of adapting and making changes and then getting on with the wonderful adventure of life.

In writing this book, we’ve done our best to tell you everything you need to know about living a gluten-free lifestyle so you too can adapt your diet and make informed decisions. You can use this book as your reference for living — and loving — a gluten-free lifestyle.

## About This Book

*Living Gluten-Free For Dummies*, 2nd Australian Edition, like all *For Dummies* books, is divided so you don't have to read it all at once, or even front to back, if you don't want to. You don't have to read from A to Z: You can skip from B to R to A and even reread B if you wish. You can read it sideways and standing on your head if you like; all you have to do is find a section you're interested in and dig in.

We suggest you begin with the Table of Contents, see whether any particular chapter or subject really takes your fancy and start there. Or you can flip through the book and see whether any of the headings catch your interest.

If you've just been diagnosed as needing a gluten- or wheat-free diet and have stacks of questions, you're probably best off starting at Chapter 1 and working your way through most of the book in order.

If you've been gluten-free for years, do yourself a favour and take a look at Chapter 4. You may be surprised at some of the foods that are allowed on the gluten-free diet that used to be considered no-nos. You may find this chapter opens a lot of cupboard doors that you once thought were closed! And in Chapter 3 you can also learn about the latest research in treating — and maybe, some day, even curing — coeliac disease.

To keep things consistent and easy to follow, here are some of the basic ground rules and conventions this book uses:

- ✓ All Web addresses appear in monofont, which looks like `this`.
- ✓ When this book was printed, some Web addresses may have needed to break across two lines of text. If that happened, rest assured that we haven't put in any extra characters (such as hyphens) to indicate the break. So when using one of these Web addresses, just type in exactly what you see in this book, as if the line break doesn't exist.
- ✓ Feel free to tinker with the recipes. If you don't have an ingredient a recipe calls for, don't worry — make a substitution (gluten-free, of course). You may find your swap is a huge improvement. If you haven't bothered too much about measuring ingredients before, treat yourself to a set of plastic measuring cups and spoons. Gluten-free cooking — at least baking — is just that little bit more tricky, and taking more care with measuring will definitely cut down the risk of crumbly cakes and disastrous desserts.
- ✓ If you want a vegetarian recipe, just look for the tomato icons.

Here are some conventions for the ingredients themselves:

- ✓ If an ingredient appears in a recipe, it's assumed to be gluten-free. For instance, we don't specify 'gluten-free vanilla' because all vanilla is gluten-free. But when we call for an ingredient that may or may not contain gluten, we state 'gluten-free soy sauce' or 'gluten-free cornflour'.
- ✓ Baking with gluten-free flours works best if you use a mixture of flours. Chapter 9 goes into detail about how to mix gluten-free flours to get the best results.
- ✓ If a recipe calls for self-raising flour we specify this, as distinct from plain flour.
- ✓ You can use milk substitutes in place of milk in most recipes.
- ✓ Eggs are large.
- ✓ Butter and margarine are interchangeable.
- ✓ All temperatures are Celsius.

If you're a skimmer, you can skip some stuff and not miss anything too important. You'll still get the message if you skim over the following:

- ✓ **Anything that has a Technical Stuff icon:** The Technical Stuff icon represents information that's interesting (downright fascinating sometimes!), but not crucial to your general understanding of the subject matter.
- ✓ **Sidebars:** These are the stories and titbits of information in shaded boxes scattered throughout the chapters. Just like the Technical Stuff, you may find the information in the sidebars interesting, but you won't be missing anything critical if you skip them.
- ✓ **Recipes:** Unless you're actually using them to cook or to decide what to make for dinner, recipes aren't the best late-night reading material. Obviously you'll want to skip those until you're ready to whip up some gluten-free goodies, or you're desperate for some new gluten-free ideas.

## *Foolish Assumptions*

We know you're not foolish, and neither are we. You spent your own hard-earned money on this book and that means either you want to learn more about the gluten-free diet or you're related to us. Because our family members and friends already hear far more about this stuff than any human



should have to endure, we've written this book with you in mind — and we've taken the liberty of making a few assumptions about you. One or more of the following probably apply:

- ✔ You or your child has been medically diagnosed as needing a gluten-free diet and you're looking for the 'manual' that can tell you how to manage the diet.
- ✔ You love someone who's gluten-free and you're so cool that you want to learn about the diet so you can be supportive.
- ✔ You've been gluten-free for years and want the latest, most accurate information about dietary guidelines and current research.
- ✔ You're a professional who has gluten-free clients, customers or patients and you want to learn more about coping with the gluten-free diet and its benefits.

At the same time, you can make a few assumptions about us and what we tell you in this book:

- ✔ We generally know what we're talking about. We've both lived a gluten-free lifestyle for many years. Our experience is worth noting, because some people who write about gluten-free living aren't gluten-free themselves. We assure you, we didn't take on this book because we were bored and looking for extra projects: We really do live — and love — the gluten-free lifestyle and want to make the path easier for those who follow in our footsteps.
- ✔ Every effort has been made to establish the accuracy of the information in this book. Much of the material has been provided by experts from Coeliac Australia or from their publications. Dr Robert Anderson, MB ChB BMedSc PhD FRACP, a world authority on coeliac disease, and Dr Jason Tye-Din, MBBS FRACP PhD have supplied medical and research information. The book has been reviewed by professionals who are extremely knowledgeable in their fields. Graham Price, OAM, BSc (Hons), former Technical Officer for The Coeliac Society, was a member of an advisory team on gluten labelling issues established by Food Standards Australia New Zealand (FSANZ) and was the consumer representative on a Therapeutic Goods Committee that reviewed labelling of medications. Penny Dellsperger BSc Nutrition (Hons) is a dietitian for Coeliac Australia and Annabel Mackenzie BSc (Hons) Biochemistry, BSc (Med) Hons Nutrition & Dietetics, M (Nutrition) was Technical Officer for Coeliac Australia and now acts in an advisory capacity.
- ✔ We wrote this book to provide information and explanation, not medical or dietary advice. Please seek medical or other professional advice before relying or acting on the information in this book.

## Icons Used in This Book

Some people are more visual than others. That's where icons come in handy. This book uses several icons and each has a little titbit of information associated with it. Here's what each icon means:



Everyone can use a friendly little reminder. The Remember icon is a quick and easy way to identify some of the more important points that you may want to make note of throughout the book.



Sometimes we get carried away with technical and scientific stuff. Some of you will love it; others will be bored to tears. That's why we put it in its own area, marked by a Technical Stuff icon, so you can skip it (if you want to) without missing the gist of what's going on in that chapter or section.



Cleverly designated as Tips, these are, well, *tips* that can help you live (and love!) the gluten-free diet. They include info to help you save time or cut down on frustration.



Heeding the advice offered in text flagged with the Warning icon can keep you out of trouble.

## Beyond the Book

In addition to the material in the print or ebook you're reading right now, *Living Gluten-Free For Dummies*, 2nd Australian Edition, also comes with some access-anywhere goodies on the internet. Check out the free Cheat Sheet at [www.dummies.com/cheatsheet/livingglutenfreeau](http://www.dummies.com/cheatsheet/livingglutenfreeau) for some quick, helpful tips. For free extra companion material for this book, visit [www.dummies.com/extras/livingglutenfreeau](http://www.dummies.com/extras/livingglutenfreeau).

## Where to Go from Here

What we suggest you do at this point is curl up in your comfiest chair and dive into the book. You don't need us to tell you where to start — your individual needs will guide you.

If you're feeling a little down about going gluten-free, we hope you'll find the information you need to feel reassured and comforted by the knowledge that there are thousands of Aussies out there living gluten-free lives to the full.



## Part I

# Going Gluten-Free: Who, What, Why and How

getting started  
with

**living  
gluten-  
free**



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## ***In this part . . .***

- ✓ Get a handle on the basics of coeliac disease, and gluten and wheat intolerance so you can be off and running on the gluten-free lifestyle.
- ✓ Understand the many medical and psychological benefits of a gluten-free diet for those who need it.
- ✓ Learn more detailed information about coeliac disease, including likely causes, effects on the body and possible future treatments.
- ✓ Work your way through the foundations of the gluten-free diet, getting to know foods you may never have even heard of before, and become an expert on reading and understanding food labels.
- ✓ Access good information, advice and support, and ensure the resources you use are reliable.
- ✓ Appreciate your food and enjoy the benefits of a gluten-free diet that's balanced, nutritious and delicious.

# Chapter 1

## Being Gluten-Free from A to Z

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### *In This Chapter*

- ▶ Getting a grip on gluten
  - ▶ Uncovering the advantages of the gluten-free lifestyle
  - ▶ Making the most of meals
  - ▶ Going from gluten-gobbler to gluten-free forager — and loving it
  - ▶ Hitting the ground running in your first two weeks
- 

**M**argaret found herself at last in the dim recesses of the Menzies Library at the Australian National University. ‘My condition, vividly described, was on page 448 of a huge, dusty medical reference book. Lethargy, tiredness, chronic diarrhoea, painful mouth ulcers, weight loss. There was even a photograph of a child that reminded me sharply of one of my childhood photos. Me as a pale, skinny three-year-old, with stick arms and legs and a huge pot belly, at the beach in my first swimming costume.’

‘I’d gone to the library, desperate for answers in the interminably long nine-week wait to see a gastroenterologist — nine weeks when I began to think I was losing the plot. I existed on weak black tea, dry toast with Vegemite and the occasional soft-boiled egg. I secured my clothes with big safety pins and worried that one day my undies would slip right down and land in a crumpled, mortifying heap around my ankles. I didn’t allow myself to go back into the bedroom after I was up and dressed, because the mere sight of my bed made me want to sink into the soft covers “just for a little rest”, with dire consequences for the day’s work. I knew something was seriously wrong with me, but my GP clearly thought otherwise, only reluctantly referring me to a specialist. Maybe he was right and I was just another hypochondriac?’

‘Several weeks later, prodded and probed, blood tested and biopsied, I had my answer. I had the strange condition called coeliac disease, but I would get better if I stopped eating bread and other things that contained gluten.’

‘But what on earth *was* gluten? Now this was last century, way back in 1980 and, although I’d heard of gluten, I knew as much about it as I know about the mysterious workings of my lovely laptop: Less than zilch. Forget Google — the internet didn’t exist. I had to search for information out there in the real world, wherever I could. And in my search, I discovered a tiny cluster of other searchers, eager to share their knowledge.’

‘Little did I know how that search would grow; how more than 30 years later many thousands of Australians would also be asking the same questions, facing the same dilemmas and searching for the same gluten-free alternatives. To make the search easier for others I’ve gathered the sum total of my knowledge and experience, added a vast amount of information from The Experts and put my head together with Danna Korn, author of the US version of *Living Gluten-Free For Dummies*.’

‘So I start at the beginning. This chapter gives you a basic rundown of what living gluten-free is all about.’

## What Is Gluten, Anyway?

Gluten has a couple of definitions; one is technically correct but not commonly used and the other is commonly used but not technically correct. You get more details on both definitions in Chapter 4, but to get you started and for the purposes of most of this book, here’s the common definition: *Gluten* is the elastic material of dough that has been made from wheat flour.



Gluten is quite different from *glutin*, a form of gelatine obtained from the skin, hoof or bone of animals, or *glutinous*, which describes things that are sticky and gooey. And, of course, it has nothing to do with *glutton*, although coeliacs who suddenly discover a new, mouth-watering, gluten-free product or recipe sometimes morph into one for a little while.

## Common foods that contain gluten

You can find a lot of information about what you can and can’t eat in Chapter 4 and dietitians can provide lists of gluten-free foods. The most extensive list around is the *Ingredient List* published by Coeliac Australia, an organisation run by coeliacs, for coeliacs (you can find information about Coeliac Australia and how to join in Chapter 5). But you need to have a general idea of what *kinds* of foods have gluten in them so you know what to avoid. Things with wheat flour in them are the most common culprits when you’re avoiding gluten. The following are obvious gluten-loaded foods:

- ✓ Biscuits, cakes and most other baked goods
- ✓ Bread, bread rolls
- ✓ Crackers
- ✓ Pasta
- ✓ Pizza

But not-so-obvious suspects are around, too, like breakfast cereals, sauces, soups, licorice, confectionery, some potato chips and beer. When you're gluten-free, you get used to reading labels and digging a little deeper to know for sure what you can and can't eat (more on that in Chapter 4). You have to do without those foods, but you really don't have to do *without*. Food manufacturers make delicious gluten-free versions of just about every food imaginable these days. We talk more about those and where to buy them in Chapter 8.

## *Wheat-free doesn't mean gluten-free*

You may see lots of labels proudly declaring a product to be wheat-free (some of which, like spelt and kamut, aren't really wheat-free at all). That doesn't mean the food is gluten-free.



Gluten is in wheat, but it's also in rye, barley and oats. So something can be wheat-free but still have other gluten-containing ingredients, like malt, which is usually derived from barley. In that case, the product's wheat-free, but it's not gluten-free.

## *Discovering the Benefits of a Gluten-Free Lifestyle*

Being gluten-free involves much more than just cutting gluten out of your diet. It affects other aspects of your life, from how you handle ordering at restaurants to attending social functions and dealing with emotional challenges.

We believe it's important to take control of the diet or, if it's your kids who are gluten-free, help them gain control. Going gluten-free also gives you an opportunity to reach out and help others who may need to embark on the wonderful world of gluten-freedom, as well as a chance to discover more about nutrition and what you're actually putting in your body on a daily basis. If that sounds like a lot of work, relax. We'll guide you through it. And not only can you feel better, but you can also feel better about yourself!



This book is the resource you need — wade your way through it and dog-ear the pages you want to come back to when you need some practical or emotional reminders on how to deal with difficult issues. If you have an optimistic but realistic approach, you'll encounter fewer obstacles along the way.

You have a lot of company. Coeliac disease is now being diagnosed at a faster rate than any other disease and the number of people diagnosed with gluten intolerance is also on the rise. Changing both your diet and lifestyle is neither quick nor easy, but the benefits of going gluten-free can be fantastic — no surgery or medication required!



If time is a problem, or you're not much of a read-everything-in-one-go type, flip to the end of this chapter for a guide to getting through the first two weeks of living gluten-free. But don't forget to come back and poke around the rest of the book to make sure you're equipped to enjoy your new lifestyle to the full!

## Abstinence makes the gut grow stronger

When gluten is what's making you sick, what your symptoms are doesn't matter; even if your symptoms don't seem to be related to your gastrointestinal tract, nasty battles are going on inside your gut.

Hairlike structures called *villi* are on the lining of your small intestine. The job of the villi is to increase the surface area of the small intestine so it can absorb more nutrients.

For people with coeliac disease, the body sees gluten as a bad guy or toxin and attacks it. In doing so, it also accidentally attacks the villi, and those villi get blunted and inflamed, sometimes becoming almost flat.

Flat villi can't absorb stuff, so those all-important nutrients just slide right by and you don't get enough of the vitamins, minerals and other things that are vital for good physical and emotional health. You develop what's called *malabsorption* and become poorly nourished.

Don't worry! This story has a happy ending. Your villi are tenacious little things, and

when you stop eating gluten, they begin to heal right away. Before you know it, your villi repair themselves and absorb nutrients again and your health is restored. That's why we say abstinence makes the gut grow stronger.

By the way, lactase, which is the enzyme that breaks down the milk sugar lactose, is produced in the tip of the villi. When the villi get blunted, sometimes your ability to digest lactose decreases and you become lactose intolerant. When you stop eating gluten and the villi heal, you're usually able to tolerate lactose again, although it may take a little time.

If you've been diagnosed with a gluten intolerance, you may be affected in various ways, including gas, bloating, 'irritable bowel', diarrhoea or stomach pains — many of the symptoms of coeliac disease — but your gut isn't being damaged in the same way as it is if you have coeliac disease. The flattened villi are the hallmark of coeliac disease.

## *Eating isn't supposed to hurt*

Food is supposed to give you energy and make you feel good, not make you hurt. But when you eat things that your body doesn't like for one reason or another, your body has a sometimes not-so-subtle way of telling you to knock it off. Food that your body objects to can cause gas, bloating, diarrhoea, constipation and nausea — and even things that don't seem to be associated with the gastrointestinal tract, like headaches, fatigue, depression, joint pain and respiratory distress.

The great thing about all this is that when you find out, through medical tests, that your body can't tolerate gluten, you can stop eating it and then your body stops being so 'precious'. In fact, feed it right and it can make you feel great in many different ways.

## *Making nutrition your mission: Head-to-toe health benefits*

The 12th-century physician Maimonides said, 'Man should strive to have his intestines relaxed all the days of his life'. No doubt! When your intestines aren't relaxed — or when they're downright edgy or uptight — they affect all your other parts, too. It's like when you're in a really good mood and your best friend is grumpy — the situation can make you grumpy, too. One cantankerous intestine can be a party-pooper for the entire body.

In a way, the body's reaction to gluten doesn't compute. In some people, eating gluten can cause headaches, fatigue, joint pain, depression or infertility; at first those types of symptoms may seem unrelated to something going on in your gut, much less something you eat — much less something as common as wheat in your diet.

But those — and about 250 others — can be symptoms of coeliac disease and gluten intolerance. People with coeliac disease or gluten intolerance often have gastrointestinal symptoms, but sometimes the symptoms are *extraintestinal*, meaning they take place outside the intestinal tract.

If you're diagnosed with coeliac disease, a gluten-free diet should relieve many symptoms, such as:

- ✓ Anaemia
- ✓ Fatigue
- ✓ Gastrointestinal distress (gas, bloating, diarrhoea, constipation, vomiting, heartburn and acid reflux)

It may also help with some other conditions, such as:

- ✓ Depression
- ✓ Headaches (including migraines)
- ✓ Inability to concentrate
- ✓ Infertility
- ✓ Joint, bone or muscle pain
- ✓ Osteoporosis
- ✓ Respiratory problems
- ✓ Weight gain or weight loss

The list's impressive, isn't it? The idea that eliminating one thing from your diet — gluten — could improve a range of seemingly unconnected conditions is hard to believe. Yet it's true — and it really makes sense when you realise that if the food you're eating is toxic to your body, your body's going to scream. Obviously gluten isn't the answer to all medical problems. Some of the symptoms on the list are due to other conditions and gluten won't help with those.

For people with gluten intolerance, eating gluten may make the symptoms of some psychiatric conditions worse. (We talk more about that in Chapter 2.) Some researchers think removing gluten from the diet can improve the behaviours of some people with:

- ✓ Attention-deficit (hyperactivity) disorder (ADD/ADHD)
- ✓ Autism
- ✓ Schizophrenia and other mood disorders

Some people find that eliminating wheat not only relieves their main symptoms but also has other benefits as well, such as reducing PMT or menopausal symptoms.

## ***But I thought wheat was good for me!***

Of course you did. Anyone who's spent more than a day on planet Earth has been barraged with messages hailing the virtues of wheat — especially in its whole form! It and other grains hog much of the food pyramid(s), suggesting

you should eat loads of it, and it's touted as a good source of fibre and nutrients. Wheat does provide some health benefits, but you can find them in other food sources, too. So how can wheat be at the root of so many health problems? This section covers some of the reasons wheat may not be good for everyone.

### *Wheat was invented yesterday*

Wheat wasn't introduced until the Agricultural Revolution, about 10,000 years ago. Before that, people ate lean meats, fish, seafood, non-starchy vegetables and fruits.

When wheat came on the scene, it was completely foreign. Human bodies had to adapt in order to tolerate it and some researchers believe that many people don't tolerate it well at all.

### *Humans don't fully digest wheat*



Humans have only one stomach — and one just isn't enough to digest wheat. Cows have four stomachs (actually, four chambers within one stomach). That's why Bessie the Bovine is okay with wheat. It goes from one stomach to another and another and — well, you get the picture. By the time it reaches tummy number four, it's fully digested and Bessie's feeling fine. Humans have a tougher time digesting wheat.

## *Mastering the Meals*

If you've just been diagnosed as a coeliac and you're afraid you'll have to wake up at 4.00 am to bake gluten-free bread and make pasta from scratch, turn off the alarm and go back to sleep. Plenty of ready-made gluten-free foods are available to take the place of all your old favourites.

And if you're as happy as a red-back in a gumboot when you're surrounded by recipe books, wooden spoons and culinary challenges, go right ahead. We'll be waiting outside for you to create the perfect gluten-free Anzac biscuit.

Whether you're a kitchenphobe or a foodie, you'll find a steadily increasing selection of gluten-free foods and ingredients to choose from.

## *Planning and preparing*

Putting together healthy and delicious gluten-free meals is a lot easier if you plan ahead. Wandering through a supermarket, perusing restaurant menus, or (gasp!) sitting in a bakery with a growling tummy isn't exactly conducive to making good food choices.



Give yourself a healthy advantage by planning and even preparing meals in advance, especially if your busy schedule has you eating away from home frequently. If you know you're pressed for time at breakfast or lunch, make your meals the night before and pack healthy gluten-free snacks in resealable plastic bags.

## *Shopping shrewdly*

The healthiest way to enjoy a gluten-free lifestyle is to eat things you can find at any supermarket or even a farmer's market: meat, fish, seafood, fruits and vegetables (see Chapter 6). If you want to add canned, processed and even junk foods to your shopping list, you can still do most of your shopping at a supermarket.

If you hope to enjoy the delicious gluten-free commercial products that are available these days, you can find them in health food aisles, in the supermarket freezers or at health food shops. Or you can shop in your PJs on one of the internet sites specialising in gluten-free products (if you're using your library's internet or an internet cafe to shop online, you may want to change out of the PJs).

Some people worry about the cost of gluten-free food, but less-expensive ways of doing it are possible. We talk about eating gluten-free more affordably in Chapter 8.

## *Kitchen considerations*

For the most part, a gluten-free kitchen looks the same as any other kitchen — without the gluten, of course. You don't need to go out and buy special gadgets and tools. If you're sharing a kitchen with gluten, you need to be aware of some contamination issues so you don't inadvertently contaminate a perfectly good gluten-free meal with gluten. Getting people to keep their crumbs to themselves isn't just a matter of hygiene, but can mean the difference between a meal you can eat and one you can't.



Some people find having separate areas or coloured containers or labels in the pantry or cupboards for their gluten-free products helpful, especially snack foods. This is an especially good idea if you have gluten-free kids in the house, because they can see that they always have lots of things to eat and can quickly grab their favourite gluten-free goodies from the special area.

## *Cooking outside the recipe box*

You'll discover that you can make most things gluten-free. All you need is a little creativity and some basic guidelines for using gluten-free substitutions, which you can find in Chapter 9.

If you're a die-hard recipe fan, never fear — we include loads of recipes in Chapters 10 to 15. Most of them are easy to follow but leave your family or guests with the impression that you spent all day in the kitchen (and being thus indebted, may volunteer to do the dishes).

## *Getting Excited about Your Gluten-Free Future*

Most people who embark on a gluten-free diet are doing so because of health issues — and that means they have no choice in the matter. When people are forced to make changes in their routine, especially changes that affect what they can and can't eat, they're not always so quick to see the joy in the adjustments.

If you're a little gloomy about going from gluten-gobbler to gluten-freebie, we understand. But prepare yourself to read about all the good reasons to be positive about the gluten-free lifestyle (impatient types, feel free to skip to Chapters 19 and 20 for a jump-start on all the pluses).

## *'A' is for adapting your perspective on food*

If you've been eating gluten for a long time — say, for most of your life — giving up foods as you know them may seem like a tough transition at first. Besides the obvious practical challenges of learning to ferret out gluten, you have to deal with emotional, physical, social and even financial challenges.

You have to do only one thing in order to love the gluten-free lifestyle and that's to adjust your perspective on food just a tinge. You really don't have to give up anything; you just have to make some modifications. The foods that used to be your favourites can still be your favourites if you want them to be, just in a slightly different form. And be prepared for the delights of discovering new favourites, for you certainly will. Your palate is pretty agreeable, if you let it, to enjoying new tastes and textures.

Or you may want to consider what may be a new and extra-healthy approach for you: making lean meats, fresh fruits and non-starchy vegetables the main components of your diet. We talk more about creating a really healthy, balanced gluten-free diet in Chapter 6.

## *Savouring gluten-free flavours*

People who are new to the concept of being gluten-free sometimes comment that the diet is boring. If you ask what they're eating, they've usually found a few meals that are gluten-free and they stick to those, day in and day out. Instead of seeking out gluten-free breads that they like, they chomp through a daily ration of rice cakes. Who wouldn't grow bored with that? That type of a diet is downright depressing.

A nutritious, gluten-free diet doesn't have to be boring or restrictive. You don't need to limit your diet to a few absolutely safe foods. If you do prefer bland foods, terrific. But if you have always enjoyed a rich variety of tasty foods, you can keep right on enjoying. No way does gluten-free have to be flavour-free.

## *Getting out and about*

You don't have to let your gluten-free diet hold you back from doing anything you want to do. Well, okay, you can't do some things — like eat a pizza from every pizza place, or devour a plate of gluten-laden Tim Tams. But as far as your activities and lifestyle are concerned, you can — and should — get out and about as you always have.

For the most part, ordering out isn't as easy as walking into a restaurant and asking for a gluten-free menu (dream on). But eating at restaurants is definitely do-able; you just need to discover how to order and be aware of contamination issues. Travelling is a bit more challenging and requires a little more flexibility about what you eat and when in the day you eat it. But finding suitable meals adds spice to the travel adventure as you grapple with gluten-free in another language. Thousands who try it agree that it's

much easier than they expected. Going to social events often requires a little advance planning, and holidays may barely faze you — after you get the hang of getting out and about gluten-free style. Chapter 16 gives you more information on this.

## *Raising kids to love their food*

The news that your child will have to be gluten-free for the rest of his life often unleashes a flood of emotions, many of them not pleasant. At first, you feel burdened and overcome with grief and frustration and long for the perfectly healthy little baby or child you thought you were entitled to. It's easy to focus on what you've lost and all that you have to change in your lives. But making adjustments doesn't take long and soon you discover that life isn't so different after all. The transformation in your child's health and behaviour compensates for the realisation that you need to be a bit more organised, a bit more watchful and a little less spontaneous when you go out.

Most importantly, you want your child to be happy about the adjustments. After all, it's their diet, their life, their future that is most affected. Thankfully, almost all kids take dietary changes in their stride and just get on with enjoying life as they did before.

A few issues are central in raising happy, healthy, gluten-free kids. Some of the highlights include

- ✓ Giving them an appropriate level of control of their diet as early as possible
- ✓ Always having yummy gluten-free treats on hand
- ✓ Reinforcing the benefits of a gluten-free diet (if you need inspiration, see Chapter 19)
- ✓ Always remembering that they're learning how to feel about their diet from you

Promoting an optimistic outlook can instil a positive approach in kids. Chapter 17 deals in detail with raising kids to love the gluten-free lifestyle and for more practical advice, help is at hand through Coeliac Australia in your state. In Chapter 5, we also provide a list of books you may want to look out for.



Kids are flexible and resilient. Adjusting to a gluten-free diet is usually much harder for the parents than for the child.



## *Setting realistic expectations*

Setting reasonable expectations for what things will be like when you adopt a gluten-free lifestyle is important, because you *will* encounter challenges, and you need to prepare to handle them well. Friends, family and loved ones may not understand. They may not accommodate your diet when you hope or expect they will. You may find social events to be overwhelming at first; or you may get confused or frustrated and feel like giving up on the diet. You can overcome these challenges and come out stronger for them.

## *Arming yourself with good information*

The good news is that because so many people are now on a gluten-free diet a lot of information about it is floating around. The bad news is that not all of it's accurate.

Be wary of what you hear and read and ensure it comes from a reputable source, like a government health site, Coeliac Australia or a dietitian. If you find conflicting information — and you will — dig deeper until you find out which source is right.

We list a few good sources of information in Chapter 5 and you can find more on your own. Just remember to keep a sceptical eye out for the good, the bad and the completely ludicrous.

## *Getting Started — A Guide for Your First Two Weeks*

If you've just been diagnosed as a coeliac, or told to go on a gluten-free diet for other reasons, you'll want to start right now, but you may not have time to look through this whole book. You're right — starting right now is important, not waiting until you know everything there is to know about living gluten-free. Your body has been taking a battering from gluten and you want that to stop quick smart so you can get on the road to recovery.

The following sections help you do just that — get started straightaway. If you like, you can come back and thumb through the rest of the book once you have made a start.



A gluten-free diet seems overwhelming at first, and you may have many questions. What on earth will I eat? Can I eat out? What will other people think? Am I a freak? How can I go travelling now? Is cooking gluten-free easy? Can I afford it? If it's your child who has been diagnosed, you'll have a whole host of other questions about the impact this will have as they grow up. These questions and many more will race around your mind at first. But don't panic. The diet's really not going to totally change your life. Many thousands of Australians are living happy, healthy, full lives on a gluten-free diet, and the sky hasn't fallen in yet. It will take a bit of time to adjust, so be patient.

## *Working out what you can eat*

Many of the foods in your kitchen are naturally gluten-free. Meat, fish and seafood, eggs, poultry, most dairy products, rice and pulses like chickpeas and beans, and all fruits and vegetables are fine, unless they've been processed in some way. You can also eat nuts and seeds, dried fruits, butter, margarine, sugar, salt, spices, vinegar (but not malt vinegar), most tomato sauces, jam, honey, tea, coffee, cocoa, fruit and vegetable juices, most chocolate, most plain potato crisps, wine and spirits. You may already have maize cornflour in the pantry. The foods you'll have to change are cereals, bread and baked products, pastas, flours and many processed and packaged foods like sauces, biscuits and snack foods. (We go into this in much more detail in Chapters 7 and 8.) In the following sections, we provide a basic shopping list to get you started and a suggested meal plan for the first two weeks.

If fast food is a major part of your diet, the change to gluten-free may hit extra hard. You'll probably have to (gulp, yes!) dig out the old wooden spoon and chopping knife, buy yourself a pot and pan and have a go at some home cooking, because your gluten-free fast-food options simply won't provide you with a healthy, varied diet. However, fast-food options are available to keep you fed for the first few days (see Chapter 16 for more on these options) while you make a transition to some home cooking.

Here are some starter tips:

- ✓ **Organise the kitchen:** Clear a space in your kitchen cupboard or pantry especially for gluten-free items, to avoid confusion and make it easier for your family members to know which items are safe for you (or themselves). Some people use particular containers for distinguishing their gluten-free food and leftovers in the fridge.
- ✓ **Join the club:** Join your state branch of Coeliac Australia to get up to date news about gluten-free products and a wealth of ideas and support through their quarterly magazine, *The Australian Coeliac*. Go to [www.coeliac.org.au](http://www.coeliac.org.au) or call 1300 458 836.

- ✓ **Find a dietitian:** If your GP hasn't suggested this, make an appointment to see an accredited practising dietitian (APD) or visit the Dietitians Association of Australia (DAA) website ([www.daa.asn.au](http://www.daa.asn.au)) to find an APD in your area. This will pay off in the long term as you discover lots more options and ensure your new diet is balanced and meets your particular needs.
- ✓ **Tell your family and friends:** You may get a mixed reception here, but your friends and family certainly need to know about your new food requirements to avoid misunderstandings and difficult situations down the track. These days most people have at least heard about the gluten-free diet, although they may have only vague ideas about it. Often others are just relieved to know what has been making you ill. Sometimes family members are upset about having to make changes to their routine and meal patterns, so give them time to adjust. You will need support from other family members and/or housemates so they don't unwittingly devour the last of your gluten-free biscuits, or mix gluten-containing food in with yours.
- ✓ **Find gluten-free bread:** Most supermarkets now stock gluten-free bread. You can get a wider range in health food shops but these may be more expensive. Don't go into a tailspin if the first loaf you try tastes like cardboard! There's gluten-free bread and then there's gluten-free bread! We all have our preferences and you will discover yours in time.
- ✓ **Try some gluten-free flours:** Changing your cooking and baking to use gluten-free flours isn't complicated. To begin with, simply use your old familiar recipes, but substitute gluten-free flour for wheat flour. You can buy gluten-free plain flour and self-raising flour mixes (made up of several flours because this works best) and later on learn which alternative flours to use for different purposes. More information on this is in Chapter 9.
- ✓ **Tap into useful resources:** Coeliac Australia provides a comprehensive list of all foods and ingredients (the *Ingredient List*) and whether or not they're gluten free. This is available to members in a handy booklet form and can also be purchased as a phone app for iPhone, Android or Windows. Other useful online sources are outlined in Chapter 5.
- ✓ **Keep your chin up:** You'll likely be a bit in shock at first. Do your best to keep this change to your life in perspective. You could have ended up with plenty of other, far worse conditions rather than coeliac disease. And although your life will involve some disruptions in the short term, in the long term you will enjoy life with more vitality and better health. So don't put it off for a few days. Go cold turkey — it will only get harder to start if you delay!

## A 'getting started' shopping list

Diets — and tastes — vary so widely it's hard to create a shopping list to suit everyone. So this is more like a list of items for you to consider; you can add and delete to your heart's content. If your budget won't stretch to everything at once, run down the list and decide which sorts of items you really can't do without, and buy those first. Keep in mind that you're doing a once-only 'getting started' shop, so it may cost more than your usual weekly shop.

To begin with, shopping will take you longer because you need to read product ingredient lists carefully until you're familiar with them. You can't always rely on the name of the product itself. For example, 'rice crackers' may also contain wheat flour, and soft rice noodles may contain wheaten cornflour.



If a product states 'Gluten-Free' on the label it will be gluten-free. Australian food labelling standards are right up there by world standards and you can rely on them to be correct. However, you still have some confusing aspects to learn, so if unsure check out Chapter 4 — doing so could save you confusion and a lot of time. Most supermarkets have a 'special diet' or 'free from' section to save time and searching. But don't forget many more gluten-free products will be scattered around the store.

Here are the gluten-free products you may like to include on your 'getting started' list:

- ✓ Biscuits, if these are part of your regular diet
- ✓ Bread — try your local supermarkets first
- ✓ Cake mix, if you have a sweet tooth — also look for gluten-free icing sugar
- ✓ Cereal or muesli
- ✓ Crackers — rice crackers are useful, but corn crackers are tastier and more substantial
- ✓ Gluten-free flours — grab a plain flour mix for making sauces and thickening dishes, and a self-raising flour mix if you're going to bake; try the supermarket varieties first and branch out to make your own mixes as you gain confidence
- ✓ Ice-cream or custard
- ✓ Nuts and seeds — these will likely assume more importance in your diet because they make great gluten-free snacks

- ✓ Pasta — available in most supermarkets; rice noodles or rice sticks are another option
- ✓ Pizza mix or pizza bases — most tomato paste is gluten-free, although not usually those in a squeeze bottle
- ✓ Rice and/or quinoa if you're familiar with it
- ✓ Sauces — you should be able to find gluten-free alternatives for mayonnaise, soy sauce and other sauces and toppings; tomato sauce is usually gluten-free
- ✓ Soup — most canned varieties contain gluten but tomato soup is usually gluten-free; also look for packet soup in your health food shop; many prepared soups are now gluten-free, although expensive
- ✓ Spreads — most are gluten-free except for Vegemite; several gluten-free alternatives are available

See Chapter 8 for more information.

## Dealing with diagnosis — a mother's story

Baby Charlotte was a gorgeous little bub. She gurgled and coo-ed, burped and farted, delighted in keeping her mum up at night and occasionally shared the spillover from her dinner with the nearest available shoulder — without warning, of course. A happy, healthy baby, weighing in nicely on the 75th percentile and doing just what babies do. Her proud and happy mother, Rebecca, breastfed her for two months and at six months, introduced solid food. Charlotte had her first taste of gluten at seven months, which produced a bout of diarrhoea within 24 hours. Well, that's not so unusual in the life of a wee baby. Except that from that day on, Charlotte presented her not so happy mum with six or so sloppy nappies a day. The handle-at-your-own-risk variety.

A few weeks later, Charlotte developed a severe gastric bug, requiring hospitalisation, and afterwards just didn't bounce back the way babies normally do. Weeks and months went by, with Charlotte producing several

diarrhoea nappies a day, barely sleeping for more than an hour at a time, and often waking from her sleep and screaming in pain. Sometimes Rebecca would hear Charlotte gag then vomit in her sleep. Greatly alarmed, Rebecca took her to a paediatrician, who examined Charlotte thoroughly but couldn't find any evidence of a medical problem. Perhaps it was dietary — an intolerance to dairy food — but this wasn't followed up. The real explanation, the paediatrician believed, was behavioural.

These days, many babies get cuddled off to sleep, rather than put down to grizzle and grump, sometimes yell for a bit, and then put themselves off to sleep, as happened in the past. And babies decide that they like to be cuddled all the time and especially all night long. Great for baby, exhausting for mum. The ones who don't get the hang of nodding off using this gentle and loving approach often end up at Sleep School, where exhausted mums get help in training their bubs into better habits. And a

few of those babies don't give up their wakeful ways without a huge battle. They've learned to get what they want by screaming and that's what they do! A wakeful baby who angrily resists sleep can fight it even to the point of crying and screaming until they vomit.

The paediatrician may have assumed that Charlotte's relentless crying, her inability to sleep and even the vomiting was just learned behaviour. 'The fastest way to cure her would be to leave her in her own vomit for the night,' suggested the paediatrician.

Rebecca was utterly dismayed. Her own instinct told her that something was seriously wrong. This diagnosis didn't account for the frequent diarrhoea, or the fact that Charlotte's weight gain had slowed right down. And no way would she let her baby sleep in her own vomit.

'But here was an expert telling me this was the cause,' explained Rebecca, 'and I started to doubt my own judgement. If it *was* behavioural, then I needed help.' Rebecca stayed several times at a Tresillian Centre for mothers and babies where mothers are taught to use 'controlled crying'. No-one questioned the earlier diagnosis. 'We had been labelled a behavioural case — a classic overanxious mum with an attention-seeking baby — and that made it harder to get a different diagnosis.' But using controlled crying had no effect on Charlotte's symptoms.

A different set of doctors examined Charlotte at about 13 months, finding she had an anal fissure, but didn't look for further causes for her diarrhoea, crying, vomiting and poor sleep habits.

Months passed and Rebecca struggled on, deeply distressed that no-one seemed to be listening to her. By then Charlotte had stopped walking and crawling and had become silent and withdrawn. She had dropped from the

75th percentile to the 10th. As Rebecca looked at Charlotte's distended belly and scrawny buttocks she knew her baby was seriously ill. Support came in the end from a paediatric nurse who agreed that something was definitely wrong. The nurse urged Rebecca to follow her instincts until she got an answer.

Still their GP was doubtful. He insisted that none of the tests had shown any problems. But, he said, 'When a mother tells me there is something wrong, there usually is!' So after months of suffering Charlotte was examined by a leading paediatrician at the Children's Hospital in Westmead. He was shocked at her condition.

'The feeling of relief was overwhelming,' said Rebecca. 'At last someone was listening. Someone recognised that Charlotte's illness wasn't just in my mind. But I felt dreadful that she had suffered so long even though I had done everything I could to find out what was wrong.'

Within a short time Charlotte was diagnosed with coeliac disease. Once on a gluten-free diet she quickly made up for lost time. It wasn't long before she was walking, talking and getting into mischief just like any other energetic and curious toddler. But it took another eight months before Charlotte began to enjoy eating again.

And the challenge of a gluten-free diet? It's nothing, according to Rebecca. 'I was so relieved to have a healthy, contented child again. It's just great to know that her medical condition can be so simply treated through diet.'

Fortunately, Charlotte's story is rare, at least in Australia and New Zealand. Paediatricians are usually right on the ball in picking up coeliac disease in babies and toddlers, so the condition is diagnosed quickly. It is less often recognised in adults, where it takes on average five years from the onset of symptoms to get a diagnosis of coeliac disease.

## *A two-week meal plan*

You may choose to simply convert your usual meals into gluten-free versions, or use this opportunity to acquire a whole new repertoire. Most people sit somewhere in the middle, which seems to work well.

The meal plan shown in Table 1-1 provides that mix, with some new recipes from later chapters in this book, as well as suggestions for converting your old favourites to make them gluten-free.

<b>Table 1-1 Two-Week Gluten-Free Meal Plan</b>			
<i>Week One</i>			
<i>Day</i>	<i>Breakfast</i>	<i>Lunch</i>	<i>Dinner</i>
1	GF cereal/muesli, low-fat milk or yoghurt	Ham and salad sandwich with GF bread	Salmon Steaks with Basil (Chapter 13) or fish of your choice
	GF bread toasted with honey, jam or favourite spread	Fruit	Mixed steamed vegetables Fruit and ice cream
2	Fruit and low-fat yoghurt	Tomato soup with GF bread (toasted) or corn thins	Spaghetti bolognaise with GF pasta or rice sticks
	Soft boiled egg on GF toast	Fruit	Green salad
3	GF cereal/muesli with low-fat milk and fruit	Grilled tomato and cheese on GF toast	Your favourite meat or chicken stir-fry using GF soy or oyster sauce
	GF toast with favourite spread		Rice or rice noodles Blueberry Layers (Chapter 15)
4	Blueberry amaranth porridge with yoghurt (Chapter 10)	Tuna with salad vegetables and rice or corn thins	Spiced Moroccan Chicken with Quinoa and steamed vegetables (Chapter 13)
	GF toast	Fruit	Boiled Chocolate Cake (Chapter 15)
5	Fruit smoothie (banana strawberry, pear, yoghurt and low-fat milk)	GF toasted sandwich with peanut butter, celery and raisins	Chickpea Curry in a Hurry (Chapter 13)
	GF toast	Boiled Chocolate Cake (Chapter 15)	Green salad

<i><b>Day</b></i>	<i><b>Breakfast</b></i>	<i><b>Lunch</b></i>	<i><b>Dinner</b></i>
6	GF cereal with low fat milk or yogurt  GF toast with favourite spread	Zucchini and Haloumi Fritters (Chapter 11) with salad greens	Grilled chicken with baked mixed vegetables  Baked custard with ice cream
7	Fried egg with lean GF bacon and grilled mushrooms, GF toast	Baked vegetable salad with fetta and green leaves	Lean beef or lamb barbecue, baked potato in foil with green salad
<i><b>Week Two</b></i>			
8	GF cereal or muesli with low-fat milk  GF toast with favourite spread	Rice salad (cooked rice, cucumber celery, capsicum apple, yoghurt)  Berry Muffin (Chapter 10)	Grilled fish with lemon sauce, potato mash and steamed vegetables
9	GF baked beans on GF toast  Fruit	Zucchini Soup (Chapter 12) with cheese and tomato sandwich	Lamb and Eggplant Tagine (Chapter 13)  Rice, green salad
10	Fruit smoothie with fruit in season, low-fat yoghurt and milk  GF toast	Tinned salmon or tuna with GF toast and green salad	Quick Zucchini and Ricotta Pasta (Chapter 14)  Green salad  Ice-cream
11	GF cereal with low-fat milk or yoghurt.  GF toast with favourite spread	Curried egg and celery GF sandwich  Fruit	Simple Salmon and Quinoa Loaf (Chapter 13) with mixed vegetables
12	Scrambled eggs with parsley on GF toast	Cold Salmon Quinoa Loaf (leftover from Day 11) with salad	Vegetarian Lasagne (Chapter 13) with green salad
13	GF cereal with low-fat milk or yoghurt  GF toast with favourite spread	Ham and salad sandwich on GF bread or large corn crackers	Pork, bok choy and noodle stir-fry  Apricot Fruit Loaf (Chapter 15)
14	Herb omelette with chopped tomato and capsicum filling  GF toast	Quick Bread (Chapter 14) with cheese and favourite toppings	Chicken Quinotto with Mushrooms (Chapter 13)  Steamed vegetables





## Chapter 2

# Understanding Why You Need to Go Gluten-Free

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### *In This Chapter*

- ▶ Working through allergies, intolerances and coeliac disease
  - ▶ Knowing how gluten can affect behaviour
  - ▶ Being tested and understanding the results
  - ▶ Understanding the consequences if you continue to eat gluten
  - ▶ Beginning to heal
- 

**p**eople start out on a gluten-free diet for a variety of reasons, some good, some not so wise. Whatever your reasons, one thing is certain. You're not alone. Millions of people around the world are going gluten-free and many of these individuals are seeing improvements in their health. Gluten just doesn't sit well with some people.

Before we look at why people are doing it, we explore three different conditions — coeliac disease, gluten or wheat intolerance.

So you're thinking, 'What exactly does all that mean and can I or can't I eat pizza?' Ah, you want to cut to the chase! An easy answer to either one of those questions isn't always possible.

This chapter explains the ways in which gluten can affect your body, how coeliac disease or gluten intolerance are diagnosed and the difference a gluten-free diet may make to your health.

## Looking at Allergies, Intolerances and Coeliac Disease

Food allergy, food intolerances and coeliac disease are three distinctly different conditions, yet many people talk about them as if they were the same. That's probably because they share a number of common symptoms and are all treated by diet.

### Food allergies

Food allergy is estimated to affect about 1 to 2 per cent of the population. It's the most serious form of reaction to food and can be life threatening. Allergies are specific reactions resulting from an abnormal and exaggerated response to food proteins. Foods that people may be allergic to include milk, egg, wheat, fish and shellfish, peanuts and soy. Most children tend to grow out of milk, wheat and egg allergies by the age of four or five. Allergies to peanuts or fish are less common, but they're more likely to persist for life.

Allergic reactions occur when the body's immune system overreacts to a particular substance, believing that it's harmful. Allergies are usually diagnosed by skin-prick testing, the gold standard for diagnosis.

If someone has a food allergy, he or she should avoid the allergen at all times. Reactions can occur to even minute amounts of allergenic protein, and sensitivity to the allergen can increase on repeated exposure. What may be a mild reaction to the first exposure can become a life-threatening one if the individual is repeatedly exposed to the allergen. In extreme cases, an allergic reaction can cause anaphylactic shock, requiring an epinephrine (adrenaline) injection.



Many food allergies are called *IgE-mediated responses* to foods. Basically, all that means is that the immune system is overreacting to a food, treating it as a foreign 'invader'. IgE just indicates a class of immunoglobulin. *Immunoglobulins* are proteins that the body makes to help fight against things it perceives to be threats. IgE's main evolutionary role has been to protect the body against parasites, but it also fights other 'bad guys', which is what it's doing when you have an allergic reaction to food. The body creates a specific variation of IgE antibody for each allergen it encounters.

Allergy to wheat isn't common and only in the case of severe allergy can an asthma attack be triggered. Rare cases of anaphylaxis can occur and these instances are usually exercise induced. An allergic reaction to wheat may include itching and swelling, vomiting, cramps or diarrhoea.

## Food intolerance

Food intolerances are *not* allergies, but reactions to food chemicals. Unlike allergies, intolerances seem to work by irritating nerve endings in different parts of the body, causing side effects. The symptoms of intolerance vary from person to person. Common symptoms may include hives, headaches, mouth ulcers, nausea, bloating and wind, stomach pains, irritable bowel and other bowel symptoms.

Food intolerances can be very unpleasant and distressing, but they don't generally cause permanent damage to the body (as allergies and coeliac disease do). They don't involve immune reactions to food proteins or cause any damage to the bowel lining. However, if the bowel is affected, causing nausea or diarrhoea over a long period of time, dehydration, weight loss and deficiencies may result.

People vary in their degree of sensitivity to the chemicals that occur naturally in foods. The most commonly recognised natural food chemicals that cause problems include salicylates, amines and glutamate. Sensitivity to these chemicals can be determined by going on an elimination diet with the assistance of an experienced dietitian.

Additives such as preservatives, antioxidants and colourings are also problematic for some people. In sensitive people, the effect is dose related and depends on how often and how much of the problem component is consumed and on individual sensitivity (or someone's threshold).



The small amounts of natural chemicals present in a particular food may not be enough to cause a reaction immediately. Each chemical may be present in small amounts in a number of different foods, so it can accumulate in the body over time, producing symptoms once an individual's threshold is finally reached.

FODMAPs have been found to cause irritable bowel symptoms in those with or without coeliac disease. Don't be put off by the term *FODMAPs* — it's an acronym for fermentable oligo-, di-, monosaccharides, and polyols, which include fructose (a naturally occurring sugar found in fruit) and lactose (the sugar in dairy products). These are poorly absorbed in some people, so they travel through the digestive tract, acting as an excellent food source for gut bacteria. The bacteria in your gut thrive on these components and, as a by-product of the fermentation, produce a lot of gas, which causes the typical symptoms of bloating, distension, wind, abdominal pain and nausea.

Some individuals sensitive to FODMAPs find that removing wheat from their diet helps to improve symptoms. A significant body of evidence now suggests that some psychological therapies help symptoms of irritable bowel disease.

## Tall stories

Sometimes people get the weirdest ideas about the way coeliac disease is diagnosed. How about these interesting versions?

- ✓ My sister went on a vegan machine at the naturopath's and they told her she was a coeliac.
- ✓ Yes, my daughter is a coeliac — the test for it is a sweat test.

✓ My naturopath said he was 65 per cent coeliac.

✓ The doctor gave her a colonoscopy to clean her out before starting the gluten-free diet.

We think some people really need to read *Living Gluten-Free For Dummies!*

Cognitive behaviour therapy and more particularly 'gut directed' hypnotherapy with a qualified practitioner have been shown to produce lasting benefits, although the reasons for this are not yet fully understood.

No medical test can diagnose wheat or gluten intolerance or any other food intolerance. The only way to identify intolerance is to go on an elimination diet or a low-FODMAP diet, supervised by a dietitian. The exception is fructose malabsorption, which can be determined by a hydrogen breath test. If food intolerance is diagnosed, you need to decide how strictly you need to avoid the food chemical(s) causing the trouble. It's a matter of balancing the severity of the symptoms against the difficulty of restricting the diet.

If you've made the decision yourself to go on a gluten-free diet, we strongly advise you to see your doctor to discuss your options. A gluten-free diet may mask other symptoms for a time and delay the diagnosis of a more serious problem. Or you may have coeliac disease, but because it hasn't been medically diagnosed, your doctor may not be monitoring you for other conditions related to coeliac disease, like osteoporosis or thyroid disease.

## Coeliac disease

Unlike gluten or wheat intolerance, coeliac disease is well defined. *Coeliac disease* is a common (yet often undiagnosed) genetic response to gluten. Triggered by eating gluten, the immune system responds by attacking the gluten molecule and, in so doing, also attacks your body cells. This is called an *autoimmune response*. The disease can develop at any age and it results in damage to the small intestine, which can cause poor absorption of nutrients. Although the damage occurs in the gastrointestinal tract, not all symptoms are gastrointestinal in nature. In fact, symptoms vary widely between individuals and sometimes no symptoms are apparent at all. We cover coeliac disease in more detail in Chapter 3.

***Identifying symptoms of coeliac disease***

The symptoms of coeliac disease can affect any part of the body. That's because coeliac disease is *multisystemic*; although the actual damage is occurring in the gastrointestinal tract — mainly in the small intestine — the symptoms can affect you in many different ways.

The key indicators that raise suspicion of coeliac disease are shown in Table 2-1.

<b>Table 2-1</b>	<b>Indicators of Coeliac Disease</b>
	<b><i>Nutrient deficiency and osteoporosis</i></b>
	Low iron
	Weight loss
	Failure to thrive
	Anaemia of any cause
	Folate, zinc, vitamin A, D or B12 deficiency
	<b><i>Constant tiredness</i></b>
	Tired all the time
	Headaches
	<b><i>Gut upset</i></b>
	Diarrhoea, constipation or 'irritable bowel syndrome'
	<b><i>Autoimmune disease</i></b>
	Autoimmune thyroid or liver disease
	Insulin-treated diabetes (Type 1 and LADA)
	Sjogren and Addison syndromes
	<b><i>Family history</i></b>
	Family history of coeliac disease
	<b><i>Other</i></b>
	Peripheral neuropathy
	Short stature
	Abnormal liver function
	Hypo-splenism
	Infertility
	Itchy, blistering skin rash (dermatitis herpetiformis)
	Down and Turner syndromes
	IgA deficiency

## Making sure you have the right diagnosis

Twelve-year-old Damon showed all the common symptoms of coeliac disease — diarrhoea, cramps, bloating and tiredness. His mother, Anna, did not want him to have a biopsy because she thought it was too invasive. Their doctor suggested they try a gluten-free diet and Anna, an expert cook, set to work baking bread and other gluten-free alternatives. Damon's condition improved for a few months, although his symptoms would return every few weeks. Anna bought fresh supplies of gluten-free flours and baking mixes, assuming that he was still getting some gluten in his diet. She

accused him of cheating on the diet at school. Over time, Damon's condition deteriorated, he lost weight and gave up his sporting activities. His academic performance at school fell badly. After two years of trying, they abandoned the gluten-free diet because it didn't seem to be helping any more. When Damon had a particularly painful attack of diarrhoea and cramps, Damon and his mum went back to the doctor, who referred Damon to a gastroenterologist. Testing revealed that Damon didn't have coeliac disease, but serious bowel damage from Crohn's disease.

Many people think the most common symptoms of coeliac disease are gastrointestinal in nature — diarrhoea, constipation, gas, bloating, reflux and even vomiting. Here are some of the 'classic' — though not the most common — symptoms of coeliac disease:

- ✓ Abdominal pain and distension
- ✓ Bloating
- ✓ Constipation
- ✓ Diarrhoea
- ✓ Gas and flatulence
- ✓ Greasy, foul-smelling, floating stools
- ✓ Nausea
- ✓ Reflux
- ✓ Vomiting
- ✓ Weight loss or weight gain

### *Identifying other symptoms*

Interestingly, although coeliac disease affects the gut, most people's symptoms aren't gastrointestinal in nature. People more commonly have

what are called *extraintestinal* symptoms. This is only a partial listing that includes some of the more common symptoms:

- ✓ Abnormal menstrual cycles
- ✓ Ataxia (difficulties with muscle coordination)
- ✓ Dental enamel defects and irregularities
- ✓ Depression, irritability, listlessness and mood disorders
- ✓ Early onset osteoporosis
- ✓ ‘Foggy brain’ or an inability to concentrate
- ✓ Hair loss (alopecia)
- ✓ Headaches (including migraines)
- ✓ Joint/bone pain
- ✓ Lactose intolerance

## The facts on flatulence

Farts. Butt burps. Trouser coughs. Fluffs. Flatus. Submarines — the silent service! Ask any boy between the ages of two and 102 and he'll tell you that there's absolutely no subject on this entire planet that's funnier than farts. So what's the deal with farts, anyway? Everyone does it (except us), yet some people deny it (we don't need to); others, usually those with a Y chromosome, proudly publicise their impending arrival ('Fire in the hole!'). An average count would be 14 times a day (and who's counting?), each boasting a distinct sound effect (or lack thereof) and fragrance.

Farts — all bodily gas emissions, for that matter — are caused by the air you swallow and the fermentation of certain foods by the bacteria in your digestive system. If you eat fruit immediately after a meal, you're more

likely to experience wind — the stomach juices take longer to break down fruit than other foods, and if you've had a big meal the fruit will move down into the duodenum before it has been adequately treated. As it moves through the system it ferments, causing wind in some individuals. People generally make up to one litre of gas every day and less than 1 per cent of it smells (we know some people who are performing way above average). Speaking of skewing the averages, if you're doing more than your fair share of the 14 times per day and suspect you might have coeliac disease or other food intolerances, you'll probably find that getting to the bottom of the problem (sorry for that one) significantly diminishes the fragrant (and not-so-fragrant) farting problem. So go ahead. Pull my finger.



- ✓ Low blood sugar (hypoglycaemia)
- ✓ Low calcium levels
- ✓ Mouth ulcers (aphthous ulcers) or swelling of the tongue
- ✓ Peripheral neuropathy (tingling in the fingers and toes)
- ✓ Unexplained fatigue and weakness (due to iron-deficiency anaemia)
- ✓ Unexplained infertility
- ✓ Vitamin and/or mineral deficiencies



Some people are diagnosed with coeliac disease even though they have no noticeable symptoms — these people are called *asymptomatic*. They're usually diagnosed because they have a relative who has coeliac disease and they're smart enough to know that means they should be tested too, or iron deficiency is detected and they're tested. (Truly, though, if they read the list of 250+ symptoms, it's unlikely that they could honestly say they have *none* of them!) Even though they don't feel any symptoms, gluten is damaging their small intestine, which can result in nutritional deficiencies and associated conditions. They need to avoid gluten just as much as those with obvious symptoms. These people have it tough, in terms of both diagnosis and treatment. It's not easy to stay motivated to give up some of your favourite foods when those foods don't seem to make you feel bad! But after a few weeks on the diet many of them look back and say 'I didn't realise there was anything wrong, but now I feel fantastic'.



### ***Spotting symptoms in kids***

Kids who have coeliac disease tend to have the 'classic' gastrointestinal symptoms of diarrhoea or constipation, although exceptions do occur. They may also have some of these symptoms:

- ✓ Abdominal pain and distension
- ✓ Anaemia
- ✓ Bone pain
- ✓ Delayed growth or delayed puberty
- ✓ Failure to thrive (in infants and toddlers)
- ✓ Inability to concentrate
- ✓ Irritability
- ✓ Tiredness
- ✓ Weight loss in older children

### *Discovering misdiagnoses and missed diagnoses*

Thankfully, as awareness of coeliac disease increases, diagnoses are on the rise and many more people with coeliac disease are discovering improved health on a gluten-free diet. But in the meantime, underdiagnosis is still a big problem. Patients are often misdiagnosed with a variety of conditions before finding out that they really have coeliac disease.



In Europe, the average time between the onset of symptoms and a diagnosis of coeliac disease is six months. In Australia, it takes an average of five years after symptoms develop. In the US, if the diagnosis ever comes, it takes an average of 11 years after symptoms develop. A *Reader's Digest* article titled '10 Diseases Doctors Miss' cited coeliac disease as one of the top 10 misdiagnosed diseases. In Australia, only one in five people with coeliac disease is diagnosed.

So why are doctors missing the diagnosis of this common condition? Michelle Pietzak, MD, one of the foremost experts on coeliac disease in the US, offers some ideas:

- ✓ **Doctors aren't exposed to it enough at university and during residency training.** These are critical periods when doctors' opinions and future practices are moulded. If they don't hear enough about it during their training, they're not likely to look for it after they graduate.
- ✓ **Some doctors get 'continuing medical information' from drug reps, journal articles and conferences.** Right now, no drugs for coeliac disease exist, so drug reps aren't strolling into the doctors' offices and chatting it up. Nor do many conferences and journal articles bring coeliac disease to the forefront, where it would be more likely to get top-of-mind awareness during the testing procedures.
- ✓ **Symptoms are vast and sometimes even absent.** Symptoms of coeliac disease are often quite varied, affecting many different parts of the body, sometimes all at once. Some people don't seem to have any symptoms. That makes pinpointing a cause difficult.
- ✓ **Doctors may think the patients are exaggerating or just plain 'crazy'.** More than one person with coeliac disease has been called neurotic or a hypochondriac because of the symptoms involved. The long laundry list of symptoms may come across as exaggeration or hysteria.
- ✓ **Routine blood tests don't pick it up.** Full blood counts (FBC) and chemistry panels don't test specifically for coeliac disease. So although a doctor is likely to order BC and chemistry panels for patients with coeliac symptoms, these don't offer any hints that a patient may have coeliac disease. An astute doctor, though, will see signs in these panels: Anaemia; low potassium, bicarbonate and protein levels; and high liver enzymes are red flags for coeliac disease.

✓ **Routine endoscopies and poorly done biopsies don't detect coeliac disease.** Some patients think they've been tested for coeliac disease because their doctor did an endoscopy. But an endoscopy without a biopsy doesn't detect coeliac disease. Damage to the gut is only visible to the naked eye in 50 per cent of cases, so a tissue sample is needed for examination under a microscope. Even if doctors do a biopsy, they may miss the diagnosis if they do the biopsy poorly, if they don't take enough samples or if they don't take samples far enough down into the small bowel. If you're confused about endoscopies or biopsies, see the sidebar 'Guiding you through the opsies and scopsies', later in this chapter.

## *Blaming the Bread: How Gluten May Affect Behaviour*

Rarely considered a culprit in behavioural issues, gluten is sometimes behind the scenes wreaking havoc on behaviour and moods.

'Sorry I haven't been productive at work lately; I've been eating too much bread' sounds a bit ridiculous. But really, it could be the case because some researchers believe bread — gluten — may affect the behaviour of coeliacs in several ways, including 'foggy brain', or an inability to concentrate. Some doctors think individuals could be affected in any of the following ways:

- ✓ Attention-deficit disorder (ADD) and attention-deficit hyperactive disorder (ADHD) type behaviours
- ✓ Autism
- ✓ Inability to concentrate or focus
- ✓ Irritability
- ✓ Lack of motivation

## Coeliac disease and fertility

Research shows that men with undiagnosed coeliac disease have a lower than average sperm count and reduced sex drive. These problems are resolved once gluten has been removed from the diet.

The incidence of coeliac disease in women with unexplained fertility problems is much higher than in the general population. Many studies show that up to 50 per cent of women with undiagnosed or untreated coeliac disease are likely to have reproductive difficulties such as infertility, miscarriage or low birth weight babies.

But there's good news for women already diagnosed with coeliac disease. If you are on

a strict gluten-free diet at the time of conception and throughout the pregnancy, the risk of problems is no greater than for other women. (And naturally, to be in the best of health for your children you'll want to be scrupulously gluten-free all the time.)

If you've had fertility problems and you're pregnant or trying to become pregnant, ask your doctor to test you for coeliac disease. Good news is available here, too. In most cases, once you have been diagnosed and on a gluten-free diet for six to 12 months, you should be able to fall pregnant naturally. The risk of miscarriage will diminish and the likelihood of having a low birth weight baby will be no greater than for other women.

## Exploring dietary treatment for autism

Anecdotal evidence (that is, parents and others report it to doctors or researchers) shows that some people with autism improve on a gluten-free, casein-free diet (casein is the major protein found in milk). This seems to be confirmed by some studies, but disproven by others. On the diet, some people show improvement within a week — others within a year. Others show no improvement at all. Of those who report changes in behaviour, the changes themselves vary, too. Some people with autism report an improved ability to sleep through the night, others become more verbal and interactive, and some are completely 'normalised' on the diet.

A recent study in the US didn't find any evidence of a link, but larger and more rigorous studies are needed to clarify this important issue. Getting autistic kids to eat well is a big enough problem without complicating it by eliminating gluten, unless the benefits are clearly established.



It's well documented that autistic children often have gastrointestinal problems. The effects aren't due to an allergy or severe reaction to gluten, but a toxin or drug. Although some connection may exist between coeliac disease and autism, the nature of that connection has yet to be established.



## Educational achievement

Undiagnosed coeliac disease appears to have a negative effect on educational learning and on achievement in working life as well. People with coeliac disease are less likely to have studied at a tertiary level than others. Young coeliacs are more likely to have had behavioural problems and/or poor marks at school before they were

diagnosed and treated with a gluten-free diet. Studies also show that they're more likely to suffer from depressive disorders. It isn't known whether these lower levels of achievement are due to generally poorer health or whether the behavioural or depressive problems may have interfered with successful learning.

## *Depression and other mood disorders*

Clinical depression, bipolar disorder, schizophrenia and a variety of mood disorders can, in rare cases, be associated with or exacerbated by gluten sensitivity and coeliac disease. Some journal articles even list these mood disorders as 'symptoms' of coeliac disease. These conditions sometimes improve on a gluten-free diet.

Schizophrenia has been associated with gluten since the 1960s, when it was first noted that a gluten- (and dairy-) restricted diet led to improvement in some institutionalised patients. However, no satisfactory studies have established a convincing connection.

A recent study found that coeliacs and diabetics rated themselves as more depressed and anxious than others. This was seen as related to the difficulties of adjusting to a chronic and restrictive condition rather than directly to the disease. But gluten-free food is much easier to find than in the past and community understanding and tolerance is steadily improving. Now that thousands of people are on a gluten-free diet, they aren't quite the two-headed monsters they used to be.



Evidence exists that coeliacs diagnosed in childhood have higher than normal death rates, mostly from accidents, suicide and violence. It's well known that this excess also occurs in people with other chronic conditions such as diabetes or epilepsy. During adolescence, the pressure to conform is enormous and it may be that young people who feel 'different' go out of their way to prove themselves with their peers, taking greater risks or acting tough. Teenagers often bitterly resent their diet and may experience anger or depression because the condition is lifelong.

Teenage coeliacs need more monitoring and care than adults, who are more likely to have the life skills to cope with their diet. Life improved for young diabetics with the introduction of sugar-free soft drinks. Fortunately, a far greater range of gluten-free fast-food options is now available, so young people are able to enjoy a night out with friends without feeling excluded or 'different' (see Chapter 16 for more details).

## Getting Tested

Tests are available to diagnose food allergies and coeliac disease. If neither of these conditions is found, you may have a gluten or wheat intolerance, but this can only be determined by excluding gluten or wheat from the diet. Specific medical tests for intolerance aren't available. It's worth remembering that although you may not have coeliac disease at the time (or there may have been only scattered damage to your intestines that wasn't picked up by biopsy) you could possibly develop it later in life. Gene testing (explained later in this chapter) can help here, because if testing shows that you don't have the necessary genes, you can almost definitely exclude coeliac disease.

If coeliac disease is suspected, tests are selected to establish whether a gastroscopy and small bowel biopsies are necessary. Blood tests aren't enough on their own to diagnose coeliac disease, but they can be a good indicator of it.

### Testing for coeliac disease — blood tests

Blood tests — also called *serological* tests — look for antibodies that the body produces when someone with coeliac disease eats gluten.



You have to be eating gluten regularly before blood testing. If you don't eat gluten, or haven't eaten it for long enough, your body may not be producing enough antibodies to show up on the tests, and the results may show that your antibodies are in the normal range. Opinions vary on how much gluten you need to be eating and for how long, from one month to four to six months. You need to be guided by your gastroenterologist on this issue. If you have severe symptoms during that time, consult your doctor to see whether you should continue to eat gluten.

The most comprehensive panel of blood tests generally recommended for coeliac screening includes five tests for antibodies. Only one serum tube is required. Endomysial antibody (EMA) (IgA) or transglutaminase antibody

(tTg) (IgA) tests are the preferred tests. Antigliadin antibody tests (AGA) (IgG & IgA) are less precise. Sometimes the test results can be misleading because an individual has an IgA deficiency (this occurs in 2 per cent of coeliacs). They're less reliable in children under the age of four or five.



A range of antibody tests have been developed in order to diagnose coeliac disease. The main (and possibly the only) autoantigen in coeliac disease is tissue transglutaminase (tTg). This enzyme is present in many different cell types. When tissue injury has occurred (as in coeliac disease) this enzyme is released to restore the damaged tissue. The performance of tests measuring antibodies to tTg has improved so much over the past few years these tests are now preferred over earlier tests, which measured gliadin or endomysial antibodies.

If one or more of these tests are positive, the results may indicate coeliac disease. The next step will be an intestinal biopsy to confirm the diagnosis.

## Biopsies

Biopsies are considered the 'gold standard' for diagnosing coeliac disease, and they've come a long way since they were first administered. Back in the 1980s biopsies were done without any sedative or anaesthetic. On one occasion Margaret was halfway through a biopsy procedure when she was told she had to be moved to another room. Clutching the cute little blue gown around her buttocks for some semblance of privacy, she had to walk right through a crowded waiting room with a long tube hanging out of her mouth. She tried for a dignified saunter, but only managed a beetroot-faced scuttle. These days biopsies are far more civilised and not at all unpleasant. When doctors do a biopsy, they do it by way of an endoscopy in order to collect cell samples from the *villi*, the hairlike structures on the lining of the small intestine. When people with coeliac disease eat gluten, the body launches an attack and ends up attacking itself, blunting the villi. The biopsy determines how much blunting, if any, has occurred.

The endoscopy itself and the clipping of the villi aren't painful. You're given a light sedation so you're not conscious but can be easily awakened. Most people sleep right through the short procedure. The gastroenterologist inserts a tube through the mouth into the oesophagus, to the stomach and finally to the small intestine. Sometimes people have a mild sore throat after the procedure. You wake gradually, have a rest and a cup of tea and you're free to go — although you'll need someone to drive you home in case the sedative is still making you drowsy.

## Guiding you through the opsies and scopsies

Biopsies, endoscopies, gastroscopies, colonoscopies — words that roll off the tongue of your GP or specialist like football scores. Most people don't have a clue what they are — but they know they don't sound very nice. Actually, though, they sound a whole lot worse than they are and none of them are painful. Here's a quick description of each:

- ✓ An *endoscopy* is a procedure for looking into the human body for medical reasons, using a long, narrow, flexible tube with a CCD or fibre optic camera and a light, called an endoscope.
- ✓ A *gastroscopy* is an examination of the upper digestive tract — oesophagus, stomach and duodenum — with an endoscope.
- ✓ A *colonoscopy* is an examination of the large bowel using an endoscope.
- ✓ A *biopsy* is the removal, using an endoscope, of a sample of cells or tissue for a laboratory examination. In the diagnosis of coeliac disease, several samples are taken from different parts of the small intestine.



Like the blood test (refer to the preceding section), you have to be eating gluten in order for the biopsies to be accurate. Here are a few important things to know about a biopsy:

- ✓ As in all surgical procedures, some slight risks are involved. In rare cases, the small bowel may be perforated, requiring further surgery.
- ✓ The doctor should take at least four biopsy samples. Coeliac disease can be patchy, sometimes affecting one area but not affecting the area right next to it. Taking several samples maximises the chance that at least one will be from an affected area, if one exists.
- ✓ Even mild blunting can indicate damage. People used to think that in order to diagnose coeliac disease, *total villous atrophy* needed to be apparent, or completely flattened or blunted villi. Today, different degrees of damage are measured by the Marsh rating system and even partial blunting indicates damage.
- ✓ For the most part, doctors can't make a diagnosis by doing an endoscopy alone. Although visual clues can indicate damage due to coeliac disease, biopsies are needed for accurate diagnosis.

The biopsy samples are sent to a pathologist, who then gives the results to the gastroenterologist. You should hear back from the gastroenterologist with the results of your biopsy within a few days.



## *Genetic tests*

Genetic testing can be done by taking a swab from the inside of the cheek (a buccal swab), or from a blood sample. Doctors look to see whether someone has the genes associated with coeliac disease.

Genetic testing is valuable for ruling out coeliac disease, because if you don't have one or both of the genes HLA-DQ2 or HLA-DQ8, you have a 99.6 per cent chance of never developing coeliac disease. The test isn't valuable for predicting who *will* get coeliac disease, though, because lots of people have these genes and never develop it. More information about the genetics of coeliac disease is provided in Chapter 3.

## *Allergy tests*

Some people have IgE-mediated allergy to wheat, other cereal grain proteins or even seeds, such as sesame seeds or poppy seeds, which are sometimes included in bakery products. This can be tested using the RAST test, a blood test that looks for immunoglobulin E (IgE). A skin-prick test is another alternative, and this is usually performed by an allergy specialist or at an allergy centre.



Coeliac disease can be triggered at any age, so just because you tested negative once doesn't mean you're 'out of the woods' forever. But if you have the gene test and it shows you have neither of the necessary genes for coeliac disease, you can be pretty certain that it will never develop.

## *I've tested positive! Now what?*

If you've been diagnosed with coeliac disease, you're lucky! You hold the key to better health: A gluten-free lifestyle. Going gluten-free right away is important. You may have a million questions in your mind at first, but this book helps you find many of the answers. You may make mistakes at first and that's okay. Learn from them and move on.



Coeliac disease is a genetic condition. If you've been diagnosed, your immediate family members should have blood tests and maybe the gene test, even if they have no obvious symptoms. Other relatives who do have some symptoms should let their doctor know coeliac disease is in the family.

## *Paying the Price if You Continue to Eat Gluten*

Some people who have been told they need a gluten-free diet still continue to eat gluten, for a variety of reasons:

- ✓ Gluten-free food may be extremely hard to source, particularly if you live in a small country town or remote area.
- ✓ You may have little control over the food that's available to you — some elderly coeliacs in retirement hostels or even nursing homes struggle to get enough gluten-free food to satisfy their needs. In a large family with parents who are barely coping, some coeliac children have to eat gluten-containing foods or 'do without'.
- ✓ Gluten-free bread and other supplies are just too expensive.
- ✓ You're not able to understand how to avoid gluten, because of intellectual, emotional or language limitations.
- ✓ You don't experience unpleasant symptoms and it's all too much effort.

Continuing to eat gluten when you've been diagnosed with coeliac disease increases your risk of developing serious medical conditions down the track. We look at some of these in the following section.

Health and other services are badly needed to find better ways of educating coeliacs and their families or carers, and to ensure that gluten-free food is within reach of all those who need it.



Mild symptoms don't mean that you have a mild form of coeliac disease or only mild damage to your bowel. When you've been told you're a coeliac, even if you have no symptoms, eating gluten will cause damage.

### *Looking at associated conditions*

Certain conditions are associated with coeliac disease, meaning that someone who has one is more likely to have the other. It's not always clear which one developed first (except, for instance, Down syndrome, which people are born with).

If you already have one of these conditions but haven't been tested for coeliac disease, you should be tested, because the fact that you have one of these diseases increases your chance of also having coeliac disease.

### ***Autoimmune diseases***

Several autoimmune diseases are associated with coeliac disease, including

- ✓ Addison's disease (hypoadrenocorticism)
- ✓ Autoimmune chronic active hepatitis
- ✓ Autoimmune diabetes mellitus (type 1 diabetes)
- ✓ Crohn's disease
- ✓ Myasthenia gravis
- ✓ Raynaud's phenomenon
- ✓ Scleroderma
- ✓ Sjögren's syndrome
- ✓ Systemic lupus erythematosus
- ✓ Thyroid disease (Graves' disease and Hashimoto's disease)
- ✓ Ulcerative colitis

## **Type 1 diabetes and coeliac disease**

Type 1 diabetes and coeliac disease are both autoimmune disorders. If a person has one autoimmune disorder, they have a greater chance of developing another. Up to 10 per cent of children and adolescents with type 1 diabetes also develop coeliac disease. Usually the diabetes is diagnosed first and coeliac disease picked up as a result of routine screening, but in many cases it's thought that the coeliac disease may have been present for some time. Often no obvious symptoms of coeliac disease have been seen, although a biopsy shows severe damage to the small intestine.

At first it's hard to manage a gluten-free diet and, at the same time, monitor your intake of food and drinks containing carbohydrates. People with both conditions really need to seek help from a dietitian and check back in from time to time as changes occur in lifestyle or physical condition. Research does suggest that a gluten-free diet makes it easier to avoid hypoglycaemic episodes and control blood glucose levels.

### *Mood disorders*

Some of the mood disorders that may be rarely associated with gluten and/or coeliac disease include

- ✓ ADD/ADHD
- ✓ Autism
- ✓ Depression and bipolar disease

### *Nutritional deficiencies*

Because coeliac disease affects the small intestine, nutritional deficiencies are associated. In addition to specific vitamin and mineral deficiencies, people may have

- ✓ Anaemia
- ✓ Osteoporosis, osteopaenia or osteomalacia

### *Neurological conditions*

Some neurological conditions are associated with coeliac disease, including

- ✓ Cerebral calcifications
- ✓ Spina bifida (neural tube defects) (in babies born to mothers with coeliac disease who are eating gluten)
- ✓ Neurological problems, such as ataxia, neuropathy, tingling, seizures and optic myopathy

### *Other conditions*

Several other conditions are associated with coeliac disease, including

- ✓ Cancer (especially intestinal lymphoma) due to untreated coeliac disease
- ✓ Down syndrome
- ✓ Organ disorders (of the gallbladder, liver, spleen or pancreas)
- ✓ Tooth enamel defects



Type 1 diabetes and coeliac disease often go hand in hand. About 10 per cent of people with type 1 diabetes have coeliac disease, but many don't know it. Some individuals with coeliac disease and type 1 diabetes say it's easier to manage blood-sugar levels on a gluten-free diet.



The earlier in life you are diagnosed with coeliac disease, the lower your risk of developing osteoporosis.

## *Living with compromised health*

You may feel perfectly healthy. You may be *asymptomatic* (have no apparent symptoms) or have mild symptoms that you barely notice. But if you have coeliac disease and you continue to eat gluten, you're undoubtedly compromising your health. Your body is being robbed of important nutrients that it needs to function properly and stay strong. You're also increasing your risk of developing other serious medical conditions.

## *Healing Begins on Day One*

One of the coolest things about going gluten-free when you have coeliac disease is that you start healing the minute you stop eating gluten. Most people begin to feel better immediately; some take months to improve; and a few feel better initially but then take a temporary nosedive a few months into the diet. (If that happens you may need to check with a qualified dietitian to make sure you're not eating some gluten by mistake.)

All these are normal responses to your body's healing process and, in the long run, you can look forward to improved health in ways you may not have even expected. Often people say they didn't realise how sick they were until they started to feel better. Margaret at last understood how people could actually be cheerful first thing in the morning — she assumed it was normal to feel like a mouldy cabbage when you dragged yourself out of bed. Although most, if not all, of the intestinal damage caused by gluten is reversible, some of the prolonged malnutrition and malabsorption issues, such as short stature and weakened bones, may have long-lasting, if not permanent effects. That's one of the reasons it's important to be diagnosed as early as possible — so you can achieve your potential and live life to the full.

## Chapter 3

# Taking a Closer Look at Coeliac Disease

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### *In This Chapter*

- ▶ Looking at the frequency of coeliac disease
  - ▶ Examining causes
  - ▶ Reviewing the effects of coeliac disease in the body
  - ▶ Understanding the relationship between gluten and dermatitis herpetiformis
  - ▶ Looking into the future of treatments
- 

**C**oeliac disease is common, but hard to diagnose, because it mimics the symptoms of many other conditions. The word coeliac comes from a Greek word *koiliakos*, meaning ‘suffering in the bowels’. (Was that a heartfelt ‘oh, yeah’ from someone out there?)



Coeliac disease has many names that all mean the same thing, including *celiac disease* (the American spelling), *sprue*, *coeliac sprue*, *non-tropical sprue* (not to be confused with tropical sprue), *gluten-sensitive enteropathy* and *Gee-Herter disease*.

Coeliac disease doesn’t have a cure, but it can be treated very effectively by diet and no medication is needed. Even on a gluten-free diet people with the disease remain sensitive to gluten for the rest of their lives. However, they no longer have the unpleasant and distressing symptoms that led to their diagnosis. Yet most people with the disease aren’t yet diagnosed.

So just how common is it? Well, since you asked, in this chapter, we cover this and other aspects of coeliac disease, including its causes and what the condition does to the body. We also look at the connection between gluten and dermatitis herpetiformis, and what research is being undertaken into coeliac disease.

# Exposing One of the Most Common Genetic Diseases

Recent research indicates that as many as one in 80 Australians are affected by coeliac disease, and the prevalence may be as high as one in 60. Of those, fewer than one in five is currently diagnosed. Close relatives (parents, brothers, sisters and children) have about a 10 per cent chance of having or developing coeliac disease.

To put these numbers in perspective, coeliac disease is more common than Crohn’s disease, ulcerative colitis, multiple sclerosis, Parkinson’s disease and cystic fibrosis combined. Table 3-1 shows how coeliac disease measures up.

People often wonder: If coeliac disease is so common, why don’t more people have it? They do! They just don’t know it yet (and may struggle through life never finding out what is wrong with them).

Table 3-1 Incidence of Common Genetic Diseases in Australia	
Disease	Estimated Number of People
Type 1 diabetes	940,000 ( <a href="http://www.healthinsite.gov.au">www.healthinsite.gov.au</a> )
Epilepsy	735,000 ( <a href="http://www.virtualmedicalcentre.com">www.virtualmedicalcentre.com</a> )
Coeliac disease	250,000 (Coeliac Australia)
Crohn’s disease	36,000 ( <a href="http://www.cureresearch.com">www.cureresearch.com</a> )
Parkinson’s disease	25,000 ( <a href="http://www.mydr.com.au">www.mydr.com.au</a> )
Multiple sclerosis	15,000 (Trish Multiple Sclerosis Research Foundation)
Cystic fibrosis	1 in 2,500 births ( <a href="http://www.healthline.com">www.healthline.com</a> )

## Myths and misconceptions

Some of the things you hear about coeliac disease have about as much truth as the Loch Ness Monster legend, but without even a grainy photograph to back them up. Here are some of the more common myths:

**Myth:** Coeliac disease is rare.

**Fact:** Coeliac disease is one of the world's most common genetic diseases, affecting about one in 100 people. No reliable figures for gluten/wheat intolerance or wheat allergy are available.

**Myth:** Coeliac disease is a childhood condition. You grow out of it.

**Fact:** Actually, coeliac disease occurs at any age. The average age of diagnosis

is 42 years. Once diagnosed, you have it for life.

**Myth:** A naturopath can diagnose coeliac disease.

**Fact:** Coeliac disease can only be diagnosed accurately through an intestinal biopsy.

**Myth:** Severe gastrointestinal problems, like diarrhoea, are the most common symptoms of coeliac disease.

**Fact:** Only 9 per cent of coeliacs have diarrhoea and many have no gastrointestinal symptoms. Their symptoms are extraintestinal, like headaches, fatigue, joint pain, depression and feeling generally run down.

## *Pinpointing Who Develops Coeliac Disease and Why*

Doctors have no way to accurately predict who develops coeliac disease. What doctors *do* know is that you need at least three things in order to develop the condition:

- ✓ The genetic predisposition
- ✓ A diet that includes gluten
- ✓ An environmental trigger

Even if you have all three, you may never develop coeliac disease. You *can* say, though, that if you're missing one of these three things, you won't develop the disease. Coeliac disease affects most races and nationalities. Experts commonly believe the condition to be more prevalent in people with European or west Asian ancestry, but that distinction is diminishing as populations are becoming more diverse and intermingled. It is still uncommon in Australia among people of full Aboriginal descent and in the Oriental Asian population.



## Who joined the dots with coeliac disease?

Way back in the second century AD a Greek physician called Aretaeus of Cappadocia observed patients with the all-too familiar symptoms and noted, 'If the stomach be irritable of the food and it pass through undigested and crude, and nothing ascends into the body, we call such persons Coeliacs'. Skip to 1888 when a British paediatrician called Samuel Gee described the conditions in great detail, concluding, 'If the patient can be cured at all, it must be by means of diet'. The trail got hotter early in the 20th century when coeliac disease was linked to carbohydrates and patients were put on a low-carbohydrate diet. The famous 'banana diet' was popular for children — a diet low on carbs except for ripe bananas. A variety of other diets were tried too — the beef steak cure, the milk diet and a diet of fruit and puréed tomatoes or potatoes.

The final dots were joined together by a Dutch paediatrician, Professor Dicke, in 1936, but

hold the applause for the good doctor for a minute, because some of the credit should go to an astute mother with a coeliac child (coeliac disease was called Gee-Herter's disease at the time). This smart mum reported that her child improved rapidly each time she removed bread from the diet. As a result of that insight, Dr Dicke tested a wheat-free diet on many of his young patients and during the 'Winter of Starvation' after WWII, when horrific food shortages occurred, he realised that many of his young patients did well on a grain-free diet, eating potatoes and more uncommon foods such as tulip bulbs!

Further research with colleagues revealed the real culprit — the gliadin component in wheat and other grains — and so the gluten-free diet was born.

Anyone for tulip bulb tart? It's gluten-free!

## *It's in the genes*

No-one knows all the genes that are involved in developing coeliac disease, but researchers do know of two key players: HLA-DQ2 and HLA-DQ8. You don't have to have both — just one will do — and DQ2 is the one seen most often in people with coeliac disease.

Approximately one-third of the general population has one or both of these genes, but of those who do, only about one in 30 goes on to develop coeliac disease. If you don't have either gene, you have a 99.6 per cent chance of not developing coeliac disease. You can pretty well rule it out. But knowing that you have one or both of the genes still doesn't tell you whether you'll develop coeliac disease. So the gene test can't diagnose coeliac disease; its main use is to rule out the possibility of coeliac disease.



In the case of identical twins (twins who share exactly the same genetic make-up), if one has coeliac disease the other has a 70 per cent likelihood of also being affected, although this may happen months or years later. Clearly, the disease needs some sort of trigger to become active.

## *Gluten is the guilty party*

In the past, in certain places in the world none of the gluten-containing grains were ever eaten and so, as far as we know, coeliac disease was not found. In today's world, it's highly unlikely that a child could grow up without ever being exposed to wheat, rye, barley or oats. But if you never, ever ate gluten you wouldn't develop coeliac disease.

## *Triggering coeliac disease through the environment*

Coeliac disease isn't dominant or recessive — it's *multifactorial*; that is, both genetic and environmental factors are involved. Some of the environmental factors we know and some we don't.

Some people have a pretty clear idea of when their coeliac disease was triggered, because in many cases they're relatively healthy and then *boom!* Their symptoms seem to appear 'out of the blue' and they have no idea why. But doctors have no way of telling how long the disease has been active before symptoms are first noticed.

Environmental triggers can include

- ✓ Car accident or other physical injury
- ✓ Divorce, job loss, a death in the family, or other emotional trauma
- ✓ Illness, including gastroenteritis or rotavirus
- ✓ Pregnancy
- ✓ Surgery

Others show signs of coeliac disease in early childhood but it's not diagnosed and they appear to recover during adolescence. Symptoms return in adulthood, gradually increasing in severity.

## *Understanding Coeliac Disease and What It Does to the Body*

Coeliac disease is an *autoimmune disease* (a disease in which the immune system attacks the body) that's activated when someone eats gluten. To help you understand exactly what damage is being done, we revisit high school biology, specifically focusing on the gastrointestinal tract.

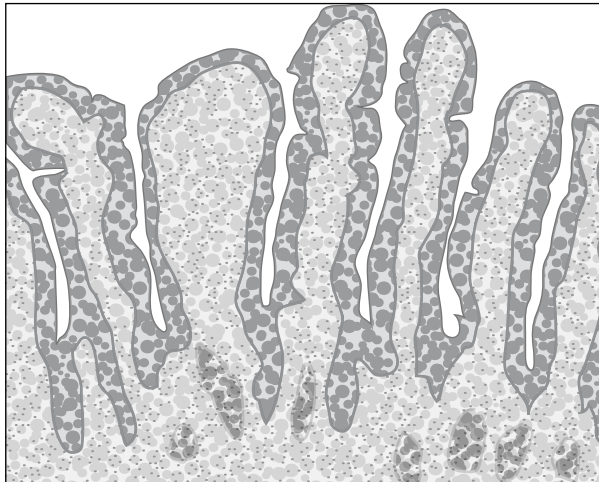
## *How your guts are supposed to work*

You've got guts, but do you know how they work? Skipping approximately dozens of important steps, we start our explanation in the upper part of the small intestine. The food has already been chewed, swallowed and passed through the stomach to the intestine.

The small intestine is lined with numerous finger-like projections called *villi*, shown in Figure 3-1. A cross-section of a single villus at high magnification shows a covering layer of tall cells called enterocytes. With even greater magnification you see hundreds of minute, hairlike projections known as microvilli on the surface of each enterocyte, each packed with enzymes. The villi and microvilli create an enormous surface area for absorbing nutrients.

The lining of the small intestine is basically a solid wall. All the cells on the lining are joined together by *tight junctions*. When the body is ready to absorb the nutrients, these tight junctions open the space between cells and let the good stuff in — but keep the bigger bad stuff, like toxins, out.

How do the tight junctions know how far to open? They have a security guard named *zonulin*. Zonulin is a protein — it acts as a sort of nightclub bouncer, opening the tight junctions just enough to let the good stuff in but keep the harmful stuff out.



**Figure 3-1:**  
Healthy villi.

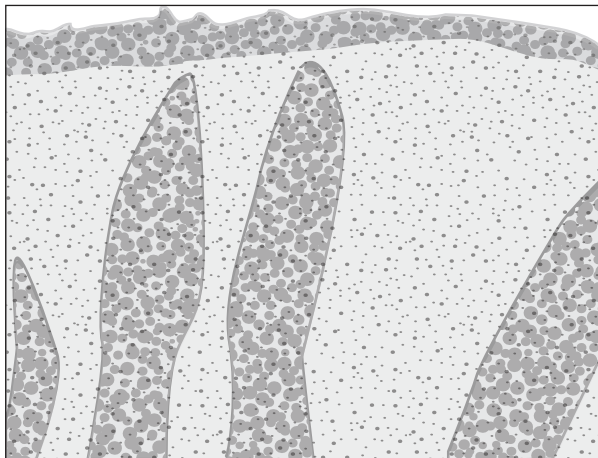
## *How your guts work with coeliac disease*

Problems start when the food reaches the small intestine. The nutrients have been chopped into minuscule particles (amino acids and gluten peptides) that normally pass through the wall and enter tiny blood vessels for distribution around the body. But in a person with coeliac disease, these gluten peptides are actually toxic. Experts believe that the zonulin ‘security guard’ (refer to preceding section) may allow larger particles of gluten peptides to pass through the wall. In other words, coeliacs may have a degree of intestinal ‘leakiness’ and when the immune system checks out these peptides, it thinks they’re harmful. Some people refer to this as ‘leaky gut syndrome’, but the term has no medically agreed meaning.

The cells of the immune system attack gluten as if it was a viral or bacterial infection and in the process the surrounding tissues in the intestine are severely damaged. If an individual continues to eat gluten the attacks are relentless and the tissues don’t get a chance to recover. Over time, so much inflammation occurs that the finger-like villi are no longer fully exposed and the surface area appears to be flattened (see Figure 3-2). With far less surface area the intestine loses its ability to absorb nutrients — this is called ‘malabsorption’. That’s why you see nutritional deficiencies in undiagnosed coeliacs.



An *autoimmune disease* is one in which the body’s immune system produces antibodies that react against normal, healthy tissue (rather than against bacteria or viruses), causing inflammation and damage. Coeliac disease is unique, because it’s the only autoimmune disease for which people know the trigger that sets off the response. A survey from the American Autoimmune Related Diseases Association found that 45 per cent of people eventually diagnosed with an autoimmune disease were initially labelled as hypochondriacs because doctors thought they were imagining their symptoms.



**Figure 3-2:**  
Damaged  
villi showing  
inflammation.

Because the food is just passing through the intestine without being absorbed the way it's supposed to be, you sometimes see diarrhoea. But think about this: The small intestine is nearly seven metres long and the damage starts at the upper part — so you have *lots* of small intestine to compensate for the damaged part that's not able to do its job. That means by the time you have diarrhoea, you're usually a very sick puppy.

Armed with all these details, just think what a hit you'll be at cocktail parties now that you can fascinate your friends with discussions of your villi, zonulin and leaky guts.

## *After diagnosis*

A recent study in Melbourne looked at recovery in newly diagnosed coeliacs. After one year on a gluten-free diet they were given a repeat biopsy and blood tests. People who continued to eat some gluten did not improve. All of those who maintained a strict gluten-free diet showed good recovery, but only 50 per cent had a normal bowel at the end of the study. Individuals who had shown the most extensive damage at diagnosis had not improved as much as those with minor damage, suggesting that severe damage to the gut usually takes longer (up to two years) to recover. No real surprises there!

But here's the interesting finding. Repeat blood tests showed that although antibody levels fell over time, half of those involved still had raised tTg (transglutaminase) and one in five still had raised EMA (endomysial antibodies), even though many of those people had shown full recovery in their biopsies. It seems that blood tests aren't a reliable way to measure recovery of the gut or compliance to the gluten-free diet. The only way to be absolutely sure is to have another biopsy.



Most newly diagnosed coeliacs notice an improvement in their health within weeks and sometimes days, but this is dependent on the length of time you've had active coeliac disease. Even though your bowel will take time to recover, your health usually bounces back pretty smartly.

Your doctor may want to check that you don't have a lactose intolerance — this can occur in newly diagnosed coeliacs as a result of damage to the gut. In most cases this disappears after a few months. Lactose-free dairy products are now easily available, or you can buy Lacteeze tablets from a pharmacist, which contain lactase, the enzyme you're lacking. You need to see a dietitian to make sure you're getting enough calcium in your diet.

At this point, having a DEXA scan to measure your bone mineral density is a good idea, even if you're a young person or have no symptoms of

osteoporosis. If a problem is apparent, the earlier you start treatment the better. You may be advised to increase your intake of calcium or take calcium and vitamin D supplements to protect against bone-density loss.

Weight-bearing exercise is also very important in keeping your bones strong.

Recommendations from the Gastroenterological Society of Australia (GESA) to doctors for six-monthly follow-ups for the first year after diagnosis include:

- ✓ Calcium, phosphate, vitamin D, zinc, PTH test
- ✓ Coeliac serology
- ✓ Full blood count
- ✓ Iron, vitamin B12, folic acid test
- ✓ Liver function tests
- ✓ Thyroid function

Gastroenterologists generally like to do a follow-up biopsy after 12 months to check improvement in the small bowel. If strong improvement isn't shown, you may be asked to see a dietitian to check that you're not inadvertently eating gluten.

## Reducing the chance that your baby develops coeliac disease

Some coeliac mothers don't want to expose their baby to gluten at all, and decide to put them on a gluten-free diet, but that actually increases the risk of the baby developing coeliac disease. New studies show that you may be able to reduce the risk of your baby developing coeliac disease — if you expose the baby to gluten at the right time. You can provide the best protection by exposing your baby to gluten between the ages of six and seven months. Exposing babies to gluten in the first three months of life increases the risk of coeliac disease fivefold. Introducing gluten after seven months may also increase the risk.

Even more importantly, breastfeeding seems to have an effect on the development of coeliac disease. Coeliac disease is more likely to develop if gluten is introduced after weaning. A number of studies support children being breastfed for at least four to six months before the introduction of gluten. Continuing with breastfeeding for several months after gluten has been included in the baby's diet is also important. More studies are needed to confirm these findings and provide further information about reducing the risk of coeliac disease.



It's essential that you stay on your gluten-free diet in the long term. After you've fully recovered and you're feeling better, you may start to think you can lighten up a bit on the diet. But failure to adhere to your diet can increase risk of osteoporosis, poor growth in children, infertility, miscarriage, iron deficiency and some cancers. (The risks of these are no greater than normal when you're following a gluten-free diet.) That's pretty serious stuff! Keep it in mind when you're tempted to go a bit easy on the diet.

And if that's not strong enough incentive for you, how about adding better wellbeing, improved vitality and mental function. Sounds good to us!

## *Scratching the Surface of Dermatitis Herpetiformis*

*Dermatitis herpetiformis* (we refer to it as *DH* from now on) is a severe, itchy, blistering skin condition mainly affecting people of European descent. It's slightly more common in males than females and usually occurs between the ages of 40 and 50, although it can turn up at any age. The cause of DH isn't yet known, but both genetic and environmental factors are involved. Experts generally accept that DH is a distinctive form of coeliac disease, because 90 per cent of cases have the HLA-DQ2 gene and 10 per cent have the HLA-DQ8 gene found in coeliacs (we talk about these genes in the section 'It's in the genes', earlier in the chapter). GH is less common than coeliac disease, with a prevalence of 1 in 10,000.

Usually, the rash starts as groups of red bumps with tiny blisters on top, but they itch so intensely that people sometimes scratch them to the point of opening the blisters, which then crust over. In some people the rash looks more like hives, located in one area; in others it looks more like pink, scaly dermatitis. The rash occurs commonly on the elbows, knees, bottom, back of the neck and in the hairline, eyebrows and scalp, but can also be on the face, trunk and other parts of the arms and legs. The rash also tends to appear symmetrically in these areas (equally on both sides of the body). Most people with DH don't have any gastrointestinal symptoms, but research indicates that they will all have some degree of damage to the gut, as in coeliac disease.

To diagnose DH, doctors take a biopsy of the skin near the lesion. The process isn't painful, because doctors can use a local anaesthetic to numb the site. They're looking for an antibody called IgA (we talk more about IgA in Chapter 2) and if they see it, they make a diagnosis of DH.

Treatment is a strict gluten-free diet, but improvement takes some time. A medication called Dapsone may be prescribed to reduce the rash and relieve the itch. However, Dapsone doesn't improve the damage to the intestines and so a gluten-free diet is also essential. Side effects from long-term use of Dapsone include a form of anaemia, chronic tiredness, depression, headaches and nerve damage, so your doctor will monitor your progress carefully. The rash flares up again if you eat foods containing gluten, or if you stop taking Dapsone before your gut has fully healed.



The name for DH comes from *dermatitis*, meaning inflammation of the skin, and *herpetiformis*, because it looks similar to herpes, which involves clusters of lesions. But it's a specific chronic skin condition and not related to either dermatitis or herpes, and it's not contagious.

## *What Does the Future Hold For Coeliacs?*

Over the past two decades, our understanding of why gluten is toxic for people with coeliac disease has increased dramatically. Doctors know that for gluten to become toxic it needs to be able to be absorbed into the body through the bowel to reach the immune system, where it triggers an abnormal reaction. This understanding has paved the way for designing new treatments that could either supplement the gluten-free diet, or potentially replace it altogether.

Coeliac disease is now firmly on the research radar and some of the more innovative (and promising) new work is being done in Australia.

Research into coeliac disease fits into three broad categories. Firstly, studies are underway to trial medication for newly diagnosed coeliacs that will speed up the healing process in the bowel after diagnosis. Other research focuses on attempts to prevent gluten from entering the gut and causing damage. Finally, major research that began in Australia aims to restore the immune system to a normal state so it no longer reacts abnormally to gluten.

### *Healing the bowel*

Researchers are looking at the use of medication to speed up the process of healing in the bowel in newly diagnosed coeliacs. Up until now, the only treatment for coeliac disease has been a lifelong gluten-free diet.





Persistent small bowel inflammation (villous atrophy) in coeliac disease is associated with an increased risk of several long-term health complications such as osteoporosis and some forms of cancer. So healing the bowel quickly is an important treatment goal.

To speed up recovery, drugs that improve the rate of healing may be prescribed in the future. At the time of writing, researchers in Melbourne are studying whether a drug called Budesonide might be used for this purpose — specifically, settling inflammation in the gut quickly. Rapid healing of the bowel may reduce long-term health issues but a strict gluten-free diet will still be necessary to maintain the gut in good health.

## Keeping the gluten out

Here are some of the options researchers are looking at to prevent gluten from entering the gut in people with coeliac disease:

- ✓ **Genetically modified cereals:** Some researchers are working on developing varieties of cereals that don't contain the components that are toxic for coeliacs. However, since gluten is very complex and a number of toxic parts are found throughout the grain, developing safe gluten-free cereals remains challenging.
- ✓ **Enzyme tablets:** Several researchers are trialling enzymes called endopeptidases or *glutenases*, which are said to break down the toxic sections of gluten protein that are usually resistant to natural digestion by the gut. These are reported to provide protection for tiny amounts of gluten and may be useful in providing an extra layer of protection against accidental ingestion of gluten. However, the results on this therapy option are not conclusive and are, therefore, not recommended until further research has confirmed their effectiveness.
- ✓ **Zonulin inhibitors:** In a gut inflamed by gluten, zonulin breaks down the 'tight junctions' that help to hold intestinal cells together. This leads to an increased passage of food proteins such as gluten across the bowel into the body (We cover this in more detail in the section 'How your guts work with coeliac disease', earlier in this chapter.) Some researchers are concentrating on developing zonulin inhibitors that will reduce gut 'leakiness' so no gluten can pass through. However, since research has shown gluten can also pass through the cells themselves, this may negate the effect of blocking zonulin. Trials to assess this approach are underway.
- ✓ **Transglutaminase inhibitors:** When gluten reaches the small bowel an enzyme called transglutaminase (tTG) modifies gluten by a process called *deamidation*. This makes the gluten more toxic to the immune system. Researchers are

working on drugs that can block the effect of transglutaminase, so less toxic gluten is available to trigger the immune system. Since tTG is essential for many processes in the body, such as wound healing, inhibiting its function needs to be done very carefully. Drugs to do this are still a while off from clinical trials.

✓ **Blockers:** Once the gluten has been modified by transglutaminase (refer to preceding point), your immune system swings into action. Cells called *antigen presenting cells* (APCs) sample the environment and pick up gluten fragments that are then ‘presented’ to T cells. These activated T cells then orchestrate a damaging immune response, leading to your bowel wall becoming damaged. Research is focusing on the development of drugs that can block the interaction between the APC and the T cell; however, these are in the earliest stages of development.

## *Letting the gluten in safely*

Research looking into changing the body so it no longer reacts abnormally to gluten focuses on the immune system, for this is where the real problem lies for coeliacs. Rather than preventing gluten from entering the gut, the emphasis is on convincing the immune system that gluten is not so bad after all. Restoring the immune system to a state where it tolerates gluten, as it does in people without coeliac disease, should allow people with coeliac disease to return to a normal diet altogether.

Amazingly, researchers in Brisbane have shown that changing the immune response to gluten in people with coeliac disease is possible — by infecting them with a type of parasite called a hookworm. Hookworms seem to alter immune processes in the bowel, and when people with coeliac disease eat gluten the usual damaging immune responses are lessened. This tells researchers that the abnormal immune response to gluten can be changed, even in people with coeliac disease.

Another approach is to use a desensitisation treatment that returns the immune system to one where gluten is tolerated. Research into a drug that might do this began in Melbourne, where researchers defined the key parts of gluten that cause disease. By using these key fragments in a ‘coeliac vaccine’, called Nexvax2, researchers hope to restore immune tolerance to gluten and allow people with coeliac disease to return to a normal diet and good health. Clinical trials of Nexvax2 are currently underway — go to [www.ImmusanT.com](http://www.ImmusanT.com) for more information.



## Chapter 4

# Grasping the Ground Rules of the Gluten-Free Diet

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### *In This Chapter*

- ▶ Understanding what gluten is
  - ▶ Knowing what you can and can't eat
  - ▶ Getting a handle on food labels and ingredient panels
  - ▶ Identifying foods you can safely eat
  - ▶ Introducing new grains
  - ▶ Selecting gluten-free alcohol
  - ▶ Ensuring your medicines are gluten-free
  - ▶ Taking into account non-food products
- 

**W**hether you're brand new to the wonderful world of gluten-freedom or an old pro who's been gluten-free for years, this chapter tells you things about the gluten-free diet that may surprise you.

At first glance the diet looks so easy and your doctor may tell you to stop eating gluten as though it's as simple as cutting the crusts off your bread. Gluten is in wheat, rye, barley and oats — so just avoid those foods, right? If the diet were that simple, we'd be signing off with 'The End' or 'So they lived happily ever ...' right about now and the book would be finished. No, the diet's not quite that straightforward, thanks to additives, flavourings, derivatives, fillers, binders and other fancy terms that are really just euphemisms for 'stuff that may have gluten in it'.

The good news is that the list of things you can eat is a lot longer than the list of things you can't. Sure, you may have to kiss your favourite pizza goodbye (along with the particular kinds of rolls, bread, biscuits, cakes and pies you're used to eating and — yup — beer as well).

But you'll discover a whole new world of gluten-free foods that can take the place of your old favourites — some of which you may never have heard of before, like *quinoa* (if you read the rest of this chapter, you may even know how to pronounce it). And if you think amaranth is a semi-precious stone and *sorghum* is what you get when you have your teeth cleaned, now's the time to learn more about some of the interesting grains and starches available to you on a gluten-free diet.

Don't be discouraged if you find the guidelines a little overwhelming at first. For some people, learning what's allowed and what isn't on a gluten-free diet is confusing and downright frightening. For others, it's a less dramatic change. And for others still, it's an exciting new challenge.

Whether you're a one or a ten on the I'm-overwhelmed-by-this-diet scale, this chapter is crucial because it establishes basic gluten-free guidelines. We outline what is and isn't gluten-free and why you sometimes have to question a product. We also talk about pharmaceuticals and non-food items that you may or may not need to be concerned about, such as dental products, alcoholic beverages, medications and external products like lotions and shampoos.

## *Defining Gluten So You Can Avoid It*

You have to know what gluten is — and not just so you can be the life of the party, sparking conversations that begin with audacious lines like, 'So, which do you find harder to avoid? Gliadin, hordein or secalin?' (Yup, that'll get the party started, Smooth Talker.) No, you need to know about gluten so you can avoid it (gluten, not the pick-up line).

*Gluten* is what scientists call a storage protein, what bakers call the dough-forming elastic ingredient in wheat and what some newbies to the gluten-free diet pine away for. Gluten is a group of proteins that technically comes from wheat and only wheat.

Strictly speaking gluten isn't one thing. It's a collective name for the proteins in wheat, rye, barley and oats that cause problems for coeliacs. Once the connection between gluten in wheat had been established, back in the 1950s, doctors realised that barley, oats and rye made people sick too, even though they didn't contain the same proteins. To keep it simple, the term 'gluten' was used to loosely describe the various proteins that were causing damage in some people.

The official definition of gluten used by Food Standards Australia New Zealand (FSANZ) states: 'Gluten means the main protein in wheat, rye,

oats, barley, triticale and spelt relevant to the medical conditions of coeliac disease and dermatitis herpetiformis’.



*Prolamins* are a class of proteins present in a variety of grains and they’re what cause problems for people who can’t eat ‘gluten’. Technically, gluten is made up of the proteins glutenin and *gliadin*, a specific type of prolamin in wheat. However, gluten has become a general term for any kind of potentially harmful prolamin. The prolamins that cause damage to people with coeliac disease include *gliadin* (in wheat), *secalin* (in rye) and *hordein* (in barley). Other grains have prolamins, too (the prolamin in corn is called *zein* and the prolamin in rice is *orzenin*), but their prolamins aren’t toxic to people with coeliac disease. Oats contain a protein called avenin and researchers have found that oats can cause gut damage in some coeliacs, so we say oats contain gluten as well.

## Determining Gluten-Free Standards

In Australia and New Zealand a food labelled gluten-free must contain ‘no detectable gluten’, using the most sensitive test method available. The current test used — the ELISA method — can achieve a detection level of 0.0003 per cent, or three parts per million.



Coeliac Australia and gastroenterologists agree that a gluten-free standard of less than 20 parts per million (0.002 per cent) is a safe threshold for people with coeliac disease and are lobbying to have the definition changed. This position is based on scientific evidence and advice from leading experts around the world.

Any food or product you pick up from the supermarket shelf must meet the Australian and New Zealand standard to be labelled gluten-free. We’re fortunate to have rigorous standards and labelling laws, because they take the guesswork — and worry — out of shopping.

## Reading and Understanding Food Labels

If a product is labelled gluten-free, either it’s made up of ingredients that are naturally gluten-free or ingredients in which gluten can’t be detected. But gluten is tucked away in all sorts of unexpected places. Is polydextrose gluten-free? What about pilcorn? Triticale? Hominy grits? (Gluten or no gluten, anything called hominy grits doesn’t exactly get you salivating, does it? Well, maybe if you’re a ravenous chook.) And who would guess that buckwheat has no wheat, but licorice may?



Some manufacturers like to have their products endorsed by Coeliac Australia. It's an added guarantee that the item is gluten-free. Look for the 'crossed grain' logo, shown in Figure 4-1, to recognise these products. However, some gluten-free products don't carry the logo, because Australia's labelling system is so clear, so don't limit yourself unnecessarily. On imported products you may see the international 'crossed grain' logo.

When you're first diagnosed, you have a lot to learn. You'll make mistakes or avoid foods unnecessarily because you think they contain gluten. The safest way to get your facts right is to join Coeliac Australia in your state and get a copy of their *Ingredient List*. The list contains information on every conceivable ingredient as well as additives, and also has tips for reading labels. A dietitian can also steer you through your initial confusion and help you find alternatives to your favourite foods and products.

To begin with, understanding food labels is a challenge. But you can't start to understand a label until you've tried to read it — and sometimes that's a whole other challenge in itself. You pick up the packet/jar/carton or whatever and look at the front. No ingredients listed there. You try the back, and then the sides — no ingredients there either. Maybe the label is on the bottom? No luck. So you start all over again, searching more intently. The information has to be there — you know that — but where the dickens have they hidden it? Round and round you go until finally you locate a teeny-weeny section of writing, font size 2, often in the palest of print on a dark background. Aha! You have it! Alas, unless the supermarket is well lit and you have 20/20 vision, you likely won't be able to read it. And that's where you'll learn to develop the 'coeliac squint', a highly attractive visual sport. Assistance from specs, magnifying glasses, partners, children and passing shoppers all permitted.

**Figure 4-1:**

This logo means that the product is endorsed by Coeliac Australia.



A different challenge awaits the gluten-free shopper when buying health food bars, snack bars or packets of biscuits in stiff wrappers. For some obtuse reason, the ingredient list is usually placed under the fold of the wrapper and invariably in the palest of colours. The art here is to pull the folded section of the wrapper back far enough to read the list, without actually opening the product. No wonder we can't resist a little hip-hop between the shelves when we find a product with a big, clear 'GLUTEN-FREE' on the front.



You need to check labels often. Ingredients change and a product that may have been gluten-free at one time may not necessarily still be gluten-free.

### ***No means no and gluten-free means gluten-free***

The first thing to remember is that if a product says on the packaging label GLUTEN-FREE, it contains no detectable gluten. Sometimes you'll find something in the ingredient list or panel (for example, maltodextrin from wheat) that seems to contradict this GLUTEN-FREE statement. That seems weird, for sure. But the gluten-free label overrides the ingredient listing. It can occur when an ingredient is derived from a gluten-containing source but has been so highly processed that, when tested, gluten simply can't be detected.

If the words GLUTEN-FREE are NOT present, this doesn't apply and you need to look right through the ingredients to check.

### ***All ingredients from wheat, rye, barley and oats are shown on the label***

All grains that contain gluten and any ingredients that come from these grains MUST be listed in the nutrition panel. The grain itself must be listed (such as wheat, barley and rye). You might read any of these terms:

- ✓ Starch from wheat
- ✓ Wheat starch
- ✓ Contains gluten
- ✓ Contains ingredients from wheat
- ✓ Modified starch (wheat)



Occasionally the source isn't listed beside the ingredient, but at the end of the list; for example, *Contains ingredients from wheat*. So it's important to read right through the ingredients panel or list.

## ***All sources of gluten must be listed***

Don't get confused or worried when you see ingredients that you think could contain gluten but don't tell you the source. People who've been on the diet for ages get confused here, because in the past a term like 'starch' often did indicate gluten. If the source of the grain in ingredients like starch, thickeners, maltodextrin, yeast extract, hydrolised or textured vegetable protein isn't listed, that means they don't come from a gluten-containing grain (remember, all gluten must be listed). So, for example, yeast extract, on its own, will be gluten-free, but yeast extract (barley) contains gluten from barley.

## ***What about glucose syrup?***

Some ingredients derived from gluten-containing grains are so highly processed that the gluten can't be detected (the most sensitive test used at present tests to five parts per million of gluten). These ingredients include glucose syrup, dextrose and caramel colour. They're an exception to the rule. Sometimes you'll read 'glucose syrup (from wheat)', but the glucose syrup has been so highly processed it contains no detectable gluten. So glucose syrup, even with wheat listed in brackets after it, is in the clear at last, along with caramel colour and dextrose. No scientific evidence suggests these ingredients can cause damage in coeliacs. In many cases, manufacturers help you out with this exception by putting a gluten-free label on the product, which overrides the ingredient listing anyway.

## ***Low gluten***

The term 'low gluten' is permitted under Australia's food standards code and applies to food with gluten levels up to 200 parts per million. This level is way too high for people diagnosed with coeliac disease and all products labelled 'low gluten' should be avoided. Some people with non-coeliac gluten intolerance are able to tolerate small amounts of gluten and low-gluten products may be appropriate for them, depending on their level of sensitivity.

## *'May contain traces of gluten'*

Sometimes you come across a confusing statement like this on a product. Or you'll read 'May Contain Gluten', 'Made on the same line as gluten' or similar. These statements occur where processing aids have been used that may contain gluten, or where a remote possibility exists of contamination. The Australian Food and Grocery Council is currently working to remove this area of confusion. This is a grey area and you need to make your own choice on this one.

Products that have an 'either/or' statement — for example, starch (wheat or maize) — are just plain annoying. Manufacturers are encouraged to avoid using this statement and luckily you don't see it very often. If you see an 'either/or' when one of the alternatives contains gluten, don't buy it. Look for a different brand.

## *When in doubt, leave it out*

If you're in a situation where you can't find out whether a product or food contains gluten (your hostess has thrown away the packet of rice crackers, or the chef is no longer on the premises at the restaurant where you're dining), don't give in to the thought that it's probably okay. It may not be okay. For a reminder of what you're doing to your body when you eat gluten, take a look at Chapter 2, where we talk about associated conditions and serious complications that can develop if you have coeliac disease and eat gluten, even from time to time.



Even if your symptoms are mild or absent, gluten causes serious damage. You're a lot better off being safe instead of sorry, so follow the Coeliac Golden Rule: When in doubt, leave it out.

## *Recognising Gluten-Free Foods at a Glance*

Keep in mind that you have to become familiar with a lot of ingredients when you're mastering the intricacies of the gluten-free diet. But also remember that the foods in the lists in this section vary and that they're only to get you started.

## So you want to sow your oats . . .

The question of oats in the gluten-free diet is still under discussion by researchers and medical practitioners. Oats are problematic in three ways:

- ✔ Oats are grown as a rotational crop with gluten grains, so they're easily contaminated through the sharing of harvesting, storage, processing and packaging equipment.
- ✔ Research has shown that the gluten protein in oats causes intestinal damage in one in five coeliacs (20 per cent).
- ✔ The current analytical method for testing gluten isn't able to measure the oat gluten (avenin) and so repeatedly gives a gluten-free result; however, this is a false negative test result. The avenin is still present, but the method for testing its presence isn't yet available.

For these reasons, Food Standards Australia and New Zealand (FSANZ), the government body that determines food labelling standards,

declares that oats aren't gluten-free. Some countries overseas recognise oats as gluten-free, but doctors place some provisos on their consumption by coeliacs. That is, an individual must be completely gluten- and oat-free for one year, then, under medical supervision, that person may eat oats for a trial period of three months and have an endoscopy before and after the trial period. If the second endoscopy shows the oats haven't caused damage, they can safely include oats in their diet. What's not safe is for someone to trial oats themselves, without medical supervision, because the absence of symptoms isn't sufficient to indicate that oats are safe for that particular individual to consume on a long-term basis.

Imported oats from the United States are labelled wheat, rye and barley free to indicate that they're free from contamination. Discuss the issue of oats with your doctor or specialist, and remember — you can't safely test your own ability to eat oats because you could be experiencing intestinal damage without realising it.

## Forbidden grains

We're not starting with the forbidden grains to be negative — we're starting with them because the list is a lot shorter than the list of grains you can eat. Here are the grains you need to avoid on a gluten-free diet:

- ✔ Barley
- ✔ Oats (pilcorn)
- ✔ Triticale (a hybrid of wheat and rye)
- ✔ Rye (pumpernickel)
- ✔ Wheat (atta, burghul, dinkel, durum, farina, graham flour, semolina, spelt)

## Wheat grass and wheat fibres

The suppliers of wheat grass (sold in health food shops and at juice bars) claim that it's gluten-free, because the grass hasn't yet formed the gluten-containing proteins that cause problems for coeliacs. But contamination is still a concern. So remember — where there's doubt, leave it out.

Wheat fibre is an ingredient in a number of products. Gluuuurk, you say! Wheat fibres

will be deadly. But think again. In this case the fibre is so highly processed it contains no detectable gluten and is safe for you to eat. The product label correctly states 'gluten-free' and this overrides any mention of wheat in the ingredient listing. If this is confusing, have another look at the section 'No means no and gluten-free means gluten-free', earlier in this chapter.



You need to look carefully at anything with the word 'wheat' in it. This includes hydrolysed wheat protein, wheat starch and wheatgerm. Wheat grass, like all grasses, is gluten-free, but still not recommended. (Refer to the sidebar 'Wheat grass and wheat fibres'.)

Here are a few additional details to keep in mind:



✓ Wheat starch is wheat that's had most of the gluten, but not all, washed out. In some countries, wheat starch is still permitted on a gluten-free diet. (See Chapter 16 for information about overseas labelling standards.)

✓ Triticale is a made-up grain — a hybrid of wheat and rye. Inventors developed it to combine the productivity of wheat with the ruggedness of rye, not just to add another grain to your list of forbidden foods.

✓ Wheat has several names and varieties. Beware of aliases like *flour*, *burghul*, *semolina*, *spelt*, *durum* (also spelled *duram*), *graham*, *farina* and *couscous*. Sometimes marketed as a 'wheat alternative', spelt isn't even remotely gluten-free. Eaten way back in the Bronze Age and later mentioned in the Bible, maybe. But gluten-free? No.

✓ Wheat just isn't what it used to be. In fact, in an effort to bring down the cost of commercial baked goods and make wheat slightly more nutritious, some farmers are finding ways to hybridise wheat so it contains more gluten than ever before.



✓ Derivatives of gluten-containing grains aren't allowed on the gluten-free diet, either. The most common derivative that you have to avoid is malt, which usually comes from barley. Look carefully when you see malt, malt extract, malt flavouring and malt vinegar. The source of malt must be included in the ingredient list on a product if it comes from a gluten-containing grain. Malt from corn is fine.

## Grains and starches you can safely eat

You have lots of choices for gluten-free grains and starches. Even if you're an old pro who's been gluten-free for years, some of these may be new to you:

Amaranth	Polenta
Arrowroot	Potato
Beans	Quinoa (pronounced <i>keen wah</i> )
Buckwheat	Rice
Chickpeas (garbanzo beans, besan or gram — not to be confused with graham, which <i>does</i> have gluten)	Sorghum
Corn	Soy
Millet	Tapioca (gari, cassava, casaba, manioc, yucca)
	Teff



Glutinous rice doesn't contain gluten! Manufacturers make glutinous rice, or *sweet rice* or *mochi*, by grinding high-starch, short-grain rice. Glutinous rice thickens sauces and desserts in Asian cooking and is often the rice used in sushi.

You may run across different names or forms of corn that are gluten-free in addition to plain ol' corn. They include grits, hominy, masa, masa harina, harinilla (blue corn), atole, polenta and, of course, cornstarch, corn flour, corn bran and cornmeal.



Beware when purchasing cornflour! Some products labelled 'cornflour' aren't made of corn, but wheat starch, which contains gluten. You need to find cornflour that's labelled gluten-free. Cornflour should come from maize flour, not wheat (cornflour from wheat is often referred to as 'wheaten cornflour'). To avoid making a mistake when you're shopping in a hurry, locate a brand of cornflour in your supermarket that comes from maize (sometimes called maize cornflour or maize flour), familiarise yourself with the packet and always stick to that. Very often manufacturers put a GLUTEN-FREE sign on the packet or call it gluten-free cornflour.

Gums, such as xanthan and guar gum, contain no gluten. People use them frequently in gluten-free baked goods because gums help give the spongy, elastic texture that gluten-containing flours usually provide. Guar gum may have a laxative effect in some people.

## A corny tale from the US

Maize (Indian corn) dates back thousands of years and its cultivation was a remarkable feat. Native Americans developed as many as 24 different kinds of corn to accommodate the length

of growing season, altitude, rain, sunlight and soil type. To ensure a full season's yield, the people grew both early and late ripeners, and all the corn came in a variety of colours.

## Other foods that are gluten-free

These foods are gluten-free in their original form. If they're further processed or contain additives they may not be gluten-free. For example, nuts are gluten-free but are sometimes rolled in spices, which may contain gluten. The gluten will always be listed, however, so it's just a matter of learning how to identify gluten and getting into the habit of checking labels.

Gluten-free options include the following:

Beans	Meat
Dairy products	Nuts
Eggs	Poultry
Fish	Seafood
Fruit	Tofu
Legumes	Vegetables



Gluten-free food falls into two categories: Food that's naturally gluten-free and food that's specifically prepared for those on a gluten-free diet. You can buy manufactured products such as biscuits, cakes, brownies, breads, crackers, crisps and other treats that have been made with gluten-free ingredients. We talk more about those products and where to buy them in Chapter 8, which covers shopping.



*Wheat-free* doesn't mean *gluten-free*. Something can be wheat-free and still contain, for instance, malt (derived from barley), meaning it's not gluten-free.

## Don't eat the wheat meat

*Seitan*, pronounced say-*tahn*, is a chewy food made from gluten that resembles meat in texture. You may not have heard of seitan, but you might have heard of mock chicken, duck or pork in a Chinese vegetarian restaurant. Also called *wheat meat*, people make seitan by making dough out of wheat flour and water, kneading it to develop the gluten, and rinsing away the starch and bran, leaving only

the gluten. They then simmer it in water or vegetable broth that's been seasoned with soy sauce, resulting in a chewy, firm, meat-like food ... food that not only is *loaded* with gluten, but also *is* gluten. Loosely translated, the Japanese word seitan means 'is protein'; it's called *kofu* in China (not to be confused with *tofu*, which is made from soy). You might see it in vegetarian products as *Protam*.

## Foods that usually contain gluten

Unless you're buying special gluten-free products, you can assume the following foods contain gluten:

Baked goods — biscuits, brownies, cakes, cupcakes, doughnuts, muffins, pastries, pies and pasties and other baked goods

Bread, breadcrumbs, biscuits

Cereal

Communion wafers

Cornbread

Crackers

Croutons

Gravies and roux

Imitation seafood (for example, imitation crab)

Licorice lollies

Pancakes and drop scones

Pasta

Pizza bases

Pretzels

Sauces

Sourdough

Soy sauce

Stuffing



Organic foods aren't necessarily gluten-free. Sometimes shop assistants with little or no understanding of gluten will tell you a product is organic as though that's the end of the matter. But you still need to check for gluten.



In some places, low-gluten communion wafers are available. Although low-gluten products are usually not allowed, a combination of factors means that these wafers are safe — they contain only a tiny amount of gluten, each wafer only weighs  $\frac{1}{5}$  gram and you aren't eating them every day. So the total amount of gluten is minuscule. Regular communion wafers aren't safe.

## Exploring Alternative Grains and Superfoods

When it comes to grains beyond corn, wheat and rice, most people don't know barley from burghul. Actually, a great big world of grains to be explored exists out there, many of which are gluten-free, delicious and loaded with nutritional value.

These grains are called 'alternative grains', yet many aren't grains at all. Instead, they're grasses, seeds or flowers. Some people also call them *superfoods* because they're foods that are *super*-nutritious. Beware, however, of the hype surrounding some of these new grains. While they're certainly highly nutritious, they don't possess the amazing capacities heralded by some advertisers and marketing managers.

### Amaranth

Loaded with fibre, iron, calcium and other vitamins and minerals, amaranth is also high in the amino acids lysine, methionine and cysteine, and is a source of protein. A small beadlike grain, amaranth isn't only nutritious but also delicious, with a pleasant peppery and hearty nutty flavour.

Amaranth isn't a true cereal grain at all, but a relative of the pigweeds and ornamental flowers called *cockscorn*. People grow it not only for its seed but also for its leaves, which you can cook and eat as greens. Amaranth can also be toasted for extra flavour. You can even pop some varieties like popcorn, boil and eat them like cereal, or use them in soups or as a side dish. You should always cook amaranth before eating it, because like some other edible seeds, raw amaranth contains compounds that can inhibit the proper absorption of certain nutrients.

### Finding gluten-free fast food

Fast food and takeaway is becoming more and more a fact of life for many people, and numerous gluten-free options are out there. Most of the fast-food chains have information online and at their outlets on ingredients in each product

or dish, and often your local fish and chip shop will gladly prepare you a gluten-free alternative. Don't be afraid to ask — someone else probably has already. You can find more information on what to look for, and what to avoid in Chapter 16.





Mixing amaranth into your home-baked bread gives it a lovely light texture and a very palatable flavour. You may not be able to use it as successfully in baked desserts, because it can still be rather gritty even after cooking. Soaking the amaranth grains in hot water and draining well before cooking helps overcome this.



For centuries, the Aztec culture depended on amaranth and believed it had mystical powers that could bring strength and power even to the weakest of people. The name means ‘not withering’ or, more literally, ‘immortal’. Although amaranth may not make you immortal, it’s extremely nutritious — and gluten-free.

## Arrowroot

Arrowroot was once revered by the ancient Mayans and other inhabitants of Central America as an antidote to poison arrows. People use it in cooking as a thickener for soups, sauces and confections.

An easily digested and nutritious starch, arrowroot is a fine, white powder with a look and texture similar to that of cornstarch. The translucent paste has no flavour and sets to an almost clear gel. You can use arrowroot in gluten-free cooking or as a thickening agent to replace maize cornflour, although it thickens at a lower temperature and its consistency doesn’t hold as long after cooking. The superfine grains are easy to digest, making arrowroot a perfect ‘invalid’ food. In fact, arrowroot biscuits are one of the first solid foods often given to babies (but beware — manufacturers usually add wheat flour to arrowroot biscuits, so they’re not gluten-free).

## Buckwheat (*soba*)

The fact that buckwheat is gluten-free often confuses people — after all, buckwheat has the word ‘wheat’ in the name. But buckwheat isn’t even related to wheat; in fact, it’s not even a true cereal grain. It’s a fruit, a distant cousin of garden-variety rhubarb. The buckwheat seed has a three-cornered shell that contains a pale kernel known as a *groat*. In one form or another, groats have been around since the 10th century BC.

High in lysine, which is an amino acid lacking in many traditional grains, buckwheat contains several other amino acids — in fact, this grain has a high proportion of all eight essential amino acids, which the body doesn’t make but still needs to keep functioning. In that way, buckwheat is closer to being a complete protein than many other plant sources. It’s also high in many of the B vitamins, as well as the minerals phosphorus, magnesium, iron, copper, manganese and zinc. And buckwheat’s a good source of linoleic acid, an essential fatty acid.

Whole white buckwheat is naturally dried and has a delicate flavour that makes it a good stand-in for rice or pasta. Cooks often use buckwheat in pancakes, biscuits and muffins — but be aware that manufacturers often combine buckwheat with wheat in those products, so you have to read the labels carefully before buying buckwheat products. In Japan, people often make buckwheat into soba, or noodles, which sometimes — but not always — have wheat flour as well.

## Millet

Not a grain at all, *millet* is actually a grass with small, round, ivory and yellow kernels that swell when you cook them. Millet supplies more servings per kilogram than any other grain.

Millet is packed with vitamins, minerals and other nutrients. High in iron, magnesium, phosphorus and potassium, it's also loaded with fibre and protein as well as the B-complex vitamins, including niacin, thiamine and riboflavin. Millet is more alkaline (it has a higher pH — we talk more about acidic and alkaline foods in Chapter 6) than many traditional grains and digesting it is very easy.



Millet has been a staple food in Africa and India for thousands of years, and people grew it as early as 2700 BC in China, where it was the prevalent grain before rice became the dominant staple. Today, millet is still a significant part of the diet in northern China, Japan, Manchuria and various areas of the former Soviet Union, Africa, India and Egypt. Grown today in Western countries mostly for cattle and bird feed, millet is gaining popularity as a nutritious, delicious part of the human diet as well.

## Quinoa

*Quinoa* (pronounced keen wah) — and also called *hie* (pronounced he-uh) — is yet another of the grains that isn't really a grain; it's actually a fruit and a relative of the common weed lambsquarter. The US National Academy of Science describes quinoa as 'the most nearly perfect source of protein from the vegetable kingdom'.

Like other superfoods and alternative grains, quinoa is packed with lysine and other amino acids that make it a complete protein. It's also high in phosphorus, calcium, iron, vitamin E and assorted B vitamins, as well as fibre. Quinoa is usually pale yellow in colour, but it also comes in pink, orange, red, purple and black.



Because the uncooked grains are coated with *saponins* that act as a natural repellent for insects and pests, most suppliers suggest you wash the quinoa thoroughly before use. Saponins are harmless for humans unless consumed in very large doses. However, they may create a rather bitter aftertaste. Recent research suggests that saponins may have a number of health benefits and quinoa should only be lightly rinsed to remove any extraneous matter. But it's too early to be sure of the many health benefits claimed. Some brands of quinoa have already been rinsed, which will be stated on the label.



Although new to Australians, people in the South American Andes have cultivated quinoa since at least 3000 BC. Ancient Incas called this annual plant 'the mother grain' because it was self-perpetuating and ever-bearing.

They honoured it as a sacred food product, because a steady diet appeared to ensure a full, long life; the Inca ruler himself planted the first row of quinoa each season with a golden spade.

## Sorghum

*Sorghum* is another of the oldest known grains (that isn't a true cereal grain) and it's been a major source of nutrition in Africa and India for centuries. Sorghum is generating excitement as a gluten-free insoluble fibre and is probably best known for the syrup that comes from one of its varieties. It's also known as milo, jowar, jowari or cholam.

Because the proteins and starches in sorghum are more slowly digested than those of other cereals, it may be beneficial to diabetics (and healthy for anyone). It's high in iron, calcium and potassium, and doctors actually used to prescribe it as a supplement for people low in these nutrients.

Some cooks suggest combining sorghum with soy flour. Sorghum is also fermented and used in alcoholic beverages.



Sorghum and millet are both rich in a group of compounds called nitrilosides. Some people notice a correlation between high nitriloside intake and low cancer rates, leading some to speculate that nitrilosides may actually help fight or prevent cancer. For instance, in Africa, where as much as 80 per cent of the diet consists of high-nitriloside-yielding foods, the cancer incidence is very low.

## Teff

Don't be put off by the dark colour of this highly nutritious grain. Teff, the tiniest of all grains and loaded with calcium, iron and protein, packs a nutritional punch well above its weight. It has been a staple of Ethiopian

cooking for centuries and tastes good as a porridge, can be used in biscuits, bread and in veggie burgers or used as a replacement for polenta. You can buy it as flour, or a wholegrain.

## *Happy Hour — Choosing Your Alcoholic Beverages*

Happy hour isn't quite so happy for some people on a gluten-free diet. Although alcoholic drinks are usually gluten-free, most beers aren't. But things are looking up and gluten-free beers are increasingly available in pubs and liquor shops. And you can even make your own gluten-free home brew. Some brew-it-yourself kits and recipes are available on the internet too. A quick search should turn up several options.

Drinks in general have an ingredient statement, but alcoholic beverages aren't required to include ingredient information.

### *Cheers to these*

The list of gluten-free alcoholic beverages is way longer than the list of bevies that are off-limits. Other forms of alcoholic beverages may be gluten-free in addition to these, but this list covers the basics of the booze you can use:

- ✓ Bourbon
- ✓ Brandy
- ✓ Cider (very occasionally contains malt from barley, so be careful)

### **The facts on food additives**

Flavours, flavourings or colours can be derived from or include other substances as carriers. Some examples are maltodextrin, starch or dextrin in savoury products. But the same rules apply — if they're from a gluten-containing grain this must be stated on the ingredients list. Sweet flavourings in lollies, ice cream and drinks are almost always gluten-free and, if not, the gluten-containing ingredient will be indicated.

The food additives numbered from 1400 to 1450 are all thickeners. They may or may not contain wheat. If the source is wheat, this must be listed. Thickeners usually have the source listed in brackets, such as wheat, potato, tapioca or corn. If you see 'thickener' with no source listed, you'll know that it is gluten-free because all gluten must be identified.

- ✓ Cognac
- ✓ Gin
- ✓ Rum
- ✓ Schnapps
- ✓ Tequila
- ✓ Vodka
- ✓ Whisky (and malt whisky)
- ✓ Wine (and sparkling wine or champagne)

Distilled spirits are safe on a gluten-free diet, even malt whisky. Even though some spirits are produced from wheat, rye or barley, they undergo a distillation process that ensures protein (gluten) isn't carried over into the final product.

Whisky, rum, brandy, port, sherry and some liqueurs can include caramel colour from glucose syrup, but this contains no detectable gluten (even if it comes from wheat — refer to 'What about glucose syrup?', earlier in this chapter).



People still worry that whisky can contain gluten. If you love your malt whisky and you're worried about reports that it can contain gluten, because gluten can be added after the distillation process, worry no more. By definition, malt whisky must not have anything added after distillation.

## *Step away from the bottle*

Very few alcoholic beverages contain gluten. They include (but may not be limited to)

- ✓ Alcoholic cider (in very rare cases) — if concerned, you may need to ring the manufacturer to find out, because alcoholic beverages don't usually have ingredient information
- ✓ Beer (except gluten-free beers)



The distillation process completely eliminates any traces of gluten, which is why you can safely enjoy alcoholic beverages made from distilled alcohol, even if they come from a gluten-containing source like wheat.

## *Making Sure Your Medications and Supplements Are Safe*

Remember, anything that you swallow can cause problems if it's not gluten-free — even a tiny little pill, because you may be taking one or more every day for a lengthy period of time. Very few medications contain gluten, and it's now a simple matter to find out if yours are gluten-free.

Sometimes pharmaceuticals do contain gluten, usually in the form of wheat starch. In Australia and New Zealand all therapeutic goods, whether prescription drugs, over-the-counter medications, vitamins, herbal or homeopathic remedies, must provide allergenic listings either on the product itself or in a package insert.



Some types of malaria tablets contain gluten — don't get so carried away with the packing frenzy for your overseas trip that you forget to ask your doctor when he or she is prescribing.

Get into the habit of asking your GP to check for gluten whenever a medication is prescribed for you. Many doctors may remember to do this automatically if you're a regular patient. If you forget until you're at the pharmacy, your pharmacist may be happy to check for you, or simply search online using the name of the medication and find a copy of the product insert.



Here are a few tips to keep in mind:

- ✓ Make a list of the over-the-counter products you commonly use that are gluten-free and keep the list in your medicine cabinet or cupboard. Painkillers, fever-reducers, cold medications and anti-inflammatories, for instance, are usually gluten-free — but you don't want to be wondering about it at 1.00 am when your child's earache is keeping him — and you — up.
- ✓ Write 'GF' in permanent marker on the medication container to remind you later that it is gluten-free.

## *Using Non-Food Products: What You Need to Know*

You may get a lot of conflicting information about non-food products and whether you need to be concerned. You may hear that you need to beware of plastic storage containers, lipsticks, lotions, shampoos, toothpaste, envelopes, stamps, glues ... what's a gluten-freebie supposed to do?!

You certainly don't have to worry about plastic storage containers, pots and pans, envelopes or stamps. The following sections let you know where you could have a concern.



Play-Doh has gluten in it. We know you're not supposed to eat it, but show us a preschooler who hasn't had a nibble or ten. Let your child's teacher or carer know that Play-Doh is a risk and ask them to be extra vigilant when your child is at the craft table if this product is being used. Many recipes for gluten-free playdoughs are available and adding a hefty amount of salt to a homemade mix will also deter compulsive nibblers.

## *Make-up matters*

A few long-lasting lipsticks have wheat in them, but you can ask to see the ingredient details. These will be available at the point of sale so you can choose a product that's safe. You don't need to worry about regular lipsticks, lip balms, lip gloss or other make-up.

## *Lotions and potions*

Coeliacs have a problem with gluten in the small bowel, and products used on the skin — such as lotions, creams or conditioners — don't move through to the bowel. Lotions and potions *can* affect people with allergies or intolerances, however.

## *Coming unstuck on glues*



Some of the older glues still on the market contain wheat — the claggy sort often called 'paste' used for children's craft activities. Very few of these are still available and you can avoid the problem by using a glue-stick instead — and cut down on the mess at the same time.

## *Getting the drill on dental products*

The drill on dental products? Well, you have no pain here. Products used by your dentist, like polish, fluoride or other dental agents don't contain gluten. No-one has ever found dental products, such as toothpaste and mouthwashes to contain gluten either.

## Chapter 5

# Finding and Using Good Resources

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### *In This Chapter*

- ▶ Searching for information
  - ▶ Finding good support
  - ▶ Using reliable resources
- 

**H**uman communication has come a long way from its humble beginnings. The grunts and growls of our cave-dwelling ancestors developed over millennia until they were able to pass on information by word of mouth and through primitive cave drawings. The development of writing and later printing opened up huge possibilities for far greater communication with people living further away. Improved communication meant that knowledge could grow and be shared at increasingly rapid rates. Over the past few decades, we've seen an astonishing explosion of not just knowledge, but also the means to pass on that knowledge. With radio, television, books, libraries and the internet, an individual can access information on just about every aspect of human knowledge.

The trouble is, while you have almost unlimited access to almost unlimited information, you don't always have the capacity to sort out the facts from the fairytales. So much information is out there, if you go looking when you've just been diagnosed and told you need a gluten-free diet, it won't be long before your head is spinning like a mosquito on speed.

In this chapter, we cover the search for information, how to sort fact from fiction and where to go for support and help.



## *Searching for Information: The Good, the Bad and the Completely Ludicrous*

The good news is that loads of information on gluten, gluten intolerance, coeliac disease, related disorders and the gluten-free diet is available. The bad news is that much of it is garbage.

No matter what the source, always question the credibility of the authors and remember that even seemingly credible sources can perpetuate bad information.

You may find that a lot of the information is conflicting. One source says hot chips are safe, another says they're not (in most cases they are). Here are a few tips to help sort out the reality from the ridiculous:

✓ **Check the publication date.** Information on the internet and in books and magazines can become outdated the minute it's published, so ensure what you're reading is current.

✓ **Look for credentials.** Are the authors knowledgeable, or are they just sharing personal experiences and opinions? Where do they get their information? Not all writers are reliable: You don't need a licence to publish, nor do you have to let the facts get in the way of a good story.

Don't believe everything you read, just because it's on the printed page. Look at who wrote it and whether they're qualified to write about the topic. In some countries, you can 'buy' a university degree, call yourself Doctor and publish what's no more than your own personal opinions.

✓ **Use only reliable sources.** To avoid confusion and mistakes, stick to official sites and sources. You can read widely or surf to your heart's content about other issues, but when your health is involved, you need the right facts and the correct advice.



## *Knowing who to believe*

Knowing where to look for the right information is important or you can start to get confused by uninformed people, or by information sources that are just not accurate. The issue of contamination is a good example of this.

Sometimes people worry about contamination and, it's true, contamination of gluten-free products can occur. Contamination in your own home, on a regular basis, is, of course, a serious issue and you need to do everything you can to avoid it (see Chapter 7 for information on contamination in the kitchen). Contamination in a restaurant is also something to be aware of. We talk about checking on the possibility of contamination when you're eating away from home in Chapter 16. These are times of greater risk than in your own kitchen, where you know exactly what's going into your meals.

But some people read about and then worry about contamination that's actually way beyond their control. What if the packet of gluten-free flour you buy is contaminated during processing or packing? What if contamination occurs right out there on the farm where your rice is grown? Sure, it could happen. But the risk is extremely slight because the food labelling laws are so strict. A minuscule dose of gluten on an extremely rare occasion isn't going to alter the course of destiny for you.

We don't live in a perfect world and mistakes do occur. In reality, we face a certain level of risk in every aspect of our everyday lives, but we're so used to it that we don't notice. We take a risk each time we leave the house and drive to the shops, or to work. We take a risk when we eat any form of processed food, or even 'natural' food. We don't lose sleep over it, though, because the risk is so negligible.



If you're feeling worried or confused about your diet or some other aspect of living with coeliac disease, don't feel embarrassed to seek help from your GP or a dietitian. You can be sure you won't be the first to ask that question — you likely have a lot to learn at first.

Whatever you do, don't become so worried about accidentally eating gluten that you lock yourself away from the rest of the world in a gluten-free bubble and forget to enjoy life. Keep yourself well informed about where the real risks lie so you don't waste good nervous energy worrying about teeny weeny possibilities that will probably never, ever occur. If you find information that makes you worried, check it with your GP, a dietitian or one of the sites listed in this chapter. Coeliac Australia receives phone calls every day from members who are worried or confused about misinformation.

## Why do conflicting beliefs about the gluten-free diet exist?

Good question. For one thing, a lot has changed in the gluten-free world in the last few years. Testing methods have become so refined that we can now be far more certain about 'debatable' ingredients like caramel colour or glucose syrup. But not everyone understands the food labelling system in Australia and New Zealand and people are still using old information.

Lots of people rely on the information they first heard and aren't aware of changes as they occur. For example, years ago coeliacs were allowed to eat wheat starch — at the time, gluten-free bread was largely made of wheat starch, usually called 'cornflour'. Today some coeliacs still believe that wheat starch is permitted and are suffering damage to the bowel as a result.

We all build our own theories about our own bodies and how they behave, and our own theories about the world. Humans have always created their own explanations or beliefs to account for events and then turned those beliefs into 'facts' which, over time, become set in concrete. So if a person feels unwell, he might track back over what he has eaten and find something to blame. But everyone feels unwell at some time or another, not just people on a gluten-free diet. The unwell feeling could have been due to any number of factors, including indigestion, constipation, a mild gastric infection, the start of a virus or just plain tiredness. Coeliacs get food poisoning just like non-coeliacs. Kids with coeliac disease get

unexplained tummy pains, just like other kids. But an innocent food gets a bad reputation and another myth is built.

Margaret went on an elimination diet a few years ago, to check for food intolerances (apart from gluten). She had several theories about what was upsetting her system. While she was on the elimination diet, eating unlabelled (but carefully numbered) capsules every four days, containing one or other of the main foods that cause problems for many people, she had some bad reactions. She had a pretty good idea of what was in those particular capsules, based on her previous theories. And was she right? Nope. Wrong on all counts! When she went back to the dietitian to report on which capsules had caused a bad reaction, she learned — to her surprise — that her body always took about 36 hours to react to a problem food, so she had been blaming the wrong foods — and, of course, avoiding the wrong foods — and puzzling over why she was still getting sick.

Sometimes it *is* really clear over a long period of time that a particular food has caused a reaction — and many people work out that bread is a problem for them well before they're diagnosed with coeliac disease. But beware of jumping to conclusions too quickly. We have the benefit of world-class research and world-class food labelling, so why not use it, rather than sticking unquestioningly to your old beliefs? Get your information from reliable sources and leave the fairytales to others!

## *Ignoring the hype*

Labels are cluttered with tempting enticements like *organic*, *all-natural*, *no GMOs*, *healthy*, *nutritious* and good old *new and improved*. Some of these may be important to you and some of them are pure hype, but none of them says anything about the gluten-free status of a product. In fact, ‘new and improved’ is actually a signal for ‘now you definitely have to check ingredients — again — because we’ve changed our formula’.

People sometimes make the erroneous assumption that if a product is healthy, it’s more likely to be gluten-free. Not true. In fact, if you see the words *whole grain* emblazoned on a label, step away from the product. Chances are it’s not gluten-free.



‘Organic’ has absolutely nothing to do with ‘gluten-free’. A product or food may be organic and gluten-free, or organic and loaded to the hilt with gluten.

Even if a product says *wheat-free* on the label, that doesn’t mean it’s gluten-free. You still need to watch for barley, rye and oats — as well as their derivatives.

Sometimes when you’re looking at a product to see if it’s gluten-free, an eager shop assistant will assure you that it’s organic, as if that was the end of the matter. ‘Well, it’s organic, so I’m sure it will be okay.’ Organically grown wheat, rye, barley or oats contain exactly the same amount of gluten as their non-organic cousins.

## *Checking with food manufacturers*

Thankfully, you rarely have any need to spend frustrating hours waiting in a phone queue to get product information. (‘Thank you for your call . . . You have progressed in the queue . . . Your call is important to us . . . Did you know . . . We value your call’ — all accompanied by intolerably bad music. Urrrgh!) Because Australia has such a high standard for product labelling, the information you need to know about whether it’s gluten-free is right there on the product.

You should only need to ring a manufacturer on the rarest of occasions (the dog ate the empty packet before you checked ingredients, your hostess put the jar in the bin that was emptied this morning, you desperately need a particular product in the supermarket but you left your glasses at home and are too shy to ask a stranger to read the label, the cafe staff are positive one of their cakes is gluten-free but aren’t sure which one it is, and other tragic tales).

You *can* ring a manufacturer to thank them for a new product, or tell them how much you love their muffins/beer/pumpkin soup, or congratulate them for making the effort to replicate the foods you loved but couldn't eat. People at the other end of the line are used to receiving complaining, angry, downright rude and occasionally obscene calls, week in, week out. It simply makes their day when someone calls with a positive comment or heartfelt thanks. Try it one day — the delight in the voice at the end of the phone line will give you a lift too! Positive messages *do* get through to the top and — who knows? Your appreciation may inspire the manufacturer to create even more gluten-free treasures for you to enjoy.



Most of the special dietary foods on the shelves are there because enough individuals jumped up and down and demanded gluten-free products. A phone call to a manufacturer (or letter or email) giving positive feedback about a product can only be a good thing. This applies particularly to the small, local manufacturers.



When you're not feeling well or have the symptoms you usually get after eating gluten, don't simply assume that the last meal or snack you ate contained gluten. Maybe it did, but maybe your symptoms are caused by something else. Keep an open mind about the source of the trouble.

## Books

Many wonderful gluten-free cookbooks are on the market and some are available online. You can also find many good gluten-free recipes online, but read the ingredients carefully because overseas standards are different from Australia and New Zealand. We can't possibly list all the books available, but here are a few (just because a cookbook isn't listed doesn't mean it's not good):

- ✓ *4 Ingredients: Gluten Free, Lactose Free* by Kim McCosker
- ✓ *Bread, Buns and Breakfasts* by Lola Workman
- ✓ *Coeliac Australia's Gluten Free Recipe Book*
- ✓ *From My Kitchen to Yours* by Sally Wise
- ✓ *Forever Yum! Gluten Free Family Fare* from John Hunter Children's Hospital
- ✓ *Gluten-Free & Allergy-Free Eating* from *The Australian Women's Weekly*
- ✓ *Gluten-Free Cooking For Dummies* by Danna Korn and Connie Sarros
- ✓ *Gluten Free Favourites from Mary's Kitchen* by Mary Kiwarkis

- ✓ *Gluten-Free Soups, Sauces and Marinades* by Ric Hunter
- ✓ *Low GI Diet for Gluten-Free Cooking* by Jennie Brand-Miller, Kate Marsh and Philippa Sandall
- ✓ *Multi-Allergy Cookbook* by Lola Workman
- ✓ *What's Cooking?* Coeliac Australia
- ✓ *Wheat-Free World* by Lola Workman

## Support Groups

A diagnosis of coeliac disease can leave you feeling bewildered, isolated and anxious about your new diet. It can also raise your interest in medical or dietary issues, so your head is brimming with questions. For a time, you'll want to share your experience of diagnosis, your thoughts and your fears with others, until you've worked through them. Finding other people who are going through the same process, or have in the past, can really help.

Because your gluten-free diet is lifelong, you need up-to-date information about gluten-free issues over the years. And you may be really interested in keeping up with the latest research into coeliac disease or gluten intolerance. If you're a parent of a coeliac child, you may share many of these needs and another 102 questions may be spinning around in your brain. Thousands of coeliacs (over 20,000 to be precise) find many of their needs are met by joining Coeliac Australia, which gives information and support to those who are medically diagnosed with coeliac disease or dermatitis herpetiformis, and those medically diagnosed as requiring a gluten-free diet.

Members receive a quarterly magazine loaded with information, recipes, research articles, members' stories, travel and dining out information and puzzles for children. They also receive a handbook packed with information, a recipe book and the Coeliac Australia's *Ingredient List*. State societies hold regular functions such as information sessions, new member meetings, cooking demonstrations, shopping tours and children's events. Gluten-free food expos are held in most capital cities. Contact groups hold meetings and run functions in suburban or country areas where you can meet other coeliacs and share experiences and ideas.

To join Coeliac Australia, you need a letter from your doctor indicating a medical need for your gluten-free diet.

The contact details for **Coeliac Australia (CA)** are as follows: P.O. Box 271, Wahroonga, NSW 2076; phone 02 9487 5088, or 1300 990 273, fax 02 9487 5177; email [info@coeliac.org.au](mailto:info@coeliac.org.au), website [www.coeliac.org.au](http://www.coeliac.org.au).



You can contact your state organisation on 1300 GLUTEN (1300 458 836 on a landline only) or by contacting the addresses listed here:

**New South Wales and ACT**, P.O. Box 271, Wahroonga, NSW 2076; Suite 1, 41–45 Pacific Highway, Waitara, NSW 2077; phone 02 9487 5088, fax 02 9487 5177; email [nsw@coeliac.org.au](mailto:nsw@coeliac.org.au).

**Queensland**, 91B Wilston Road Newmarket QLD 4051; PO Box 3455, Newmarket, QLD 4051; email [qld@coeliac.org.au](mailto:qld@coeliac.org.au).

**South Australia and Northern Territory**, Unit 5–6, 88 Glynburn Road, Hectorville, SA 5073; phone 08 8336 1476, fax 08 8365 1265; email [sant@coeliac.org.au](mailto:sant@coeliac.org.au).

**Victoria and Tasmania**, P.O. Box 89, Holmesglen, VIC 3148; 11 Barlyn Road, Mt Waverley, VIC 3149; phone 03 9808 5566, fax 03 9808 9922; email [victas@coeliac.org.au](mailto:victas@coeliac.org.au).

**Western Australia**, P.O. Box 726, Bentley, WA 6982; Unit 2, 4 Queen Street, Bentley, WA 6102; phone 08 9451 9255, fax 08 9451 9266; email [wa@coeliac.org.au](mailto:wa@coeliac.org.au).

**Coeliac NZ**, P.O. Box 35 724, Browns Bay, Auckland 0753; phone 09 820 5157, fax 09 476 7251; email [admin@coeliac.org.nz](mailto:admin@coeliac.org.nz), website [www.coeliac.org.nz](http://www.coeliac.org.nz).

Many other countries have their own support groups, including Ireland, Spain, the United Kingdom, Finland and the US. You can find them with a quick internet search.



If you look at overseas sites, keep in mind that definitions of ‘gluten-free’ and labelling standards and regulations vary from one country to another.

## ***The Australian Coeliac magazine***

*The Australian Coeliac* magazine is a favourite with members, who often say they read it from cover to cover as soon as it arrives. *The Australian Coeliac* keeps you abreast with news of the latest research and food labelling

regulations, and each edition has a medical article on important issues that relate to coeliac disease. It's also loaded with great recipes and cooking tips. On the world stage it's considered one of the best.

## *The Internet, for Better and for Worse*

The internet's wonderfully convenient. You can be in your PJs, coffee mug in hand, before dawn (okay then, that's a bit unlikely — at 2.00 am) and find out more about gluten than you ever knew you didn't know. The problem is that you can't always trust what you read online and checking credibility is difficult. Visit any chat room and you'll meet a fascinating cross-section of the human race. Some will be experts, some will think they're experts and some will be just right out there on the second planet on the left after Neptune. If you talk to people face to face you can usually get an idea of who the weirdos are, but it's much harder to tell when you're online. You need to watch out for the weirdos but, more importantly, for the people who think they know, but really don't. If you believe everything you read in chat rooms, pretty soon you won't have very much left to eat, because someone or other will have said it contains gluten.

Furthermore, people publish information on the Web and sometimes forget about it or don't take the time to update it. What you're looking at could be several years old — and many things have changed in the past few years.

Reliable websites include

- ✓ [www.healthinsite.gov.au](http://www.healthinsite.gov.au): A government website with information about coeliac disease and related conditions.
- ✓ [www.gesa.org.au](http://www.gesa.org.au): The website of the Gastroenterological Society of Australia. Here you'll find an excellent update (4th edition) on coeliac disease (available at [www.gesa.org.au/files/editor\\_upload/File/Professional/Coeliac\\_Disease4Ed07.pdf](http://www.gesa.org.au/files/editor_upload/File/Professional/Coeliac_Disease4Ed07.pdf)) and helpful recommendations.
- ✓ [www.coeliac.org.au](http://www.coeliac.org.au): You'll find links to each of the state societies, more details about how Coeliac Australia can help and information on how to join.
- ✓ [www.daa.asn.au/Dietitians](http://www.daa.asn.au/Dietitians): The website for the Dietitians Association of Australia, where you can access a list of dietitians experienced in coeliac disease. (If you can't find one in your area you can ring the Association on 1800 812 942.)
- ✓ [www.foodstandards.gov.au](http://www.foodstandards.gov.au): You'll find details here of the food standards that apply to all foods produced or imported for sale into Australia and New Zealand.





## Chapter 6

# Gluten-Free ... Nutritiously

### *In This Chapter*

- ▶ Recognising what food has to offer
- ▶ Keeping the right balance
- ▶ Understanding the glycaemic index and load
- ▶ Getting the right nutrients
- ▶ Controlling your weight on a gluten-free diet
- ▶ Maintaining healthy eating as you get older

**W**hether you're a salad-dodger or suffering from *orthorexia* (an extreme desire to eat only health foods), eating gluten-free nutritiously is simple but not plain. You don't have to balance any food blocks (and turn them upside down every few years), weigh portions, keep a food log or count kilojoules.

We have more than just a passing interest in nutrition and that interest extends far beyond whether something is gluten-free or not. We love food (and who doesn't?) and believe that eating well shouldn't just be about getting the right nutrients, but enjoying what you eat. When you need to remove gluten from your diet it's crucial to make sure you get the balance right and still love your food as before.

In this chapter, we hope to share with you our fervour for food as more than just something that satisfies your hunger pangs. We explain why gluten-free doesn't always mean guilt-free and why paying attention to the glycaemic load is important to staying healthy. And with a few gentle nudges, we hope to help steer you — oh-so-gently — down the path of eating gluten-free nutritiously, for life.

If the subject of nutrition seems intimidating or far too complex, don't worry. We boil it down to the raw ingredients and make this a lesson in nutrition that's easy to digest.

## Appreciating Your Food

You make some pretty drastic changes to your diet when you first go gluten-free, becoming far more aware of what's going into your mouth — faithfully reading labels and scrutinising the ingredients, acutely aware of where gluten could be lurking, and avoiding it like vampires avoiding garlic. While those changes are taking place and your focus is right on food, looking at other aspects of your diet as well as the gluten-free side of things makes sense.

People tend to think that *gluten-free* means *healthy*. After all, gluten-free foods are available at 'health food' shops and sometimes they cost far more than 'regular' foods. More importantly, they don't have the evil villain gluten in them, so they have to be nutritious, right? No, not necessarily. But a gluten-free diet *can* be absolutely healthy — and, in a way, you get a head start on healthy eating because you're more likely to be eating fresh foods than people on an average Aussie diet. Foods that are free from absolutely delicious and nutritious additive stuff like polyoxyethylene sorbitan tristearates, dioctyl sodium sulphosuccinates and the pick of the bunch, calcium disodium ethylenediaminetetraacetates. (Say that one quickly three times before you take a bite and you probably won't feel quite as hungry.)



The *type* of food you eat has powerful effects on preventing disease and on maintaining proper organ function, energy levels and moods, and can even affect your longevity and how you age. What you eat has a direct bearing on the way you look and feel — and live. That, of course, applies to everyone, but it has special significance for people with coeliac disease.

## It's a Matter of Balance

We promise we won't mention the food pyramid — it seems to have lumbered back into the Egyptian desert to chat with the Sphinx and good Queen Nefertiti. But realising that just because something is gluten-free doesn't mean that it's healthy, or that you have to eat it, is important. Despite being on a gluten-free diet, you still need to follow the general healthy eating rules that are important to all Australians (coeliac or not).



Include a wide range of nutritious foods and liquids in your diet, such as:

- ✓ Lean meat, fish and poultry (or gluten-free vegetarian alternatives).
- ✓ Loads of vegetables, legumes and fruit, keeping in mind the following:
  - Vegetables don't have to be restricted to broccoli, brussels sprouts and the other green stuff your mum tried to brainwash you into eating.

'Lots of vegetables' includes crunchy salads and yummy things like avocado, olives, grilled capsicum or eggplant and tinned tomatoes. (Okay, we know avocados are actually fruit, but have you ever seen one in a fruit salad?)

- You should aim for at least seven serves of fruit and vegetables each day. Eating five serves of veggies and two pieces or serves of fruit is recommended.
- Legumes include a wide variety of beans, chickpeas and lentils. And yes, baked beans are right in there, for breakfast, lunch or dinner. You will need more legumes and nuts than before (they are a great source of vitamin B, fibre and protein).

✓ Plenty of water.

✓ Milks, yoghurt and cheeses (or alternatives). Aim for at least three servings a day. Many dairy alternatives (like rice or soy milk) are now calcium-fortified.

✓ Plenty of good-quality cereals.



When we talk about cereals we're not just thinking about the stuff you cover with milk and demolish at breakfast, but any food made from grains. Okay, so that includes the stuff you cover with milk, including muesli and bran flakes, but also things like rice, pasta, bread and anything you make from flour.

Some other important tips:



✓ Fat is an essential part of your diet, but limit the saturated fats and moderate total fats (you find details about this on the package or container). The mono- and polyunsaturated fats are the good ones.

Avoid too much salt (everyone needs some salt, but you probably get enough in your bread to meet your daily needs). Even if you don't salt your food, you could be getting far too much in your diet. The sodium that's found naturally in foods like shellfish and some cheeses isn't usually a problem. But processed foods are often loaded with sodium in the form of flavour enhancers, thickeners and preservatives. Even soft drinks often have sodium to help them maintain carbonation.

✓ Keep your intake of sugar and foods containing added sugars low (again, you can find information about sugars on packaging). Compare similar products and choose the ones with less sugar.



As you may have heard, 'Variety is the spice of life'. But it's more than spice. It's the *essence* of a balanced gluten-free diet. Do some homework to locate as many varieties of gluten-free products as you can and incorporate these into your regular diet. Build up a list of yummy meals or recipes, too, and keep the list handy so you can quickly check when you're right out of inspiration.

## Good Carbs, Bad Carbs: Tuning In to the Glycaemic Index and Glycaemic Load

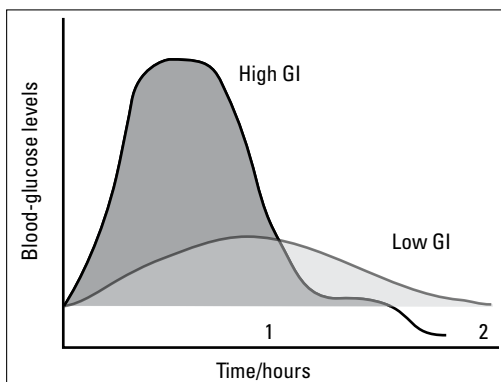
Information about diets, especially when it contains weird and confusing words like ‘glycaemic’, sounds complicated, tedious, boring or all of the above. But please don’t go away, because what’s coming next is really important to your health and wellbeing. It also helps to explain why some people on a gluten-free diet feel hungry a lot of the time, or why they experience a ‘low’ during the day and feel awful until they eat something.

To start, here’s an interesting question: True or false — a potato is worse for you than a chocolate bar. If you’re talking about how each food affects your blood-sugar levels, it’s true. Now are you interested? Read on.

### Getting into the glycaemic index

All carbs aren’t created equal; in fact, they behave quite differently in individual bodies. When you eat carbohydrates, the digestive process breaks them down into the sugar glucose, which is what gives your body the energy it needs to function. Because glucose is a sugar, it raises your blood-sugar levels when it enters your bloodstream.

The *glycaemic index* (GI) is a ranking of carbohydrate foods according to their effect on blood glucose levels. (Carbohydrate foods include fruit, starchy vegetables, rice, breads and cereals, legumes, dairy products and, of course, sugar itself.) Figure 6-1 shows the different rates at which high and low-GI carbohydrates affect the release of glucose into your blood. Table 6-1 shows how glycaemic index numbers are ranked according to their effect on blood glucose. Foods containing fat and protein don’t really affect your blood-sugar level that much (if anything, they help to stabilise it), so the glycaemic index really only concerns foods that contain carbohydrates.



**Figure 6-1:**  
Release of  
glucose into  
the blood.

**Table 6-1      The Effects of High-, Moderate- and Low-GI Carbs on Blood-Sugar Levels**

<i>GI</i>	<i>GI Rating/Number</i>	<i>Effect on Blood Glucose</i>
Low	55 or less	Slower, lower rise in blood glucose levels
Moderate	56 to 69	Moderate rise in blood glucose levels
High	70 or more	Fast rise in blood glucose levels



High-GI carbohydrates break down very quickly during digestion and produce a fast and high blood-sugar response. Low-GI carbohydrates break down slowly, releasing glucose gradually into the bloodstream.

Eating a lot of high-GI foods can be harmful to your health, especially if you're overweight or don't get regular exercise. Try to choose mainly low-GI carbs that slowly trickle glucose into your bloodstream (see Table 6-2 for suggestions). That way your energy levels are more balanced and you feel satisfied for longer between meals.

The benefits of eating low-GI carbohydrates each day include the following:

- ✓ You feel fuller for longer.
- ✓ Your body burns more fat and less muscle.
- ✓ You lose weight.
- ✓ If you have diabetes or insulin resistance (pre-diabetes) your blood glucose is easier to control. You may reduce your risk of heart disease.

Wow! That all sounds pretty good. But, you're thinking, how hard is it going to be to maintain a low-GI diet? Now you're going to tell me to take even more foods out of my diet. Give me a break!

It can be tricky to be both gluten-free and have low GI. But it's do-able. The problem is that many of the gluten-free alternatives have a higher GI than their gluten-containing counterparts. (Remember that anything above 70 is considered high GI — refer to Table 6-1.)

Here is the GI of common gluten-free staples and snack foods:

- ✓ Most gluten-free breads: 70 to 80
- ✓ Most gluten-free cereals: 80 to 90

- ✓ Most gluten-free pasta: 70 to 90
- ✓ Most varieties of rice: 80 to 100
- ✓ Most varieties of potato: 70 to 100
- ✓ Rice cakes: 82
- ✓ Corn thins: 87
- ✓ Rice crackers: 92
- ✓ Plain popcorn: 72

At face value, that all looks pretty negative. How can you possibly choose low-GI foods on a gluten-free diet? But don't panic yet. A number of gluten-free foods are also low GI (and good for you):

- ✓ Most fruits
- ✓ Legumes such as lentils, kidney beans, baked beans and chickpeas
- ✓ Most dairy products
- ✓ Some types of rice, noodles and grains, such as basmati rice, rice noodles, gluten-free soba noodles, buckwheat and quinoa
- ✓ Some starchy vegetables, such as orange sweet potato, corn and taro

**Table 6-2 Comparing the GI of Some Gluten-Free Foods**

<i>Low-GI Foods</i>	<i>Moderate-GI Foods</i>	<i>High-GI Foods</i>
Apple (40)	Arborio rice (69)	Corn thins (87)
Baked beans (48)	Basmati rice (58)	Cornflakes (77)
Custard, reduced fat (37)	Doongara rice (56)	GF multigrain bread (79)
GF muesli with milk (39)	Ice cream (full cream) (61)	GF rice and maize pasta (76)
Kidney beans, canned (52)	Rice vermicelli (58)	GF white bread (80)
Lentils, canned (44)		Jasmine rice (109)
Milk (30)		Potato (76)
Moore's grain bread (52)		Pumpkin (75)
Sweet corn, canned (46)		Rice cakes (82)
Sweet potato (44)		Sugar (glucose) (100)
Yoghurt, low fat (33)		Watermelon (72)



The glycaemic effect of foods depends on a number of things, including the type of starch that's in it, whether that starch is cooked, how much fat is present and the acidity level. For example, adding vinegar or lemon juice (acidic) to a food actually lowers the glycaemic index. And fat or dietary fibre can help inhibit the absorption of the carbohydrates, which also lowers the glycaemic index. That, by the way, is why a chocolate bar — which has fat in it — can have a lower glycaemic index than a potato (but this doesn't mean the chocolate bar is a better choice). Processing affects the glycaemic index of a food, too. The more highly processed a grain such as rice, corn or wheat is, the higher its glycaemic index and the more quickly your blood sugar rises.

## *Why blood-sugar levels are important*

Your blood-sugar levels can have profound effects on your health in many ways: Disease cause and prevention, weight loss and weight gain, moods, energy levels and even how quickly you age.

The underlying principle is simple: What goes up must come down. When you eat high-glycaemic-load foods — such as bread, pasta, pizza, biscuits and cakes — your blood sugar spikes. And chasing that spike in blood sugar is your friend *insulin*, a hormone produced by the pancreas. Insulin's job is to get nutrients from the blood and make them available to various tissues in the body.

Glucose is the fuel that your body uses. Insulin is in charge of getting the glucose into the cells where they can use it for energy. Think of insulin as the delivery guy — bringing glucose to the cells, opening the door and tossing the glucose inside.

When insulin shuttles the glucose from the bloodstream into the cells, insulin *lowers* your blood-sugar level (the sugar isn't in the blood anymore; it's in the cells).

When your blood-sugar level is high, your body makes a load of insulin to try to bring that level down. The problem is that insulin is sometimes a little *too* good at its job.



People with diabetes used to think they had to avoid sugar — as in table sugar. But simple sugar (like table sugar) doesn't make your blood glucose level rise any faster than complex carbohydrates do. That's why using the glycaemic index is a more valuable tool in controlling blood-sugar levels (and losing weight) than cutting down on sugar.



## The effects of high insulin

When you eat a lot of high-glycaemic-load foods (see the following section), your blood sugar spikes and the pancreas has to work really hard to pump out a load of insulin to bring the blood-sugar level down. And it works — blood sugar drops fast. You crash. You get fatigued, sometimes a little dizzy — and hungry.

When high-glycaemic-load foods cause your blood-sugar levels to spike and then drop quickly, your hormones are strapped in the front seat on this roller-coaster ride, wreaking havoc on your energy levels and even moods.



Insulin also increases the amount of cortisol in the body. *Cortisol* is a stress hormone that can accelerate ageing and cause other health problems.



People who eat high-glycaemic-load foods for years can develop a condition called insulin resistance. *Insulin resistance* is when the body has so much insulin all the time that it doesn't respond like it should anymore. Usually, just a little bit of insulin can bring blood sugar down, but in someone who's insulin resistant, this doesn't happen. So in an effort to lower blood-sugar levels, the body keeps producing insulin and has elevated levels of it all the time. This can put stress on the pancreas and lead to the development of type 2 diabetes.

## Looking at the glycaemic load (GL)

Using the glycaemic index alone can be a tad misleading. Watermelon, for example, has a high glycaemic index, but because watermelon's mostly water, you'd have to eat a lot of it to raise your blood sugar much. The glycaemic load (GL) measurement is actually a little more valuable. *Glycaemic load* looks at how many grams of available carbs a food provides. The *available carbohydrates* are the ones that provide energy, like starch and sugar but not fibre. The glycaemic load of a meal takes into account both the amount and the quality of the carbohydrates present. And both of these are important in determining how much your blood glucose level rises and falls.

## Looking for the GI Symbol

To make shopping easier, the Glycemic Index Foundation (in consultation with the University of Sydney) has come up with a cool logo (the GI Symbol) that tells you what the GI is for that product. When you see the logo on a food item you know that the GI has been measured and the food must contain appropriate levels of carbohydrates, total fat, saturated fat, salt and

energy and, where appropriate, be a good source of fibre. Use of the symbol isn't compulsory — it's entirely up to the manufacturer — but it's appearing on more and more products. Remember, the GI Symbol tells you *only* about the glycaemic load, not about gluten. So you still have to read the nutrition panel to see if it's gluten-free.

Most people don't have the time — or the inclination — to be constantly calculating the GI, product by product, as they hurtle round the supermarket. They're already busy enough looking for the gluten-free logo or those magic GLUTEN-FREE words, or straining to read the minuscule details in nutrition panels, not to mention putting back all the junk items little Ollie is sneaking into the trolley. So how can you do low GI and gluten-free at the same time?

Don't get carried away with enthusiasm when you see the GI Symbol on a product and scoop it up into your trolley. Remember, choosing low-GI food is all about good health, not about whether a product is gluten-free. Look for gluten-free products first, and then check the GI, either from the GI Symbol — if one is shown — or by learning to recognise the gluten-free foods that are also low or moderate GI.



Try these simple and practical tricks:

- ✓ Try to spread the amount of carbohydrate you eat evenly throughout the day.
- ✓ Watch the size of your carbohydrate portions (too much of even a low-GI food will send your blood-sugar levels skyrocketing).
- ✓ Include a low-GI carbohydrate food at each meal if possible.
- ✓ When you choose to eat high-GI foods, include some low-GI carbs in the meal to bring down the load of the meal.
- ✓ Look for low-GI, gluten-free bread.
- ✓ Mix mashed cannellini beans or orange sweet potato into your mashed potatoes so you need less potato to be satisfied.
- ✓ Add some quinoa flakes to your rice porridge.
- ✓ Use corn on the cob or canned corn rather than potato with meals.
- ✓ Look for roasted chickpeas — they're great for snacking and now come in spicy flavours as well as plain.

If you want to find out more about the GI value of other foods, you can try the University of Sydney website at [www.glycemicindex.com](http://www.glycemicindex.com) where you can key in a particular food and find its GI. Make sure you get the right website; some crazy ones are out there that are highly inaccurate. You can find other helpful information on [www.gisymbol.com](http://www.gisymbol.com). Other countries may measure GI differently to Australia.

## Avoiding Nutritional Pitfalls on the Gluten-Free Diet

People often ask whether nutritional deficiencies arise as a result of being gluten-free. Recent research by Australian dietitian Dr Sue Shepherd has found that the food consumed by most people on a gluten-free diet isn't nutritionally adequate. Some of the deficits occur because people tend to eat less bread than those not on a gluten-free diet. Bread made from wheat is fortified with thiamin by law, but this doesn't apply to gluten-free bread. Wheat bread (but not gluten-free bread) is also fortified with folate and iodine.

Dr Shepherd's research found that, after one year on a gluten-free diet, women had inadequate levels of thiamin, folate, magnesium, calcium, vitamin A and iron. Men were found to be lacking in thiamin, folate, magnesium, calcium and zinc. Fibre levels were also not adequate.



With a well-balanced diet, making up for the deficits common among people eating gluten-free isn't hard:

- ✓ **Fibre:** The recommended intake of fibre for adults is 25 grams per day for women and 30 grams per day for men. See the following section for reasons fibre is important and ideas on how to increase fibre in your diet.
- ✓ **Thiamin (vitamin B1):** This is important for the functioning of your heart, muscles and nervous system. It's found in whole grains, pork, offal, eggs and legumes.
- ✓ **Folate:** This is essential for the manufacture of new cells, including blood cells. It's found in leafy green vegetables like spinach, kale, Asian greens, broccoli as well as citrus fruits and legumes.
- ✓ **Magnesium:** This helps the body produce energy and is important for healthy teeth and bones as well as heart, muscle and kidney function. You can get magnesium from leafy green vegetables, whole grains and nuts.
- ✓ **Calcium:** This is important not only for healthy bones and teeth, but also for muscle and heart functioning as well as the regulation of hormones. Dairy food is the best source of calcium but you can also get it from leafy green vegetables, nuts, and canned fish such as sardines and salmon that contain bones.
- ✓ **Vitamin A:** This is essential for good vision in low light as well as healthy skin, teeth and bones. It is found in eggs, meat, fortified milk, cheese cream and offal. The body can also make vitamin A from the carotenoids found in red, orange and yellow vegetables and fruit, like

carrots, pumpkin, sweet potato, rock melon and apricots, as well as leafy green vegetables.

- ✓ **Iron:** This is important in transporting oxygen around the body in red blood cells. Good sources of iron include meat, liver, egg yolk, legumes, whole grains and dried fruit.
- ✓ **Zinc:** This is important for immune functioning, reproduction, blood clotting and hormone regulation. Good sources of zinc include oysters and shellfish, red meat and chicken, fish and cheese. Other sources include legumes, whole grains, seeds and leafy green vegetables.

A gluten-free diet that's mostly gluten-free 'replacement' foods like breads, pizzas, pastas, biscuits and cakes, with vegetables limited to potatoes and the tomatoes in the pasta sauce, won't provide the minerals and fibre your body needs for healthy functioning.

If you're concerned that you may not be getting all the nutrients you need, make an appointment to see an Accredited Practising Dietitian (APD) with experience in coeliac disease. An APD can provide you with information on eating a balanced gluten-free diet that's tailored to your particular needs and preferences. To find an APD in your area, contact the Dietitians Association of Australia (DAA) at [www.daa.asn.au](http://www.daa.asn.au).

## *Getting the fibre you need on a gluten-free diet*

Fibre is important for many reasons. The grains you can't eat anymore were important sources of fibre, so it's essential to find substitutes. These three types of fibre act in different ways:

- ✓ **Soluble fibre:** Removes cholesterol from the body, helps with satiety (keeping you satisfied) and helps stabilise your blood glucose levels. Soluble fibres include fruits, vegetables, legumes, bran, rice, soy grits and psyllium.
- ✓ **Insoluble fibre:** Provides bulk and speeds the movement of material through the bowel — important for preventing constipation and lowering your risk of bowel cancer. Foods in this category include fruit and vegetable skins, flaxseed, rice bran, nuts, seeds and brown rice.
- ✓ **Resistant starch:** Even though this is not traditionally seen as fibre it acts in a similar way, passing through the large bowel undigested. It may help to protect against colon cancer, stabilise blood glucose levels, lower cholesterol and keep you feeling fuller for longer. These starches include legumes, unripe banana, grains and seeds, cooked and cooled potato and cooked and cooled rice.

Fruits have almost twice as much fibre as whole grains and non-starchy vegetables have about eight times more fibre. To maximise your fill of fibre, be sure to eat the peel, when it's edible.



Some people suffer from flatulence, cramps and even diarrhoea when they try to increase their fibre intake. If you need more fibre, introduce it gradually — be kind to your guts and you'll avoid a nasty payoff!



Try these tips if you need to increase your fibre intake:

- ✓ Try brown rice instead of white.
- ✓ Add rice bran, psyllium husks, linseed, quinoa flakes or LSA to your breakfast cereal.
- ✓ Choose a gluten-free bread with more fibre (gluten-free high fibre or multigrain breads).
- ✓ If you bake your own bread, add psyllium, rice bran or seeds.
- ✓ Eat whole, unpeeled fruit and vegetables.
- ✓ Try dried fruits and nuts as a snack.
- ✓ Include more legumes (kidney beans, lentils, baked beans, soybeans, chickpeas) on a daily basis.
- ✓ Add rice bran to the mix when baking.



To keep your internal plumbing in beautiful working order, drink plenty of water throughout the day and make sure you get regular exercise. Both are essential factors in keeping your system running smoothly.

## *Packing a punch with protein*

Protein is another important element in diet. Experts estimate that about half the dry weight of the human body is made up of protein — the brain cells, muscle, skin, hair and nails are largely protein based. The protein you eat helps you to make new protein in the body. It's also converted into hormones or used as a source of energy.



Although your body likes carbohydrates as the best source of fuel, about 10 per cent of your energy comes from protein. Contrary to popular opinion, people who exercise a great deal don't need additional protein.

Foods containing protein are mainly the animal-derived foods like chicken, beef, lamb, pork, fish, dairy products and eggs. Other sources include

## Chewing the fat with mega omegas

Saying 'fat is bad' is like saying politicians are honest. Some are — some aren't — but you certainly can't label them all the same. Fats are the same way — some are good and some are bad. The saturated kind, like you find in fatty meats and cheeses, are bad, at least in excess. So are the trans fats you find in hydrogenated oils. Most people know these fats increase the bad cholesterol which may contribute to heart attacks and strokes.

Some fats are good, though — like mono and polyunsaturated fats. Omega-3 fatty acids —

like the ones in fish such as Atlantic salmon, mackerel, southern blue fin tuna, trevally, sardines, whiting, barramundi, flake and flounder — are super beneficial. They not only keep the arteries clear, but also affect your *neurotransmitters*, which are the chemical messengers in your brain, reducing depression and improving your moods. Remember, though, that fat is still fat. Just because we call them good fats it doesn't mean you can eat as much of them as you like. The 'good' fats contain just as many kilojoules as the bad ones.

legumes, seeds and nuts. Getting enough protein isn't usually an issue for people in the Western world. However, if you constantly feel hungry on a gluten-free diet, eating more protein helps you feel more satisfied. Eating more low-GI foods will also help (have another look at 'Good Carbs, Bad Carbs: Tuning In to the Glycaemic Index and Glycaemic Load', earlier in this chapter).



Try to include a source of protein at each meal to help you feel fuller for longer. If you're constantly hungry, introducing more of the low-GI choices should keep you satisfied and less likely to raid the biscuit jar between meals.

## Winning the Weight Wars

A gluten-free diet isn't a magic bullet but it can certainly help with weight issues in several ways. Sometimes people have been unwell for a long period before diagnosis and they're so underweight a sneeze can blow them clean across the room. Others have been unwell but have still packed on the weight regardless and constantly struggle to lose it. We cover both ends of the spectrum in this section.

## *Losing weight on the gluten-free diet*

If you're fighting the battle of the bulge, you're obviously not alone. In today's world of globesity, whether you're part of the Boomer Generation or Generation Y doesn't matter: The majority of the population, in the developed world at least, regardless of age, is Generation XL.

The good news is that the gluten-free diet may help with both losing weight and maintaining a healthy weight. Unfortunately, gorging on gluten-free double-choc biscuits isn't part of this weight-loss plan; the key to weight control is that you adhere to a high-protein, low-glycaemic-load, nutrient-dense diet (refer to the section 'Good Carbs, Bad Carbs: Tuning In to the Glycaemic Index and Glycaemic Load', earlier in this chapter).



When you're counting carbs, you can easily see why you get more food for your carb count when you eat fruits and veggies than when you eat gluten. The average carbohydrate content of fruits is about 13 per cent. For non-starchy vegetables, it's about 4 per cent and it's zero for lean meats, fish and seafood. The carbohydrate content of many cereal grains, though, averages a whopping 72 per cent.

Your blood-sugar levels affect hunger and cravings. Gluten-free foods like bread, crackers, biscuits and crisps are enemy number one. Those foods cause a rapid rise in blood glucose, which sends signals to your body to produce insulin.

### **Gaining unwanted weight on the gluten-free diet**

Many people gain weight when they go gluten-free, sometimes causing a weight problem that wasn't there before. This usually happens for two reasons:

✓ People who have coeliac disease or gluten intolerance often weren't absorbing all their nutrients before they embarked on a gluten-free diet. After they go gluten-free, their health begins to improve and they're able to absorb nutrients again. But they're usually still eating the same number of kilojoules — often too many to maintain their pre-gluten-free figure.

✓ Some people gain weight because they're eating a lot of rice, corn and potatoes, which are high-glycaemic-load foods that immediately turn to sugar. They may also be eating more than their fair share of gluten-free treats like biscuits and cakes in an effort to stave off feelings of deprivation.

If you've packed on a few unwanted kilos since going gluten-free, stick to a high-protein, low-glycaemic-load approach and you should have an easier time controlling your weight.

Insulin does its job and brings down your blood-sugar level, but it brings it so low that you get hungry and in fact crave more of the same kind of food that made it go up in the first place. Insulin also tells your body to store fat.

High insulin levels also inhibit the release of *serotonin*, a neurotransmitter in the brain that tells the body to stop eating.



Making too much insulin causes you to store fat and stimulates the liver to make more cholesterol, increasing blood cholesterol levels. Excess insulin also inhibits the breakdown of fat that's already stored in your body, so even if you're working out like a fiend, losing those extra kilos is that much harder to achieve.

## *Gaining weight when you need to*

Two groups of people need to increase weight on a gluten-free diet:

- ✓ Some people who have suffered malabsorption as a result of coeliac disease or gluten intolerance are underweight and actually need to pack on the kilos. When these people go gluten-free, their gut usually heals quickly and they begin to absorb nutrients more effectively. Their weight usually normalises quickly as a result of being gluten-free.
- ✓ Sometimes when people go gluten-free, they cut out things like bread and butter or toast. If you're already underweight, you may need to eat extra carbohydrate foods for a time until you've reached a healthier weight. Once you've reached the recommended weight for your height and build you can get yourself on to a more balanced diet (see your GP or dietitian for information on your recommended weight).



Don't feel you have to go without on a gluten-free diet. You may just need to do the rounds of a couple of different supermarkets to stock up on all the gluten-free alternatives you need.

## *Keeping on Top of Nutrition as You Get Older*

As you get older you may find you have less of an appetite and preparing nutritious meals takes more of an effort. Sometimes it's tempting to 'make do' with a piece of toast and a cup of tea, particularly if you no longer have a family to feed. But eating well is really important if you want to have strong defences against disease and enjoy life to the full. Although your total intake may be lower, you still need those all-important vitamins and minerals, in some cases, more than ever.





Keep in mind the following as you get older:

- ✓ Your **iron** intake is important to prevent anaemia. Make sure you include natural sources of iron — for example, red meat, offal, oily fish such as salmon, eggs and legumes such as lentils and beans. Foods that are iron-fortified, including some gluten-free breakfast cereals, are useful too. Eating foods containing vitamin C will help you absorb iron. Drinking tea and coffee at meals can impair your ability to absorb iron so limit most of your tea and coffee drinking to between meals if you can.
- ✓ You need 25 per cent more **protein** than younger adults to maintain strong, healthy muscle mass, bone health and improve blood pressure. Lean meat, chicken, eggs, fish, low-fat dairy foods, legumes, nuts and seeds are good sources of protein.
- ✓ Getting enough **calcium and vitamin D** remains important to prevent osteoporosis and keep building your bone density. Even a small increase in bone density makes your bones less likely to fracture if you fall over. About 50 per cent of older coeliacs are at risk of osteoporosis and this increases to 75 per cent for those who don't stick to their gluten-free diet. The best sources of calcium are low-fat dairy foods including milk, yoghurt and cheese. If you don't drink milk, choose a milk alternative that is calcium enriched. As you age, your capacity to produce vitamin D declines. Try to get unprotected exposure to sunshine on your face, arms and hands for 10 to 12 minutes, several times a week in summer months and one or two hours each week in winter. During the summer months, this should be done before 10 am or after 3 pm when the UV level is lower.
- ✓ **Fibre** is important to prevent constipation and diverticular disease. Drink plenty of fluids and include fruit, vegetables, legumes and if you can, nuts and seeds. (Refer to the section 'Getting the fibre you need on a gluten-free diet', earlier in this chapter, for more.)
- ✓ Ensuring you drink enough **water** is important because your sensation of thirst declines with increasing age so you may not recognise when you're thirsty. That means it's easy to become dehydrated in hot weather and this can lead to confusion and drowsiness. Try to have lots of liquid during the day, especially in summer.
- ✓ Regular **exercise** keeps your muscles strong, improves balance and helps prevent falls, helping you stay independent for longer.



If you're finding it hard to cook nutritious meals for yourself, you can have meals delivered to your home, through Meals on Wheels or home delivery companies. Almost all of these offer gluten-free alternatives. See [www.mealsonwheels.org.au](http://www.mealsonwheels.org.au) for more information.

If you need to go to hospital, if possible, contact the hospital dietitian before you go in. Take some bread and crackers to ensure you have something to eat on the first day. Hospitals do provide gluten-free meals, but keep in mind that the kitchen staff putting the food on to your tray may not understand about gluten and may pop additional items on your tray, so be vigilant, or ask a family member or friend to monitor what you eat to avoid mistakes. Many hospitals now have a refrigerator where patients can store extra food — this is a boon for coeliacs.

Aged care facilities are required to provide for residents' special needs, but the provision of gluten-free meals varies widely. Don't be afraid to ask if you're not happy. Busy kitchen staff may remember to remove the gluten components of a meal, but they often don't think to replace them with something you can eat. When your options in life have narrowed down, food becomes an increasing source of comfort and pleasure and you are just as entitled to appetising meals as any other resident! Coeliac Australia and your state office have resources available to help educate caterers and carers about the provision of a gluten-free diet — see [www.coeliac.org.au](http://www.coeliac.org.au) for more information.

## *Reviewing the Principles of Good Nutrition*

We cover a lot of ground in this chapter — the glycaemic index, glycaemic load, getting the balance right and eating a varied diet. It all boils down to this simple approach for a healthier gluten-free lifestyle:

- ✓ Keep it gluten-free always. That comes first and foremost.
- ✓ Enjoy a wide range of nutritious foods.
- ✓ Eat smaller portions, but regularly (snacks are very important).
- ✓ Choose low-GI, high-fibre carbohydrate foods.
- ✓ Include plenty of whole, fresh fruit, vegetables and legumes.
- ✓ Include protein at each meal (including protein rich snacks) — especially lean meat and low fat dairy.



Good food is food that goes bad quickly. That means fresh produce and other foods without many preservatives. Always think about the quality and 'nutrient density' of the food you're eating — if a food contains a lot of kilojoules, fats and sugars but not many nutrients, it's probably not worth eating.



## Part II

# Planning and Preparing: The Preludes to Cooking



### *Five Ways to Make Preparing for Gluten-Free Cooking Easier*

- ✓ Develop the habit of reading labels and ingredient panels, and remember that products don't stay the same forever — continue to periodically check even your most favourite products.
- ✓ Store gluten-free foods separately from foods that contain gluten to minimise confusion and mistakes.
- ✓ Keep your eyes open for new gluten-free products or recipes to avoid monotony in your diet.
- ✓ Experiment with different breads, flours and recipes until you find the ones you really like.
- ✓ Write shopping lists and stock up on gluten-free supplies so you always have a few choices on hand when cooking or snacking.



Discover more tips and information about planning for your gluten-free lifestyle at [www.dummies.com/extras/livingglutenfreeau](http://www.dummies.com/extras/livingglutenfreeau).

## ***In this part . . .***

- ✓ Organise and maintain a gluten-free kitchen, and get some help with safely sharing the kitchen with gluten.
- ✓ Find out where and how to buy gluten-free foods without breaking the bank, and choose from a range of shopping options — from health food shops and farmers' markets to supermarkets and online.
- ✓ Get a handle on gluten-free cooking (even if your idea of cooking is warming a frozen dinner — yes, frozen gluten-free meals are available!) and learn how you can make just about anything gluten-free, even without a recipe.

## Chapter 7

# Creating a Gluten-Free-Friendly Kitchen

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### *In This Chapter*

- ▶ Allowing gluten and gluten-free foods to coexist in the kitchen
  - ▶ Making a list of products you want to have on hand
- 

Your idea of cooking may involve only a can opener and a microwave. Or you may have kitchen gadgets no-one else knows how to use, bring mystery ingredients home from faraway lands and subscribe to magazines with titles that most people can't pronounce. No matter how you feel about cooking, you spend a lot of time in the kitchen.

When you're gluten-free, the kitchen needs a little extra attention. Keeping yourself safely gluten-free isn't hard, but you need to take special precautions, especially if your kitchen also contains gluten.

## *Sharing the Kitchen with Gluten*

When Danna's kids were little and the family would go on a long drive (parental torture chamber on wheels), her kids would screech, 'Mummy, Kelsie's looking out my window!' to which Kelsie would quickly retort, gasping for air, 'That's because Tyler's breathing my air! He took it all!' And the drama would continue for hours (*whose* idea was this?).

Sometimes Danna imagines the same kind of bickering within her own kitchen: 'Hey, wheat bread! Get outta here. This is gluten-free territory.' 'Just because they pay twice as much for you doesn't mean they like you more.' 'Did you just spit a crumb on me? Now I'm contaminated!' Okay, now you know far too much about Danna's issues and her fantasy world, and we'll leave Margaret's well out of the picture and get to the point.

Some people think that the only way to be 100 per cent safe is to make the entire household gluten-free (see Chapter 17 for the pros and cons of this). Not true. Sure, doing so makes things easier — menu planning and cooking are simpler and, if the whole house is gluten-free, you don't have to worry about possible mix-ups or contamination (and no feuding between the breads). But choosing to share your kitchen with gluten is fine too.



Here are some tips for sharing a kitchen with gluten:

- ✓ **Gluten-free comes first.** If you're making two varieties of a meal or snack — toasted cheese sandwiches, for example — make the gluten-free one first. That way, the preparation surface and knives (always plural) stay uncontaminated. If you make the gluten-containing one first, you either have to wash the bread board and griller thoroughly before making the gluten-free sandwich or use different equipment.
- ✓ **Foil is your friend.** Using aluminium foil makes your life easier. Cover baking trays with it, use it to separate different foods, and warm foods on foil rather than putting them straight on to an oven rack. Foil is a great way to ensure your gluten-free foods aren't being contaminated.
- ✓ **Freeze it.** Your freezer is your best friend. Make a double batch of whatever you're cooking, freeze half and bingo — you have another meal already prepared. Or freeze the leftovers for a tasty snack later on, rather than leaving them at the back of the fridge until they're coated in blue fuzz.
- ✓ **Use brightly coloured labels.** Because you're likely to have some leftovers that are gluten-free and some that aren't, consider using brightly coloured stickers or labels to stick on the storage containers so you can easily tell which leftovers are gluten-free. This is especially helpful if you have babysitters or other people in the house who may be likely to grab the wrong one.

## *Avoiding cross-contamination*

Sharing a kitchen with gluten can be done easily, so don't panic! Follow the basic ground rules and you'll be fine.

### *Crumbs: Public enemy number one*

If you think ants are your biggest problem in the kitchen, think again. The ants just go marching one by one (hurrah) and, although certainly a nuisance, they don't hurt you even if you eat them. No, enemy number one in the gluten-free-friendly kitchen is the almighty crumb. When cutting bread,

crumbs fly off like sparks in a fireworks display and they're everywhere. But we're not pointing all the crumb-tossing blame at the gluten-containing kind of bread; in fact, quite the opposite. We won't name names, but between gluten-containing and gluten-free breads, everyone knows who the real winner is in the crumb-casting competition.

So here's the deal: When you work really hard to prepare a delicious gluten-free sandwich and then put it on a plate or tray in a pile of gluten-containing crumbs, you are, literally, eating a gluten-containing sandwich. If you think a few crumbs don't matter, you're assigned to read Chapters 2 and 3. Six times.

So what about gluten-free crumbs? Do you have to be obsessive about wiping those up? Yes, if you're sharing your kitchen with gluten. Not just for the sake of good hygiene but because you can't tell if they're gluten-free by looking at them, so you never know for sure what sort of crumbs your toast is picking up along the way. (And then you have to consider those annoying little marching ants.) Even a few crumbs from gluten-containing bread or biscuits can contaminate your gluten-free food.



Crumbs also apply to the double dippers using margarine, butter, jams, honey and other spreads — see the section 'Keeping gluten out of the toppings' for more on this.

### *New rules for kitchen tools*

You don't need to stock up on new pots, pans, tools and utensils, but you do need to pay attention to the way you use the ones you have. Generally speaking, gluten cleans off easily. Non-stick surfaces that clean easily and thoroughly are especially safe.

Be careful, though, with colanders when draining pasta. Pasta tends to leave a residue that's sometimes hard to see and tricky to get off. You don't want to drain gluten-free pasta in a colander that has remnants of the gluten-containing pasta on it. Same goes for the pasta tongs — it's easy to miss some of the sticky residue inside the serving tongs. Those little steel-wool scrubbers are great for ensuring that no residue is left.



Be especially vigilant when you have a lot of people in the house and others are helping you to clean up after a big meal or party. You may have been super-careful to keep your gluten-free foods away from the gluten-containing ones, but when it comes to cleaning up and popping the leftovers into containers for the fridge, ever-so-well-meaning friends may scoop the leftover gluten-free potato salad into the regular potato salad and you'll eat it later without realising what's happened.



## The tale of two toasters

Have you ever looked inside a toaster? What do you see? Crumbs. A lot of crumbs. If you're sharing a kitchen with gluten, some of those crumbs are probably of the gluten-containing variety. That means your gluten-free bread has lost its '-free'. Most of the crumbs fall down into the bottom of the toaster, so the main risk is from bits of bread/toast that get stuck on the wire tray inside. Check inside regularly and turn it upside down to shake out the crumbs (when it's cool and unplugged). A good wipe or brush out will usually do the trick.

Some people like to buy a second toaster, but that's not really necessary. Another alternative is a sandwich press with flat cooking plates. These have an adjustable height control so can be used for toasting a slice of bread evenly, for

toasted sandwiches and even grilling an open sandwich. Their non-stick, flat surface makes them easy to clean.

Yet another solution is to buy toaster bags that you slide your toast or sandwich into before putting them in a toaster, toaster oven or griller. Recent miracles of modern science, these great little bags toast your gluten-free bread or sandwiches from inside the bag, keeping your food safely out of reach of gluten crumbs. You can even make French toast within the bag, according to the label. The bags are washable and can be used many times.

You can purchase toaster bags at health food shops, from eBay and from Coeliac Australia.

### *Keeping gluten out of the toppings*

Your average family is pretty laid-back about crumbs in the margarine (or other spreads). Most people grab a knife, scoop out some margarine, spread it on the toast, sometimes popping the superfluous stuff back in the container or going back for more. On the way a few crumbs stick to the remnants of the margarine on the knife and then into the marmalade or honey or peanut butter it goes, like a busy little bee intent on pollinating as many flowers as it can.

Your coeliac household, in contrast, can't be laid-back on this one! This is a red alert area in the kitchen, an issue where you need to work out your own strategy, train your family and house guests, and stay alert to lapses as family members get casual about contamination over time.

You have different ways of going about this, depending on who lives in the house and how reliable they are. (You can explain to some people the need to take extra precautions until you're hoarse, and even though they may have the best intentions, you still find them reverting to their old ways after a few days.) You may also need to change your methods when visitors are staying in the house. See which approach is best for your household:



- ✓ Point out how many crumbs are in the margarine after everyone has buttered their toast and explain to family members the importance of avoiding contamination. Look in the peanut butter and honey jars too, to see how easily different foods get mixed up. If you're lucky you may live with very fastidious people, but your average Aussie is pretty free and easy with knives and jars.

If a coeliac is in the house, family members just have to be a bit more careful. The margarine or butter is the biggest problem because it coats the bread first and picks up the most crumbs. One option is to have two jars or containers — carefully labelled — of everything. (At least you won't need it for the MightyMite, unless family members decide it tastes better than Vegemite.) Stocking up on two of everything does take up a lot of fridge space, however, and also depends on how reliable family members are in sticking to the 'right' jar, not just grabbing the nearest. Having two margarine or butter containers is, however, a good option. They come in different sizes so the smaller container can be the gluten-free one and the larger one can be for the rest of the family.

- ✓ Buy jams and honey (and whatever other spreads you can find) in squeeze bottles so that crumbby knives can't be inserted.
- ✓ Some people use teaspoons — or extra knives — to get stuff out of containers. You spoon out as much peanut butter/jam/chutney/margarine as you think you need, put it on your plate and then use your knife to spread it on your bread or toast. If you need more, the spoon isn't contaminated, so you can dig right back in again.
- ✓ Keep a paper towel beside you when making sandwiches or other snacks and wipe the knife between spreading and dipping back in.
- ✓ When guests stay or you have many extra people in the house and it's impossible to ensure everyone is being suitably careful, give them the already-opened containers and jars and use fresh ones for the coeliac members of the family. You can keep these to one side so no-one dips into them accidentally.

### ***Gracious guests can lead to grief***

Having too many cooks in the kitchen is bad enough, but when you're trying to keep your foods safely gluten-free and your visitors are especially 'helpful', maintaining a gluten-free zone can be more than a tinge stressful. Sweet Aunt Mabel's gracious offer to help butter the bread can have you diving to protect your pristine (and well-marked) tub of margarine because you haven't yet explained to her the need to keep the crumbs well away. And as you rescue the margarine and quickly try to decide whether explaining the situation to her (and hovering over her so she doesn't make a mistake) would be easier than just buttering the bread yourself, Uncle Bob is stirring the gluten-free and the regular soups with the same wooden spoon!



If your visitors are one-time or occasional guests, give them safe tasks to keep them busy and let them lend a hand — somewhere that won't put your gluten-free foods in peril. Put them in charge of the drinks or setting the table. But if they're frequent visitors, you probably need to invest the time to teach them how to avoid contamination. You can make life easier for yourself by preparing gluten-free varieties only, so if Uncle Bob insists on stirring the soup, he only has one pot.

## *Storing foods separately for convenience*

For the most part, you don't need to have separate storage spaces for the gluten-containing and gluten-free foods unless you do so for convenience purposes. After all, simply reaching up to the gluten-free section of your pantry for a gluten-free flour mixture is easier than sorting through the shelves.

If you have children on a gluten-free diet and others in the family still eat gluten — or if some people in the home have behavioural issues or learning disorders — then having separate storage areas can be a very good idea. For these gluten-free loved ones, it's easy to look in a pantry and be overwhelmed with all the things they can't eat, even if the things they can eat actually outnumber the things they can't.

By separating gluten-containing and gluten-free foods in the pantry, not only do you make quickly choosing from their safe shelves quite easy, but also the number of things they can eat becomes more obvious to them. This can be a big psychological boost in what could otherwise be a daunting experience.



Consider marking gluten-free foods with a 'GF' as soon as you get home from the shops so the children will have an easier time helping you put everything away in the right place.

## *Taking Inventory of the Pantry and Fridge*

You want to have some basic ingredients and products specific to the gluten-free diet on hand. Admittedly, some of these items are a little pricier than their gluten-containing counterparts and they're sometimes harder to find. In Chapter 8, we suggest where to buy them and how to save as much money

as you can. But depending on how you cook (or don't), many of these items may become staples in your gluten-free-friendly kitchen.

## *Special ingredients to stock*

Don't let this long list scare you. You don't need all these things; in fact, if you're not going to do any baking, you probably don't need any of them. If, however, you're planning to cook or bake gluten-free, consider having some of these ingredients on hand:

- ✓ **Arrowroot flour:** Arrowroot is bland, keeps well and is easily digested. It often takes the place of cornflour.
- ✓ **Brown rice flour:** This flour still contains the bran, which makes it more nutritious than white rice flour. It has a slightly nutty taste.
- ✓ **Chickpea (besan or gram) flour:** A fine, but heavy flour made from dried chickpeas; this is great for batters and in bread.
- ✓ **Cornflour from maize:** This isn't the same as cornflour from wheat (wheaten cornflour), which contains gluten. You can blend maize cornflour with other flours for baking, or you can mix it with polenta (ground corn) in cornbreads and other dishes.
- ✓ **Guar gum:** You don't need both xanthan gum (listed later) and guar gum because they do the same job. Most people find xanthan gum is superior. Be aware that too much guar gum can have a laxative effect.
- ✓ **Potato flour:** This fine white flour, made from potatoes, improves the texture in baking mixes. You can use it as a thickener or with other flours in baking mixtures.
- ✓ **Sorghum flour:** This nutritious flour is making more and more of a mark in the gluten-free cooking world. Its relatively bland flavour makes it a versatile ingredient in gluten-free baking.
- ✓ **Soy flour:** These days, people use soy flour mostly in combination with other flours, if at all. It has a strong, distinctive flavour, which some people love but others definitely don't.
- ✓ **Tapioca flour (or tapioca starch):** This is also known as *cassava flour* and is very similar to arrowroot. It's great because it gives gluten-free foods a little bit of a stretch or chew that's lacking in many foods that don't contain gluten.
- ✓ **White rice flour:** Long considered the basic ingredient in a gluten-free diet, white rice flour is being overshadowed by more nutritious flours and flours with better consistencies, like brown rice flour, arrowroot,

sorghum and buckwheat. Nevertheless, white rice flour is a staple in the gluten-free pantry. Its bland flavour doesn't distort the taste of baked goods.

- ✓ **Xanthan gum:** A must if you're baking gluten-free breads and other baked goods because it helps prevent crumbling. Whatever you do, don't spill any of this — it turns to sticky goo when wet and is fiendishly hard to wipe away. It's meant to gently persuade your bread or cake to hold together, not glue your fingers to the kitchen sink! Be warned.
- ✓ **Yeast:** Yeast is an important ingredient for gluten-free breads and other foods that need to rise. Good quality yeast is essential for gluten-free baking. Don't use the rapid-rise or baker's yeast unless the recipe suggests it and check ingredients because some contain wheat flour.
- ✓ **Alternative grains:** These are the grains (they're not really all grains, but people call them that) we talk about — and espouse the virtues of — in Chapter 4. They're loaded with nutrients, and they're great to have on hand either as baking flours or as whole grains. Use whole grains to add flavour and texture, cook them as their own dish, or even add them to foods (see Chapter 9 to find out how to cook with these). Here are some alternative grains to try:
  - Amaranth
  - Buckwheat
  - Millet
  - Polenta
  - Quinoa (pronounced *keen wah*)
  - Teff



Don't rush out and buy too many new flours and grain to start, but try a few, find your favourites and then explore a bit further. You can either start with the ones needed for the recipes you want to try first or buy gluten-free plain flour mix (for cooking) and gluten-free self-raising flour for baking. Ready-mixed flours are great to start with because someone else has spent time working out which combination of flours gives you the best results.



Grains — especially whole grains — have oil in them. Oil can turn rancid quickly, so when you buy whole grains and whole-grain flours, be sure to use shops where the turnover is high and buy only what you plan to use within a few months. Refrigerate the flours and grains if you have the space, but pay close attention to the smell. Old flours and grains smell stale.

## *Mixes to have on hand*

You should keep several types of gluten-free baking mixes on hand so you're always prepared. Some of these mixes are so good that in many cases, the gluten-free variety might just win a side-by-side taste comparison. Best of all, with very little work on your part, your house smells like you've been baking all day! (You can see Chapter 9 for more on baking with mixes.)

Some people complain about the cost of mixes and we admit that they're a tad pricey. But if life is just too busy to start from scratch when baking, the price is probably worth it.

Here are some of the mixes we suggest you keep handy:

- ✓ **All-purpose baking mix:** Several companies make various types of all-purpose baking mixes, some plain and some self-raising, and most are excellent. Use these mixes for baking or to coat fried or baked foods. (See Chapter 9 for other ideas for coating fish, meat or chicken.)
- ✓ **Bread mixes:** Many different kinds of bread mixes are available today; some to use in a bread machine and some you can mix by hand and bake in the oven.
- ✓ **Cakes:** Gluten-free cake mixes come in many flavours now, and some are moist, light and tasty. With slight modifications that are almost always on the package, you can make your cakes into cupcakes. They need to be eaten in a day or so because they dry out quickly. (A very quick 'zap' in the microwave will often rejuvenate a cupcake that's showing its age.)
- ✓ **Muffins:** You can make many different varieties of gluten-free muffins, including vanilla, blueberry and apple. You can also buy basic muffin mixes that you can make into any type of muffin you want.
- ✓ **Pancakes:** Some of these come in a shake-up plastic bottle — just add water, shake well and cook. Great for kids and pretty well foolproof.
- ✓ **Pastry:** In Chapter 9, we give you suggestions for making your own pastry base from crushed cereal or biscuits. But if you want something closer to the real deal, the mixes available for pastry are what you're looking for.
- ✓ **Pizza dough:** Mixes to help you whip up a quick pizza base are available. You just top the crust with your favourite toppings and the pizza is as good as or better than anything other people deliver.
- ✓ **Puddings and desserts:** These are quick, easy to prepare and really delicious.



Be flexible with mixes — if you don't have the 'right' mix in the cupboard when you need it, you can often use an alternative. Substitute a cake mix to make a delicious dessert, or make muffins from bread mix, adding a little sugar, dried fruit and spices, or fresh or frozen blueberries or raspberries.

## *Commercial products to consider*

In this section, we recommend commercial foods that you can keep on hand as staples for your pantry. New products are arriving on the shelves at an astonishing rate and most are really good. Check these out:

- ✓ **Biscuits:** A great range of biscuits is now available to choose from. Most of them are excellent, although you still have to deal with the crumble factor.
- ✓ **Bread:** Gluten-free bread is now available in many supermarkets, health food shops and some bakeries. If the bread's not frozen when you buy it, put it in the freezer when you get home — just make sure you slice it first unless it comes already sliced. Some breads are definitely better than others, but individual tastes vary enormously, so be prepared to experiment with a few varieties to find the ones you like. Always do the 'toast-test' when deciding. Toasters seem to work miracles on gluten-free bread, transforming an inedible slice of cardboard into a crunchy, munchy, delicious treat. Keep an eye out for new varieties — they're getting better all the time.

Most gluten-free bread is best if you toast it first, even if you plan to eat it later (like in a lunch box). The exceptions are freshly baked gluten-free bread and some of the breads baked in bread machines, which have such a great texture that you can slice and then eat fresh (in one hand, too, like everyone else, because they don't crumble like a lot of gluten-free loaves!).

- ✓ **Bread rolls:** These are harder to find than gluten-free bread but handy to have in the freezer. Eat fresh or freeze and then refresh them in the microwave, or slice and pop them in the toaster or under the grill.
- ✓ **Cereals:** Very few of the big company commercial cereals are gluten-free, but you'll find a wide range of gluten-free cereals and mueslies in the larger supermarkets and health food shops.

Aside from the obvious no-nos like wheat, the usual culprit in cereal is malt or malt flavouring. Malt can be derived from corn or rice, but it's usually from barley.



- ✓ **Dry biscuits and crackers:** The most common and the most popular are rice crackers, now available in a wide range of flavours. They're crunchy and delicious, but have become so popular with the wider market that some manufacturers now use a mix of flours and you can easily get caught out. What looks like a gluten-free rice cracker may contain wheat or wheat-based soy sauce. Don't forget, though, that if the packet states that it's gluten-free, this overrides the product ingredient list (refer to Chapter 4). If you're in serious danger of turning into a rice cracker, you can also buy delicious wafer-style crackers that make a welcome change at lunchtime.
  - ✓ **Frozen meals:** If you're new to the gluten-free diet you may not realise how incredible this is, but those who have been on the diet for a very long time are simply amazed by the fact that they can actually buy frozen dinners — good ones!
  - ✓ **Pasta:** Gluten-free pasta these days comes in all shapes, sizes and flavours. Made from white rice, brown rice, corn, potato, buckwheat, millet, quinoa and blends of all the preceding, you can find lasagne, penne, spaghetti, fettuccini, macaroni and almost any other type of pasta you're looking for. Best of all, long gone are the days when pasta turned to mush and you needed a spoon to eat your spaghetti. Today's gluten-free pastas have much the same texture as regular pasta.
  - ✓ **Sauces and dressings:** Spend a little time in the supermarket, reading labels and discovering gluten-free varieties of the sauces, dressings and mayonnaise that you like. You won't find any golden rule about these — some are loaded with gluten, some not. Many products state whether they're gluten-free on the packet or bottle now. Keep a record or save labels for quick reference when you need to replenish your supplies.
- Research online can save you tedious hours in the supermarket, straining to read the fine print.
- ✓ **Pre-made pizza bases:** These pizza bases usually come frozen (if not, freeze them when you get home). Just take them out of the freezer, add your favourite sauce, cheese and toppings and bake for 10 to 15 minutes, and you have the coeliac's number-one-most-missed food: pizza!
  - ✓ **Rice cakes and corn thins:** Rice cakes first came on the market in the 1980s, at a time when gluten-free bread was still really hard to find, tasted like white sawdust and fell to bits even *before* you looked at it. It was impossible to eat a sandwich away from home, unless you were happy to snuffle the sandwich straight from the plastic wrap,





like a horse with a nosebag. So rice cakes were heralded as the great saviour of the coeliac. Still popular with gluten eaters, who choose them for a welcome change rather than a staple, these days they're not always made just from rice, so read the label carefully to be sure you have a packet that is gluten-free. The thin rice cakes are much more manageable than the old thick ones, but not very substantial if relying on them for a meal.

See? With all these special products available, you don't have to miss out on anything on the gluten-free diet. Except gluten, of course!

## Chapter 8

# Shopping Is Easier Than You Think

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### *In This Chapter*

- ▶ Developing strategies before you head for the shops
  - ▶ Working out what you want to buy
  - ▶ Finding your best source of supplies
  - ▶ Getting the most for your gluten-free dollar
- 

**H**eading home the day she was told she was a coeliac, Margaret stopped off for a coffee to collect her thoughts. ‘I knew I had to give up gluten but decided to have one last, ceremonial treat before I started the diet. My favourite treats with coffee at the time were jam doughnuts — those large, sugar-coated numbers with a dollop of raspberry jam in the middle that floods the palate when you bite into the first mouthful. I sat down with my coffee and doughnut, shut my eyes and savoured that first bite. The shop was busy and I was sharing a table with another shopper. I felt the need to mark this occasion in some way, so I turned to the lady beside me and announced, “This is the very last doughnut I will ever eat!” Now I *had* lost a lot of weight and was looking decidedly skeletal and maybe she thought I was going to die — soon. Maybe in front of her eyes! She stared at me in silence for a long second, grabbed her cup of tea, turned her back and stomped off to a distant table!’

Margaret’s next trip to the shops was not so dramatic. ‘At that stage, I knew very little about gluten — in fact, no-one knew very much about gluten. And no-one knew anything about special gluten-free food because there was none! We’re way back in 1980 here, before rice cakes had been invented, before anyone had mastered the art of baking gluten-free bread that didn’t taste like mouldy cardboard. I had no idea what I was going to eat to replace bread, toast, pasta and all those basic ‘fill-you-up’ foods. Although I had joined Coeliac Australia, my starter kit was not to arrive for several days and my appointment with a dietitian was two weeks away. I began by reading labels on familiar foods — soups at first, because it was winter and I was sadly underweight and truly starving. That first trip was a huge eye-opener, as

the stark reality of my new diet hit home. Just about everything I looked at contained flour. What on earth was I going to eat? The relief that I had felt when I first got a diagnosis and realised I was going to get better went down the gurgler pretty fast. This new diet, I decided, was just plain bad news.'

The *good* news is that, these days, finding gluten-free products really *is* easier than you may think and, thanks to new labelling laws, increased demand and manufacturer awareness, it's getting easier all the time. You can even get accurate information on how to avoid gluten, right in the shopping aisle, through your mobile phone.

In this chapter, we start by helping you work out what you want to buy. Then we offer some guidance on where to shop, how to shop and — this is important — how to save money on gluten-free foods. You can find important shopping tips to save you time, money, frustration and the embarrassment of snivelling in the bread aisle.

## *Knowing What You Want*

One of the best things you can do to make shopping easier when you're enjoying a gluten-free lifestyle is to plan ahead. If you try to wing it, especially at first, you end up spending hours in the supermarket walking in circles, trying to decide what to eat, what to buy and *then* worrying whether the food's gluten-free.

Not only do planning meals ahead of time and making shopping lists save you time and headaches in the supermarket, but these steps also give you the peace of mind that the meals you're planning are, in fact, gluten-free.

## *Planning your meals*

Most people think planning meals sounds like a great idea, and they're even able to pull it off once or twice. But for the most part, they're spontaneous and impulsive. They see something in the supermarket that looks particularly appealing (and, because they're usually hungry while they're shopping, *everything* looks good) and they toss it in the trolley. But sitting down to plan meals for the week helps you to focus on the things you actually need.



When you're planning your meals, try not to think in terms of cutting out gluten, but instead think of how you can make substitutions. Think about the things you love to eat — with or without gluten — and build around those foods, making the substitutions you need to make to convert gluten-containing meals into gluten-free ones. In Chapter 9, we explain how to make

*anything* gluten-free with simple substitutions. Well, almost anything. If you can make Anzac biscuits that really truly (honestly?) taste like the ones made from oats, we want to hear from you.

Sitting down and making a meal plan is tough, but it pays off when you're at the supermarket with only 45 minutes to get everything and be back home for the next event in your busy day. You may find some of these tips helpful:

- ✔ **Serve gluten-free meals for the whole family.** Even if some members of your family are still gluten-eaters, make your life simpler by planning most, if not all, of the family meals to be gluten-free. This planning isn't hard if you follow the approach of eating meats, fruits, vegetables and other natural foods (refer to Chapter 6 for more on this approach). And even if your meal includes things like pasta, the gluten-free varieties these days are good enough to try out on the entire family. If they like the gluten-free versions, that will make life easier. If they want to stick with the familiar flavours and textures of wheat pasta, at least you have only one sauce to prepare.
- ✔ **Plan a few days' menus at once.** Look through cookbooks (no, they don't have to be gluten-free ones) and at individual recipes for inspiration, keeping in mind the healthy guidelines in Chapter 6. Remember, the gluten-free diet is *not* just all about rice, corn and potatoes. In fact, the more variety, the better. Variety isn't just the spice of life; it's important from a nutritional point of view.
- ✔ **Plan a marathon cooking day.** Maybe you designate Sundays to be your day in the kitchen. With the week's worth of meals already in mind, you can prepare several meals at once, saving yourself time cooking *and* cleaning up during the week.
- ✔ **Use foods that can do double- (or triple-) duty.** If you're planning to cook a large roast chicken for dinner one night, you can count on leftovers for chicken stir-fry the next night, and maybe even some for sandwiches.



Involve the whole family with menu planning. Nothing is more frustrating than spending a weekend planning, shopping and cooking only to hear moans and groans about how what used to be someone's favourite food is now 'gross'. For that matter, enlist help with the cooking and cleaning, too.

## Making lists

Your spontaneity is exactly what food manufacturers are banking on. They want you to be impulsive and that's why they tempt you with the delicious-but-oh-so-bad-for-you, high-profit-margin foods at the ends of aisles and

checkout stands. How many times have you roamed the supermarket thinking of yummy, healthy meals to make for the week, only to get home with bags of groceries, unable to remember a single meal? Us too.

At the risk of sounding a little basic here, shopping lists are really helpful. They not only remind you of foods and ingredients you need, but also help prevent impulse shopping.

Keep a running list of what you're running low on or what you need to buy next time you're at the shops. Make sure the list is handy for everyone in the family so no-one whines that you 'forgot' a favourite food (when you didn't even know that *was* a favourite food). Stick one of those magnetic write-on cards on the fridge door or keep a notepad on the kitchen bench.

As you do your menu planning, add the ingredients you need for your week's worth of meals to the list. Oh, and don't be like us and forget to take the list with you!



If you're a bargain hunter and read the specials each week, you may find that the items on special provide you with inspiration for some of your meals.



Don't forget the snacks! Whether your idea of a snack is ice cream or raisins, snacks are an important part of your day. When you're making your shopping list, encourage your family members to add their favourite snacks — preferably the healthy kind — so you don't have to hear, 'There's nothing to eat in this house!'

## *Deciding What to Buy*

Obviously, the most important issues are what do you like, what are you going to make and can you get it gluten-free?

Keep in mind the two kinds of gluten-free foods: those that companies make as special gluten-free items and those that are naturally gluten-free.

Finding just about anything in a 'gluten-free' version If you look hard enough these days (and living in a city rather than a small town helps here), you can buy just about anything gluten-free. For country dwellers, you can order many of these items online. Take a wander through your local health food shop and you may be agreeably surprised at the range of gluten-free goods and the abundance of choices.

Keep a look out for the following gluten-free versions in stores:

- ✔ The range of **cereals** available now is almost bewildering. You can buy all sorts of gluten-free muesli, some with delicious additions like roasted macadamias or goji berries. Gluten-free porridge can be made from brown rice, millet, quinoa, amaranth, flaxseed or buckwheat, with additions such as cinnamon, almonds, or dried fruit. Rice bran straws are available, as well as buckwheat or amaranth puffs, multigrain Os with quinoa or wild berry flavour, soya grits, a ten-grain hot cereal and a supergrain fruit mix.
- ✔ New **flours** include coconut flour, garbanzo or fava flour (both from beans), amaranth, quinoa, sorghum, teff, lupin, sesame and millet flour.
- ✔ **Pastas** are here in many forms — lasagne sheets, fettuccine, macaroni, fusilli, spaghetti, twists, spirals and shells, penne, noodles of all thicknesses and those old favourites — alphabet noodles. The ingredients may include rice, arrowroot or tapioca, soya, buckwheat, besan, black bean, mung bean, quinoa, lentil or millet.
- ✔ New **ready-to-use mixes** are appearing all the time. You can choose from falafel, doughnut, muffin, chocolate mousse, creamy custard, pancake and pizza base mix, as well as a wide range of cake, pastry and biscuit mixes.
- ✔ Canned **soups** are often a problem, but tomato soup is often gluten-free, and a small range of packet soup mixes is available, usually found in health food stores. Vegetarian soup cubes, some available in chicken or beef flavour, are a great basis for homemade soup. Delicious ready-made soups in cartons or plastic packs, aimed at the more health-conscious shopper, are often gluten-free.
- ✔ The range of **biscuits, crackers and crispbreads** is increasing, and even potato chips or crisps can now be supplemented by vege chips, mung bean chips, wasabi chips and even sea crisps with a seafood flavour. Corn chips may or may not be gluten free, depending on the brand and the flavouring used. Coeliac kids can now enjoy an ice-cream in a gluten-free cone, like their friends.
- ✔ Dig down into the **freezers** and you can find a range of ready-prepared pastry — sheets of puff pastry and sweet or savoury short crust. Readymade and filled pastas available include beef or spinach and ricotta ravioli, potato gnocchi, beef or vegetarian lasagne. An array of pies, pasties and sausage or vegetable rolls is also available.
- ✔ In the **sweet section** you can now find most of your old favourites, from mince tarts, custard tarts and hot cross buns right through to chocolate eclairs, apple and blueberry danishes, apple turnover with cream, stollen or raspberry cheesecake — so you can still have that very special treat when you're feeling deprived.

Refer to Chapter 7 for more on available items, and the sidebar ‘Happy apps for instant help’ for ways apps can make your shopping easier.



Don’t forget that wheat-free doesn’t mean gluten-free. If you see a package labelled ‘wheat-free’ the contents may still contain barley, rye, oats or derivatives of those ingredients.

## *Remembering naturally gluten-free foods*

Many people think the gluten-free lifestyle limits them to buying foods that say ‘gluten-free’ on the label. This is so not true! Many of the foods that you’ve been eating all your life are inherently free of gluten and these are often not marketed — or labelled — as gluten-free. They include the obvious players — meat, poultry, fish, seafood, fruits, vegetables and nuts — but also some products that seem like they may have gluten in them but don’t.

Asian foods — like rice wraps, many Thai foods, and most fish sauces — are good examples of foods that are often inherently gluten-free (remember, though, that soy sauce usually has wheat in it, so look for the gluten-free varieties). Mexican and other ethnic cuisines also offer a lot of naturally gluten-free foods.

## Happy apps for instant help

If you’re still getting your head around which products are gluten-free, or how to quickly read labels, some apps are available that can really save you time in the supermarket — helping you move on to something you’d prefer to be doing. Having the app available on your phone also means you don’t need to take this book with you everywhere you go!

Check out these options if you find yourself stuck in the supermarket aisle:

- ✔ **Gluten Free Phone App:** If you’re a member of Coeliac Australia, you automatically receive an *Ingredient List* booklet, which lists every imaginable food ingredient and whether or not it’s gluten free. The

*Ingredient List* can also be purchased as a phone app for iPhone, Android or Windows.

- ✔ **Gluten Switch:** This phone app allows you to simply scan a product in the supermarket or shop and, if the product isn’t already gluten-free, it can suggest a gluten-free alternative! The Gluten Switch comes from BUPA and is free through iTunes.
- ✔ **GS1 Go Scan:** This app allows you to either scan the barcode or enter the product name. It then gives you the ingredient listing and allergen warnings — particularly useful if you struggle to read the small print on the packaging or you’re at home planning your menu.

## Logging on to food blogs

Blogs allow consumers to get the word out about places that provide a good range of gluten-free products, gluten-free mixes that work and those that don't, restaurants that serve great gluten-free meals, recipe suggestions and the name of the baker who takes the time to understand how to make the perfect gluten-free bread.

Exchanging product information is all about the continuing evolution of consumer power, and communication tools like blogs have a tremendous influence on how people shop for gluten-free products. Remember, though, that no-one monitors these sites for accuracy. Blogs are about opinions and ideas, not absolute facts, so don't believe everything you read.



The best foods are those without a label: Meat, seafood, fruit and vegetables and so on. But many other foods are gluten-free and don't mention this specifically on the label. Get into the habit of reading ingredient lists because you'll sometimes be surprised at what products are gluten-free.

## Asking for opinions

The last thing you want to do is spend loads of money on special items and expensive foods only to find that they taste more like cardboard than cake. Because gluten-free foods can be pricey, and because some are great and some are awful, asking around about gluten-free foods and getting opinions from others who've tried them is more important than ever. Of course, opinions vary, and what one person loves, another may hate, but opinions can be valuable, especially if you hear several of them. (You know what they say about opinions: They're like stomachs — everyone has one.)

If you want to hear opinions on products, you have a few options. Try some of these places:

- ✓ **Support groups:** Coeliac Australia has support groups in many areas around Australia. At meetings and functions, you can meet other coeliacs either searching for the same things as you or, better still, with the answers!
- ✓ **Shopping tours:** Coeliac Australia offers tours in different areas, depending on the demand. They're conducted by a dietitian or a member of staff in a supermarket, and all aspects of finding products are discussed. Call your state office to find out when and where the next shopping tour is going to be presented in your area.



- ✓ **Online rating systems:** A few of the online shopping websites offer customer ratings. See how many stars a product has and read the comments to help you decide whether you want to buy it.
- ✓ **Shoppers:** If you see people at a store buying a product you haven't tried before, ask whether they've tried it and what they like or don't like about it. At the same time, if you've tried a product and see someone looking at it, making a helpful comment is sometimes appropriate. Just don't overdo it — some people are very sensitive about their privacy.
- ✓ **Health food staff:** Shop assistants in health food shops are often very knowledgeable about products. Ask them if they've tried a particular product and what they like or don't like about it. Ask which items are popular, because this is also a good indicator.



When you find gluten-free products that you and your family love, save the label or part of the packaging. Keep the labels in a folder and create divided sections such as 'soups', 'sauces' or whatever sections you like. Look quickly through the folder before you go shopping so you can quickly spot the items again and rest easy, knowing that you like the product and it is, in fact, gluten-free. Just be aware that manufacturers can change ingredients from time to time, so quickly review the label before buying to make sure the product is still gluten free.

## *Deciding Where to Shop*

So you know what meals you want to make, you have at least some idea of what foods you want to buy and you may even have a list in hand. Where do you get all this stuff (some of which you've never heard of before)?

### *Supermarkets*

You can do most of your shopping at supermarkets now. If you're surprised by this, don't be. Remember, we encourage you to eat mostly foods that are inherently gluten-free, and those are at your local supermarket.



Some supermarket chains are more committed to the gluten-free shopper than others. If the one you've traditionally visited doesn't offer much choice, check out the alternatives. You may be agreeably surprised at what's on offer elsewhere.



Most supermarkets these days have a health food section and some even have a gluten-free section. If you have some favourite products that you want your local store to carry, you can ask the manager whether the store can stock them. This may not be possible with the ‘big’ supermarket chains, where decisions are made at headquarters, based on the size of your particular supermarket. Smaller supermarkets in local shopping centres are far more flexible and will often go out of their way to source particular products for you. And don’t just look in the health food section — you’ll find gluten-free items in other sections too.

The larger supermarket chains usually have a facility for online shopping and delivery (for example, [www.homeshop.com.au](http://www.homeshop.com.au)).

## *Health food shops*

Health food shops have long been the coeliac’s best ally. When supermarket chains were totally ignorant about gluten-free products, your friendly health food shop was there for you, trying new products, responding to customer requests, encouraging developing companies and taking risks on your behalf. Now that ‘gluten-free’ has hit the big time and awareness is high, supermarket chains have come in for the kill and are taking much of the business away from smaller shops. Some of the bigger supermarket chains are now developing their own brand of gluten-free products. They’re good and sometimes — but not always — cheaper.



Variety is important and if monopolies develop, ultimately everyone’s choices will be seriously limited and less competition will result. So don’t abandon your local health food shop. It can offer more variety, and the staff often have valuable expertise. Try asking a checkout operator how much xanthan gum to put in a fruitcake! (We could go on about fruitcakes and who they might be in this instance, but we’d better not go there.) And if you’re buying in bulk (for bread making, for example) you can usually get a good deal from health food shops.

## *Farmers’ markets*

Coming soon to a corner near you! Farmers’ markets are popping up everywhere (not just next to farms), offering fresh produce, eggs, meat, fish, honey, nuts and other (inherently gluten-free) items, usually at lower prices than most retailers. The foods are ripe, often organic and the generous samples that sellers pass out are enough to count as lunch. This is where you may find the most delicious gluten-free products of all — your genuine, home-baked treasures.



Check gluten-free products from farmers' markets carefully, because sometimes when people are starting up small businesses they aren't fully aware of the finer points of gluten-free baking (for example, using a gluten-free icing sugar mix, not regular icing sugar mix, which may contain wheat starch).

You can also feel good knowing you're supporting local farmers and the environment: The food is often grown without pesticides and less petrol is used to transport the produce from the farm to you.

## ***Ethnic markets***

You want a thrill? Go to an Asian market — the more authentic, the better — and check out all the stuff that's gluten-free. Don't forget the Thai and Indian aisles. Truly, the selection is amazing. Sauces, rice paper, tapioca noodles, rice sweets, things you've never heard of and things that you may have wondered about for years — and quite a few are gluten-free. Asians use very little wheat in their products, but be aware that products do sometimes appear on the shelves that aren't labelled according to our Australian food regulations. If the product doesn't have a label in English, check carefully with the assistant and be certain that communication is clear and unambiguous. (In some cultures, telling the customer what you think they want to hear is considered polite, which makes it hard to be sure whether a product is gluten-free.)

## ***Gluten-free retail stores***

We're not making this up. Once only a dream for those who've been gluten-free for a long time, gluten-free stores are finally a reality. Wonderful little shops filled with gluten-free foods, books about being gluten-free, cookbooks and other important resources are beginning to pop up and they're thriving. Maybe you'll get lucky and one will pop up near you.

## ***Websites and catalogues***

You can do all your gluten-free shopping from the comfort of your favourite easy chair, any time, day or night — you can even be in your daggiest PJs, if you want. Some great websites specialise in selling gluten-free products and within just a few minutes you can place your order. A couple of days later the goodies arrive at your door — and you may be so excited to rip open that big box of gluten-free goodies, it'll feel like Christmas all over again!

All the gluten-free food manufacturers have websites, so if you know a specific brand you want to buy, you can go to the site and see what the company has to offer (you can find the sites with a quick online search). Some companies also offer a range of gluten-free products via the internet, for example:

✓ [www.absolutelyglutenfree.com.au](http://www.absolutelyglutenfree.com.au)

✓ [www.aussiehealthproducts.com.au](http://www.aussiehealthproducts.com.au)

Some sites allow you to sort out other allergens, too, so you can narrow down the products that are, for instance, gluten-free, dairy-free, corn-free and soy-free. Some sites also provide customer rating systems. They give you an average customer rating and specific comments about a product. This customer rating system is invaluable in helping you decide which products to buy.

If you don't have a computer, most companies offer a toll-free number and some will send you a free catalogue so you can order by phone or fax.



The *Ingredient List*, published for members by Coeliac Australia, is handy when shopping. Whip it out when you come to a product that contains an unusual ingredient to discover whether it's gluten-free. Because food labelling is now so clear, you can tell anyway, but it's nice to know about new ingredients and it's good for checking those tricky things that sometimes confuse, like glucose syrup. If you have a problem with additives, it's handy for knowing about these too. Refer to the sidebar 'Happy apps for instant help' for more on accessing the *Ingredient List* as an app.

## Sorting through the health food aisle

At first, the health food shelves may seem to be the best bet for finding gluten-free foods. But traps can emerge here too.



You're not the only customer with special dietary needs. So before you fall on a packet of enticing chocolate-coated wafers, read the label — they may be wheat-free, but not gluten-free. Or they may be *called* rice crackers or buckwheat pancakes, but wheat flour or some other gluten-containing ingredient is in there as well. One of the worst reactions Margaret had was when a friend purchased rice noodles and served them up with a stir-fry when they had lunch together. Her friend knew she loved the soft rice noodles from the local supermarket. Two days later Margaret was as sick as a dog. When she tracked back, she found a new brand of 'rice noodles' on the shelf. They contained 1 per cent rice flour — the rest was wheat! She rang the

## Avoiding impulsive purchases

High-powered psychologists have spent billions of retail-funded dollars on studies that finally concluded with this shocking revelation: Shoppers are impulsive. So stores capitalise on your impulsiveness by planning your impulsive purchases. Called *planned impulsivity*, this may at first seem to be an oxymoron, but it's exactly what stores are creating when they arrange their stock.

Don't tell me you haven't fallen for the marketing. You're at the supermarket for just a few items ('I won't need a trolley') and you walk out with a bag of things you didn't even know you wanted. Maybe you're tempted by free samples

and displays at the end of each aisle — all of which are there because the psychologists have done their homework. And don't forget the fact that your kids are the primary targets, because they tend to be quite influential when you make your impulsive purchases.

Rarely are these so-called impulse purchases directing you towards healthy foods, much less gluten-free ones. If you're having a hard time sticking to the diet, or if you find being tempted by the gluttonous gluten products out there to be daunting, be aware of the efforts to snare you at the stores and have your guard up against impulsive gluten-containing purchases.

company and explained what had happened when she ate their 'rice noodles' and it promised to rename the product. The company had responded to the current demand for rice noodles and simply not thought about such a drastic consequence. (Sure, wheat was right up there on the ingredient list, but Margaret's friend had assumed they would be made from rice, like others she had purchased before.) Product names can be misleading. The full story lies in the product ingredient list, so always check.

## Living Gluten-Free — Affordably

The fact that gluten-free products are more expensive is undisputed. For starters, a loaf of gluten-free bread costs at least twice as much as regular bread and it's probably half the size. And how often have you seen it on special? Gluten-free rolls, biscuits, cakes, mixes and other items also cost more. If you're eating out at lunch, often no low-cost choice like a toasted sandwich is available and you have to order a more expensive meal or salad. When you join a group of friends for a catered set dinner, you pay for three courses and only get two or one. Ah, life's hard — but at least we *can* eat out, not like those on a truly restricted diet who may die if they accidentally ingest a tiny amount of their problem ingredient. So before you take a second mortgage on your house to finance this diet, take note of the tips in the following sections that can help to reduce the cost.

## *Scaling back on commercial foods*

Much of the extra expense involved in eating gluten-free is in the high cost of commercial products. We're not suggesting you celebrate little Luka's birthday with rice crackers to save the expense of buying a gluten-free cake. You need to have *some* special items on hand and cakes or special occasion treats are definitely among them.

But if you find you're spending far too much money, take a look at how many and what types of special items you buy. Breads, crackers, biscuits, cakes, pizzas, pretzels, doughnuts, pies — they're pricey, for sure. But you don't need them all the time. You can substitute regular chips (some are gluten-free) for a fraction of the cost of other gluten-free snacks. Even though they are high priced, sweets and snack bars that you can get at any supermarket are cheaper than health food bars (which can sometimes be loaded with sugar or artificial sweeteners and not as healthy as you might think).

By all means have a splurge from time to time, particularly when you're feeling a bit 'deprived' on your diet. But for the main part, get organised, find a few simple recipes for biscuits, cakes, muffins and pizza bases — you can get some ideas from Chapters 10 to 15 — and have a bake-up. Your own products will taste far better and you'll save pots of money. (If you work 60 hours a week and live the rest at full pelt you can stop gnashing your teeth in frustration at this suggestion. Margaret remembers how annoyed she used to feel when she was in that situation and well-meaning people told her it was so easy to bake three times a week. This suggestion isn't for everybody.)

If you *can* find the time to bake, make sure you have some 'regular' alternatives to offer when friends with big appetites come round or they'll demolish your home-cooked goodies before you've poured the coffee. But if you want to build your reputation as a fantastic cook, serve them up and watch the happy faces. Or you can put half in the freezer as soon as they're baked — and cooled — so they last a bit longer. Nothing's nicer than discovering a little container of forgotten friands at the back of the freezer.

If you get into baking in a big way, buying your flours, xanthan gum or bread mix in bulk will save money too. Large families often buy a carton of biscuits or mixes rather than individual packets, and this can reduce costs.

Ordering by mail is very convenient — and essential if you live in a remote area — but delivery costs will add to the budget. Unless you have to rely on mail-order products, try to persuade your local health food shop or small supermarket to stock the items you want, or find similar ones that are made locally. For some, the satisfaction of getting a product you love is worth the additional cost, but not everyone can afford to do that. It's very sad when you hear of families who can only buy special food for their coeliac, or treats for the other children, but not both!



Australians are among the worst in the world for wasting food! If you're in the habit of cooking too much food, try to estimate more accurately. Before you turf out the remainders of a meal, think about how you could use the food over the next day or two. Some of the leftover food can be incorporated into another dish or served up as an addition. Some can be eaten cold the next day for lunch — you'll be surprised at how delicious some foods normally eaten hot are when eaten cold. Try mashing pumpkin or sweet potato with a dash of sweet chilli sauce or tamari and spreading on toast or under the usual toppings in your sandwich. Well, we mash avocado on toast, so why not sweet potato? (Apologies to families with big eaters who always scoff everything down in three minutes and then ask, 'What's to eat?')

## *Eating nutritiously*

Some people think that eating nutritious foods is more expensive. Not true. Fresh produce and meats do seem expensive — they are! But many of the highly processed foods that are cheaper are far less satisfying, less nutritious and may cause weight gain and make you feel hungrier than ever.



Buy nutritious foods, but buy only what you need. Most nutritious foods are also perishable and if you don't use them within a few days, 'fresh' produce isn't so fresh anymore.

## *Eating in*

Eating out at restaurants or fast-food places eats through a budget in no time. Eating at home not only ensures that your meal is, in fact, gluten-free, but also saves you money.

Sure, planning and preparing home-cooked meals takes time (we give some time-saving tips in Chapter 9), but the money you save and the peace of mind that comes from knowing your meals are nutritious and gluten-free are well worth it.

## *Using gluten-free mixes*

The gluten-free mixes for baked goods like pizzas, cakes and breads may seem expensive and they are. But they're usually cheaper than buying those products ready-made. Gluten-free mixes vary a lot — some are heavier than others — so try a few to find the ones that give you the results you're looking for.

## Developing good shopping habits

In addition to what we cover in this chapter, you can do many things that save you time and money when you shop. Here's a list to get you started:

- ✔ **Don't shop when you're hungry.** If you shop on an empty stomach, you're more vulnerable to falling victim to impulse purchases.
- ✔ **Bring a list.** Planning before you head for the supermarket keeps you focused on the healthy and gluten-free foods you need and makes you less likely to impulsively buy things you don't.
- ✔ **Stock up when you can.** Buying food in larger quantities is almost always cheaper if you can afford to do so and if you have somewhere to store the food. Remember that gluten-free foods often have a short shelf life, so if you're going to stock up on ready-made products, make sure you have room in your freezer. Stock up on specials too, if you have the space and the money.
- ✔ **Consider co-ops.** There aren't many of these around nowadays but if you have one nearby, they're a great way to save money. The idea is that a group of people form a cooperative, buy food in bulk and then offer the food to others to buy. Usually anyone can become a member for a small charge (non-members can buy, too, but usually at a higher price). The focus is nearly always on healthy foods.
- ✔ **Dare to compare.** Always look at the actual contents of a product, by weight or percentage. Some items are a much better deal than others — particularly canned goods, which may contain water, vegetable oil or other fillers.
- ✔ **Keep your eye on the scanner.** So you may have to forgo the magazine that tells which celeb is giving birth to alien twins or how to lose all the weight you want in 23 seconds, but watching to make sure the price the scanner rings up is what you thought it would be is important. Checkout staff sometimes make mistakes. And a lot of times, believe it or not, those mistakes aren't in your favour.
- ✔ **If possible, don't shop with your kids.** Sure, they're adorable, but they're enemy number one when you're trying to resist the impulsive shopping that supermarkets are counting on. Kids are their primary targets. Notice where the sugary cereals are located — right at eye-level for a fractious five-year-old. Supermarkets advertise during children's TV shows and are counting on your kids to lure you into impulsive purchases of high-profit-margin treats like cereals and snack foods.
- ✔ **Buy generics.** Many generic products are gluten-free.





## Chapter 9

# Cooking: Tips and Techniques

### *In This Chapter*

- ▶ Finding out how to make recipes gluten-free
- ▶ Exploring gluten-free grains
- ▶ Entering the wonderful world of gluten-free baking

We have some unique cooking tips and techniques that can help in your gluten-free cooking adventures, and we cover them in this chapter. People approach cooking in different ways and this doesn't really change if you're doing it gluten-free. At one extreme you have the 'born to cook' types — you know them, the ones who can whip a few things out of the fridge, perform amazing feats with pirate knives and other deadly looking instruments, fry, simmer and pop in the oven while sipping champagne and discussing the relative merits of Russian caviar over Bulgarian, and produce a meal to die for.

At the other extreme you have those desperately in need of help, with only the vaguest notions about how food is prepared and which foods go together well. The end product, even if remotely edible, is only choked down as an alternative to starvation. (Well, okay, we all have to start somewhere.) Somewhere in between are the 'stuck in a rut' types who learned to cook a few basics early in life and now churn out the same tired old meals year after year. And then you have those lucky individuals, with no special training, who can throw a few random items into the wok or casserole dish and end up with a totally original, wildly different but absolutely scrumptious result.

Find out where you sit on the culinary spectrum. Calculate your score to the following statements as follows: *Totally agree* (2); *Agree* (1); *Don't know* (0); *Disagree* (-1); *Totally disagree* (-2).

- ✓ Measuring is for patient people. 'Dollop', 'slosh' and 'tad' will do perfectly well.
- ✓ If a recipe calls for  $\frac{1}{4}$  of a teaspoon, forget it.

- ✓ If a recipe has more than 10 ingredients, forget that too.
- ✓ Tomato sauce is an essential ingredient in all cooking.
- ✓ 'Beat well' means 'slosh around with a fork'.

A score of 5 or more means that you're a great cook. Keep up the good work, but go easy on the tomato sauce. A score of -5 to -10 suggests that you really know what you're doing in the kitchen, which means that you're a great cook too. If you scored between 4 and -4, with a lot of '*Don't know*' responses, we really don't know either. You're probably a great cook too.

Now if all this sounds a bit vague, it's time we came clean and confessed that your two authors are not exactly true-blue cooks. Danna comes from the 'dollop' and 'slosh' school and Margaret swings unpredictably between total disaster and spectacular success. So why are we writing about cooking tips? Well, no finger pointing, but the editors made us do it. So we've called in the very best of helpers — a Real Cook who does know what she's doing in the kitchen. Then we added our own tips and ideas, because while we're not the 'real thing', anyone who copes with a gluten-free diet learns a lot along the way.

## ***Creatively Gluten-Free: Improvising in the Kitchen***

Give people a recipe and you feed them for a meal; teach them to make recipes gluten-free and you feed them for a lifetime.

So if you love recipes, you may be delighted to know that this book includes lots of recipes and that dozens of excellent gluten-free cookbooks are available to give you added inspiration and insights.

But we also think finding out how to improvise and cook *anything* gluten-free has a lot of value. Sometimes that means taking a recipe for something that normally has gluten in it and modifying it to be gluten-free. Other times, that means throwing caution to the wind and doing without a recipe altogether.

No single ingredient is more important in gluten-free cooking than creativity. You may not always have ingredients on hand to make the gluten-free dish you want to make. You may not have a recipe handy for a meal you have in mind. You may think you have no way to convert your old favourite standby into a gluten-free goodie. Don't let any of those things stop you. Cooking gluten-free is actually easy if you improvise, learn a few basic principles, explore alternatives and stretch the boundaries of your creativity in the kitchen.

## *Adapting any dish to be gluten-free*

Quick quiz: You're standing in line at the checkout, mindlessly perusing the magazines offering valuable, up-to-date, star-struck gossip and sure-fire ways to lose all your belly fat in less than 10 minutes, when the cover of your favourite cooking magazine catches your eye. It's a beautiful photo of (insert favourite food here), glistening with — agh! — gluten! You:

- (A) Kick the trolley and ruin your day by feeling resentful and sorry for yourself.
- (B) Buy the magazine as a reminder of a past life of gluten-gluttony.
- (C) Delight in knowing that because you or someone you love bought you this copy of *Living Gluten-Free For Dummies*, 2nd Australian Edition, you can probably modify that recipe to be deliciously gluten-free.

The right answer is, of course, C. You can modify nearly any dish to be gluten-free. Some dishes are easier than others — baked goods are the toughest, so we deal with those last. You can go one of two ways when you're adapting a dish to be gluten-free: with a recipe or without.

### *Starting with a recipe*

If you're following a recipe for something that's not gluten-free and you want to convert it, start by reviewing the list of ingredients the recipe calls for. Make a note of those that usually have gluten in them. Then, using the substitutions we suggest in this chapter or some of your own, substitute gluten-free ingredients as you need to.



For the most part, when you make substitutions, measurements convert equally — with the exception of flours, which we discuss in the section 'Substituting gluten-free flours' later in this chapter.

Don't have the right substitutions? Improvise. For instance, if a recipe calls for coating something in flour before sautéing and you don't have any gluten-free flours, maybe you have a gluten-free mix that would work. If necessary, bread mix, pancake mix, even muffin mix, can work as a substitute for a flour coating.

### *Cooking without a recipe*

If you're not using a recipe, creativity once again prevails. Say you want to make chicken nuggets. You certainly don't need a recipe for that; just slice some chicken and work out what you want to coat it in before frying or baking. Put some of your favourite gluten-free potato chips or corn flakes in a plastic bag and crunch them up. Now you have a coating! (You'll need to dip

your chicken pieces into some beaten egg first or the coating will end up on the bottom of the frying pan.)

At the risk of labouring a point, you have to be creative. The substitution ideas in this chapter are just that — ideas. Coming up with substitutions that work for your convenience, preference and budget is up to you.

## *Avoiding cross-contamination when cooking*

Sometimes you can unwittingly contaminate your food by the way you cook it. Cooking gluten-containing foods at the same time as gluten-free ones is okay, but just be aware that cross-contamination during the cooking process is a very real consideration. You may have to plan how you will manage the cooking so that you have different pots and pans for your two versions. Here are some things to watch out for:

- ✓ **Cooking utensils:** Use separate utensils while you're cooking and keep track of which one is which.
- ✓ **Double-duty cooking surfaces:** If you're cooking gluten-containing and gluten-free foods on the same griller or baking tray, you should cook the gluten-free version first. If that just doesn't work, you can use the same cooking surface for both versions, but be sure to find a clean spot for your gluten-free foods.
- ✓ **Frying oil:** When you fry crumbed or battered products in oil, some of the crumbs or batter can stay on the surface of the oil when you've finished frying. But gluten is NOT soluble in oil. So if you fry gluten-containing foods in oil, always scoop out any visible bits of batter or crumbs, fry the gluten-free foods first, or use completely separate pans and fresh oil for the gluten-free foods.



Avoiding contamination is important, but don't go to the other extreme and become paranoid about it either. If you let that happen, you'll probably never be able to relax and enjoy a meal in case you've accidentally devoured a gluten crumb.

## *Using standby substitutions*

To convert a recipe that usually contains gluten into one that's gluten-free, you need to make some simple substitutions. For the most part, with the exception of flours you use when making baked goods, the substitutions

are simple — just swap one for the other. We cover flours for baked goods separately, later in this chapter.

Here are some simple substitutions:

- ✓ **Beer:** Some foods, especially deep-fried foods, may call for beer in the recipe. You can use either gluten-free beer or try cider instead.
- ✓ **Binders:** A binder is just something that holds foodstuffs together. Because gluten provides elasticity and stretch to baked goods, adding binders to foods that don't have gluten-containing flours in them is a good idea. Binders include xanthan gum, guar gum, psyllium, gelatine powder or eggs.
- ✓ **Breadcrumbs:** No-brainer here. Anyone who's ever eaten a piece of gluten-free bread (especially without toasting it) knows that breadcrumbs aren't hard to come by. You can buy gluten-free breadcrumbs from the supermarket, specialty stores or online, but if you can't or don't want to get those, consider using any gluten-free bread: Put the bread in a plastic bag and crumble it to the size you want. You can even toast or bake the crumbs if you want added crunch or need dry breadcrumbs instead of fresh ones. Crushed cereals work well in place of breadcrumbs, too.
- ✓ **Buns:** Consider using a lettuce wrap, corn tortilla or, of course, gluten-free bread. Some good gluten-free buns are available at leading supermarkets, health food shops or online.
- ✓ **Coatings:** If a recipe calls for some type of coating, you have several options. You can despair and not make the dish (Ha! Kidding!) or consider using any of the gluten-free flours we list later in this chapter, as well as any versatile gluten-free mix you have lying around, such as a mix for bread, muffins or pancakes. Maize flour, buckwheat or chickpea (besan) flour with seasonings mixed in adds an interesting texture, and crushed potato chips or corn flakes (gluten-free, of course) are an all-time favourite.
- ✓ **'Cream of' soups:** Use chicken broth and sour cream (half-and-half). Remember to add the food the soup is a cream of — mushroom, celery, potato and so on — to complete the soup.
- ✓ **CROUTONS:** Homemade croutons are actually very easy to make. Most recipes for croutons suggest you use stale bread, but we don't suggest you do that for gluten-free bread, because you'd probably end up with crouton crumbs instead. Cut fresh gluten-free bread into the size cubes you want and deep-fry them. After you drain and cool them, roll them in parmesan cheese, spices, or any other flavouring you like, or just serve plain.

- ✓ **Fillers:** *Filler* is a highly technical culinary term for something that fills stuff in. Yum. Generally not something you hope to see on a label, fillers aren't always a bad thing; they may be in meatloaf, for example, where the recipe often calls for breadcrumbs, crackers and other filler-type materials to add, well, *filling*. Gluten-free bread or breadcrumbs are obvious substitutions here, but also consider leftover rice, potato flakes, cooked quinoa or even an unsweetened cereal that you've crushed.
- ✓ **Flour tortillas:** The obvious substitution here is corn tortillas. Some new gluten-free wraps/tannour breads are on the market now. Other wrap substitutions include rice paper (found in Asian markets and featured in a few recipes in this book) or lettuce.
- ✓ **Pastry:** One of the easiest ways to make a pastry base is to crush your favourite cereal, add some butter (and sugar, if the cereal isn't sweet enough), mix it well and then press the mixture into the bottom of a pie pan. Some good gluten-free crackers and plain biscuits work well the same way. Try 125 grams of melted butter to 4 cups of cereal or crushed biscuits, but the amount of butter needed will vary depending on the dryness of your crumbs or cereal. You may want to slowly add more butter until the crumbs are beginning to stick together, but don't add too much or you'll end up with a greasy, oily base. You'll find good pastry recipes in many gluten-free cookbooks. Some pastry bases are supposed to be cooked before adding the pie filling and others aren't. This doesn't change when you are making a gluten-free pie. Also check out some of the gluten-free piecrust mixes available at health food shops, or the frozen pastry sheets.
- ✓ **Soy sauce:** Most soy sauce has wheat in it (and the label clearly indicates wheat), but you can find brands that are wheat-free and those that, even though they may contain a wheat ingredient, are gluten-free. (By the way, *tamari* — a thicker, Japanese soy sauce — isn't always wheat-free, so check the label.) It's much easier to find a gluten-free tamari than soy sauce. You may also want to get adventurous and try an Asian sauce like fish sauce (careful — it's really fishy!) or gluten-free oyster sauce.
- ✓ **Teriyaki:** Because most soy sauce has wheat in it, most teriyaki (which is made from soy sauce) does, too. A few brands of wheat-free teriyaki sauces are available.
- ✓ **Thickeners:** Many recipes call for flour as a thickener, but alternatives are available. For sweet things, try using a dry pudding mix or gelatine. Arrowroot, agar, tapioca starch and maize cornflour are also excellent thickeners. And keep in mind that muffin or cake mix you have lying around. Not only do mixes thicken the recipe, but the sweet flavour is also a pleasant surprise. You can find more information on using gluten-free thickeners in the section 'Thickening with gluten-free starches and flours', later in this chapter.

## *Cooking with Wheat Alternatives*

Most gluten-free cooking is pretty straightforward. You just substitute gluten-free ingredients for the gluten-containing ones and, for the most part, you're set. The process is a little different for baked goods, as we explain later in this chapter. But most gluten-free cooking isn't that different from 'regular' cooking, especially if you follow the theme of this chapter and let your creative side take over.

### *Incorporating alternative gluten-free grains*

Not only are the gluten-free grains and grain alternatives that we talk about in Chapter 4 ultra-nutritious, but they also add unique flavours and textures to foods. For the most part, cooking them is just like cooking other grains, as you can see in Part III of this book and in cookbooks. But you need to know a few things to perfect the art of using alternative gluten-free grains.

When cooking gluten-free grains as whole grains (as opposed to using them as a flour in baked goods), you find these alternative grains cook like most whole grains — just toss them in boiling water, reduce the heat so the water simmers and you're set. The grain-to-water proportion and cooking times are really the only things that vary. Table 9-1 has some approximations of amounts of liquids and cooking times, and the instructions on the product packaging are usually reliable.

**Table 9-1**                      **Cooking Alternative Grains**

<i><b>Gluten-Free Grain (1 cup)</b></i>	<i><b>Water or Gluten-Free Chicken Stock</b></i>	<i><b>Cooking Time</b></i>
Amaranth	2½ cups	20 to 25 minutes
Brown rice (long or short grain)	3 cups	40 minutes
Buckwheat	2 cups	15 to 20 minutes
Millet	3 cups	35 to 45 minutes
Polenta	3 cups	5 to 10 minutes
Quinoa	2 cups	15 to 20 minutes
White rice	2 cups	15 minutes
Wild rice	4 cups	45 minutes



Quinoa, millet, amaranth, buckwheat and the other alternative grains are great additions to soups, stuffing and other foods. Here are some places you can use alternative grains, whether you precook them or simply toss them in with the other ingredients:

- ✓ **Snacks:** Using a little oil in a pan, you can pop amaranth grains on the stove like popcorn and eat them seasoned or plain.
- ✓ **Soups:** Use buckwheat, quinoa or millet in soups instead of rice or noodles. No need to cook the grains first; just add them to the soup as you're cooking it. Remember, they absorb the liquid and double in volume.
- ✓ **Stuffing:** Use cooked quinoa, millet or buckwheat instead of breadcrumbs or croutons in stuffing. Season the stuffing to your taste and then stuff vegetables, poultry or pork tenderloins.

## *Thickening with gluten-free starches and flours*

People usually use starch-based thickeners such as maize cornflour, arrowroot and tapioca to thicken their sauces and gravies. Some starch thickeners give food a transparent, glistening sheen, which looks great for pie fillings and in glazes, but the thickeners don't always look quite right in gravy or sauce, so knowing which ones to use is important.



To thicken with gluten-free starches, follow these steps:

1. **Mix the starch with an equal amount of cold liquid until it forms a paste.**
2. **Whisk the paste into the liquid you're trying to thicken.**
3. **Cook for at least 30 seconds to get rid of the starchy flavour.**

But be careful you don't overcook the starch — liquids that you thicken with these starches may get thin again if you cook them too long or at too high a temperature.

Some of these flours have the advantage of working well with foods that are acidic. Acidic foods include canned or glazed fruits, citrus, tomatoes and vinegar. Bananas, figs, avocados and potatoes are examples of foods that aren't acidic (they're alkaline).

Take a look at your options for thickeners:

- ✓ **Arrowroot:** If you're looking for that shiny clear gloss for dessert sauces or glazes, arrowroot is a good bet. Use arrowroot if you're thickening an acidic liquid but not if you're using dairy products (it makes them slimy). Arrowroot has the most neutral taste of all the starch thickeners, so if you're worried that a thickener may change or mask the flavour of your dish, use arrowroot. You can freeze the sauces you make with arrowroot.
- ✓ **Maize cornflour:** This is the best choice for thickening dairy-based sauces, but don't use it for acidic foods. Maize cornflour doesn't give you the shiny, clear effect of tapioca or arrowroot so it's good for casseroles and sauces. Don't use it if you're freezing the sauce, or the sauce will get spongy.
- ✓ **Potato starch:** Usually used to thicken soups and gravies, potato starch doesn't work well in liquids that you boil. Unlike maize cornflour and some other grain-based foods, potato starch is a permitted ingredient for Passover.
- ✓ **Tapioca flour:** Tapioca flour or starch gives a glossy sheen and can tolerate prolonged cooking and freezing. It can be used to thicken sauces, soups and gravies.

You can use any of the alternative grains to thicken sauces, gravies, stews, puddings — anything! Depending on what you're making, you can use whole grains or flours as a thickener. You probably want to use a flour instead of whole grains to thicken something like gravy, but whole grains add lots of nutrition and work well to thicken soups and stews.



When you're using these flours or starches as thickeners, substitution amounts are a little different. Instead of 1 tablespoon of plain flour, use

- ✓ **Agar agar:** ½ tablespoon
- ✓ **Arrowroot:** ½ tablespoon
- ✓ **Gelatine powder:** ½ tablespoon
- ✓ **Maize cornflour:** ½ tablespoon
- ✓ **Rice flour (brown or white):** 1 tablespoon

## *Trying Your Hand at Gluten-Free Baking*

We won't sugar coat the situation: Baking is the trickiest type of gluten-free cooking you can try. But it's getting easier. Years ago, gluten-free baking produced brick-like breads and cakes that crumbled when you exposed them to air, or dipped dreadfully in the middle. Margaret's family called them 'dippy cakes'.

Gluten is what makes baked goods stretchy, elastic and *doughy*. It also forms a support structure to hold the gases that expand and to help the bread rise and become fluffy. Without gluten, baked foods tend to either crumble excessively or be dense enough to double as a lethal weapon. Using xanthan gum and combining gluten-free flours are the keys to creating gluten-free baked goods that are just as good as the real deal.

### *Mixing it up with mixes*

Swallowing your pride is a lot better than swallowing a dry lump doing its best to impersonate a biscuit, don't you think? Sure, cooking from scratch is terrific and these days, especially with the help of the Real Cookbook Authors, the success rate is high (certainly higher than it was when we started on our self-taught-gluten-free-baking-from-scratch adventures).

But consider using some of the incredible gluten-free mixes now available for pancakes, biscuits, cakes, breads, pizza bases, pastry, muffins and just about anything else you can think of. Some of the mixes are so good these days that they rival even the best homemade gluten-containing foods. They're simple to make (get the kids to help!) and fill the house with that Real-Cook-lives-here smell of freshly baked treats.

Most of the mixes simply require an egg or egg substitute, water or milk and oil. Many of the companies are aware of multiple food intolerances and offer dairy-free, egg-free, soy-free and other allergen-free products. You can keep it simple or jazz it up, adding your favourite ingredients and accommodating other allergies and intolerances. Refer to Chapter 7 for a list of the mixes you may want to have on hand.

The most common complaint about mixes is that they're expensive — and they are. Save them for those times when life is really frantic, as a special treat.

## *Introducing xanthan gum: The star of the dough*

Boasting unique properties that enhance the consistency of foods, xanthan gum is a key ingredient in successful gluten-free baking. Basically, it holds particles of foods together and it's the component in salad dressings, gravies, sauces and ice creams that gives those foods a creamy, rich, smooth texture. Xanthan gum works well in gluten-free foods, providing the stretch and elasticity that gluten usually offers.

Here's a guide to how much xanthan gum to use for each cup of gluten-free flour:

- ✓ **Biscuits:** ¼ teaspoon
- ✓ **Breads:** 1 heaped teaspoon
- ✓ **Cakes:** ½ teaspoon
- ✓ **Muffins:** ¾ teaspoons
- ✓ **Pizza:** 2 teaspoons



Be warned — xanthan gum is not cheap. Some people use guar gum instead, usually because it's cheaper. But be aware that guar gum is high in fibre content and can have a laxative effect.



When you're making gluten-free dough, use non-stick loaf pans, baking sheets and pie dishes, or be prepared to use a lot of baking paper or aluminium foil. Gluten-free dough is especially sticky.

## *Substituting gluten-free flours*

Several gluten-free flours work well for baking. But they don't always work in a one-to-one trade. In other words, you can't just replace one cup of all-purpose or wheat flour with one cup of potato starch — at least not for the best results.

You should play around with these substitutions to find the flavours and consistencies you like best, but this list gives you a starting point for using gluten-free flours.



Each substitution is instead of *1 cup* of plain flour (for those of you who aren't familiar with the highly technical culinary term *scant*, it simply means *loosely packed* or *barely*):

- ✓ **Amaranth flour:** 1 scant cup
- ✓ **Arrowroot flour:** 1 scant cup
- ✓ **Buckwheat flour:**  $\frac{7}{8}$  cup
- ✓ **Chickpea flour:**  $\frac{3}{4}$  cup
- ✓ **Maize cornflour:**  $\frac{3}{4}$  cup
- ✓ **Polenta:**  $\frac{3}{4}$  cup
- ✓ **Potato flour:**  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup
- ✓ **Potato starch:**  $\frac{3}{4}$  cup
- ✓ **Quinoa flour:** 1 cup
- ✓ **Rice flour (white or brown):** 1 scant cup
- ✓ **Sorghum:** 1 scant cup
- ✓ **Soy flour:**  $\frac{3}{4}$  cup
- ✓ **Sweet rice flour (glutinous or sticky rice flour; *mochiko*):**  $\frac{7}{8}$  cup
- ✓ **Tapioca flour or starch:** 1 cup

## *Making your own gluten-free flour mixtures*

One of the things the Real Cookbook Authors discovered in the not-so-distant past is that if you mix a variety of flours together, they produce baked goods that have a better consistency and taste. Different combinations of gluten-free flour mixtures abound and you can experiment to find your favourite.



If you're doing a lot of baking, we suggest making up a large quantity of gluten-free flour mixture, mixing it well and storing it in airtight containers in a dark, dry place. That way you have it on hand when you want to bake. Either sift it when making up the mix or as you use it in baking. You can also buy packets of excellent baking mix made up of several different kinds of gluten-free flours.

A quick perusal of most gluten-free cookbooks or a visit to gluten-free recipe sites on the internet can give you dozens of variations on these flour mixtures, but this section gives you the three most popular basic mixes. They can be used as a one-to-one substitution for plain flour.

***Plain gluten-free flour mixture***

You can use several other types of gluten-free flour mixtures, each with unique tastes and cooking properties. Here's how to mix it:

- ✓ 2 parts white rice flour
- ✓  $\frac{2}{3}$  part potato starch flour
- ✓  $\frac{1}{3}$  part tapioca flour

***Besan flour mixture***

One of the more popular flour mixtures today has besan flour, which adds protein and texture. Here's a besan flour mixture:

- ✓ 1 part besan flour
- ✓ 1 part brown rice flour (or 1 part white rice flour)
- ✓ 1 part maize cornflour
- ✓ 1 part tapioca starch
- ✓  $\frac{3}{4}$  part sweet rice flour

***Lola Workman's low reactive flour blend***

Lola Workman, who regularly writes for *The Australian Coeliac* magazine, has developed several flour mixes, which can be found in her recipe books and on her website ([www.wheatfreeworld.com.au](http://www.wheatfreeworld.com.au)). This one incorporates amaranth flour, which is highly nutritious:

- ✓ 2 parts potato starch
- ✓ 2 parts fine rice flour
- ✓ 1 part amaranth flour
- ✓ 1 part tapioca starch

***Baking bread the gluten-free way***

Those who've experimented with gluten-free breads know that at times the word *bread* is a euphemism for *brick* and the word *edible* is an overstatement. But never fear; help is here — whether you're a diehard baker or a newbie in the kitchen, you can enjoy that unbeatable aroma of your very own freshly baked, delicious bread.

Although some gluten-free breads do taste great these days, they still taste a little different from wheat-based breads. And why does that surprise people?

That's like making an apple pie but using cherries instead of apples and being surprised that it doesn't have an apple flavour. Of course gluten-free bread doesn't taste exactly like wheat bread — it doesn't have *wheat* in it!

Gluten-free breads tend to look a little different, too. In spite of great strides to make them fluffier and airier, they're still a little denser and turn out best if you make them in smaller loaves. They also don't rise as much, so the tops are sometimes flat or even concave.

You can find a number of good gluten-free bread mixes on the market. Try them out until you find your favourite.



Home-baked gluten-free bread may taste delicious on baking day, but after that you need to toast it. Toasting gives it a better consistency and makes it less likely to crumble. Gluten-free bread is great for toasted sandwiches because the butter and grilling process gives it a crispy texture and seals the bread so it doesn't crumble. Here are a few more general bread-making tips:

- ✓ All the ingredients that you use, except water, should be at room temperature.
- ✓ The water that you mix the yeast with must be lukewarm. Too hot and you kill the yeast. Too cold and you don't activate it.
- ✓ Adding extra protein in the form of eggs, egg substitutes, dry milk solids, or cottage or ricotta cheese is important for helping the yeast work.
- ✓ Vinegar, usually cider vinegar, helps the yeast work and helps the flavour of the bread emerge. Sometimes recipes call for lemon juice or a dough enhancer instead. These ingredients also act as preservatives.
- ✓ You should use small loaf tins for gluten-free bread. The heaviest quality bread tins are better.
- ✓ Gluten-free bread tends to need to cook a little longer, so cover your loaf with foil for the last 15 minutes or so, to keep it from burning.
- ✓ Wait until the bread has cooled to room temperature to slice it. (Don't look, but our fingers were crossed as we wrote that. Who can resist the flavour and texture of a slice — or three — of hot bread? Certainly it's better for the loaf if you allow it to cool, but if you're virtuous enough to bake your own bread, it's okay to sneak a slice while it's still warm.)

Given the choice of doing something by hand or using an efficient, easy-to-clean-made-for-the-job-tried-and-true tool to do it, we'll go for the tool. If you want to use a bread machine for your gluten-free breads, keep a few things in mind:

- ✔ Look for one of the bread machines on the market that specifically says you can use it for gluten-free bread and, better still, for a machine endorsed by Coeliac Australia. You can make some really successful breads using the recipes in the instruction booklet.
- ✔ Gluten-free bread needs only one kneading and one rising cycle. If you have a setting that allows you to do only one kneading and one rising, choose it.
- ✔ If you haven't bought a bread machine yet, buy one with strong paddles, a strong motor and a strong fan.
- ✔ Take your bread out as soon as it is finished, even if the bread machine has a 'keep warm' facility. Gluten-free bread will soon go soggy if it is left in the pan.
- ✔ Add ingredients in the order the bread machine manufacturer recommends. It does make a difference!
- ✔ A few minutes after the bread machine has started, use a rubber spatula to scrape the dough off the sides of the pan back into the dough and stir a little to make sure all ingredients are mixing in well.



If you're a glutton for punishment and choose to mix your dough by hand, but you're using a recipe for a bread machine, double the amount of yeast and use a little more liquid (a couple of tablespoons).

## Time-saving tips for the gluten-free cook

Even we have to admit that cooking without gluten *does* take more time and effort. That's why we thought you might appreciate some tips to save you time in your gluten-free cooking adventures:

- ✔ Make your gluten-free baking mixtures in advance and double the recipe. Store them in large canisters in a cool, dry, dark place and label them well (for example, 'GF bread mix', 'GF baking mix'). Our Real Cooks find that baking with dry yeast is more successful than with fresh yeast.
- ✔ Make as much of the meal as possible gluten-free. If you have a blended family, with some members eating gluten and others eating gluten-free, making most of the meal, if not all, without gluten is easier on you. This practice also makes the gluten-free member feel more included.
- ✔ Save your gluten-free mistakes or stale breads, because one bad batch is another meal. So the bread didn't rise, the cake crumbled and the biscuits fell apart? Save the crumbs and use them for stuffings, casseroles or breadcrumbs.
- ✔ Each time you bake, save a little of the finished product (or make a mini-mini-version in a cupcake pan) and use it for lunch the next day. Or stash it in the freezer for a snack or emergency treat. (This one requires discipline, however.)





## Part III

# From Menus to Meals: Recipes for the Gluten-Free Gastronome



### *Five Keys to Success When Turning Menus into Meals*

- ✓ Keep in mind that adapting favourite recipes is often easier than you think.
- ✓ Discover new and delicious alternatives — this helps you forget the old favourites you can no longer eat.
- ✓ Learn to cook your own meals — this may be a challenge but you'll feel healthier for it, and save a chunk of money as well.
- ✓ Understand which gluten-free flours are best for different types of recipes — this leads to successful cooking every time.
- ✓ Ensure you have adequate proteins in your diet — doing so satisfies those sugar cravings and helps you maintain a healthy weight.



Learn more (free!) information about cooking and baking delicious gluten-free recipes at [www.dummies.com/extras/livingglutenfreeau](http://www.dummies.com/extras/livingglutenfreeau).

## ***In this part . . .***

- ✓ Start your day off right by exploring the many and varied gluten-free breakfast options — from smoothies and muesli to frittata and muffins.
- ✓ Tempt your tastebuds with some delicious appetisers, including some healthy wraps, rolls and dips — just try to save some room for the main course!
- ✓ Move beyond just lettuce and tomato to enjoy a range of nutritious and tasty gluten-free soups, salads and sides — most of the options can be served as accompaniments or as complete meals in themselves.
- ✓ Fortify yourself and your family with satisfying mains ranging from interesting chicken and beef options, creative seafood choices and fresh vegetarian ideas.
- ✓ Enjoy foods you thought were a thing of the past — pizza, pasta and bread — and find out how easy it is to make your own.
- ✓ Treat yourself with some mouth-watering desserts, cakes and biscuits — and enjoy some guilt-free options too!

## Chapter 10

# Beginning with Breakfast

### *In This Chapter*

- ▶ Making the most of mad-rush mornings
- ▶ Egging on the day
- ▶ Starting off with smoothies or pancakes
- ▶ Enjoying muffin treats

**W**hether you're a bacon-and-eggs-with-a-stack-of-toast hearty, a big-bowl-of-cereal devotee, or a black-coffee-and-sliver-of-toast type, breakfast usually comes loaded with gluten. So what are you supposed to do on the gluten-free diet? Dig in, that's what! Yes, you can enjoy delicious traditional breakfast foods that may at first seem to be off-limits on the gluten-free diet.

But don't be afraid to think beyond the old favourites. Smoothies are delicious and nutritious, eggs are truly versatile and muffins or drop scones make great alternatives to boring old bread. Use this chapter as inspiration for exploring alternatives to the old standby breakfast routines. When you start to think outside the breakfast box, you may discover a whole new world of wholesome gluten-free options to start your day off right.

### *Recipes in This Chapter*

- Gluten-free Muesli
- Bircher Muesli
- Gluten-free Porridge
- Blueberry Amaranth Porridge
- Eggs in a Bread Basket
- Instant Eggs
- Fetta Frittata
- ▶ Little Egg and Bacon Pies
- French Toast
- Simple Smoothie
- Pancakes
- Scottish Drop Scones
- Fruit and Nut Muffins
- Banana and Choc Chip Muffins
- Berry Muffins



## Getting Your Day Off to a Gluten-Free Start

Breakfast is the first meal you eat after you wake up — after you’ve ‘fasted’ for eight or more hours (hence the clever name for this meal: *break fast*). Your body is hanging out for fresh supplies to get going for the day ahead. Yet many people aren’t hungry, or at least they think they aren’t hungry — and most people are frantically rushing to get themselves or others out the door. Usually, what’s sacrificed in this whirlwind of chaos is a healthy breakfast.

If mornings are a tad chaotic in your house, taking the time to prepare a healthy, gluten-free breakfast may seem like a luxury you can’t afford. But in reality, breakfast is, as your mum probably told you, the most important meal of the day. Not only does breakfast help with weight management by revving up your metabolism first thing in the morning, but breakfast eaters also have more positive attitudes and perform better at work and school. A nutritious gluten-free breakfast can have a positive impact on your entire day.

Breakfast, more than any other meal, is a very personal thing. The mere sight or smell of a hearty breakfast can send some people staggering back under the doona, heaving tragically, while others bounce out of the shower ready to eat the proverbial horse. Often people are at their fussiest first thing in the morning so the thought of particular foods that they would happily tuck into at lunch can be a real turn-off. So making the best choices and ‘getting it right for you’ is particularly important, especially for mums or dads who want to send their kids off with something nutritious inside. It’s worth spending time trying different things to find what makes a healthy, enjoyable breakfast for you or your child — and then making sure you don’t get into too much of a rut so that it becomes boring. (Some people eat the same breakfast — and love it — every morning for most of their lives. Some people just love the old, familiar routines.)

## Creating a crunchy mix

You can make up your own crunchy mix using dried fruit, gluten-free rice pops or cornflakes, nuts, seeds and (dare we suggest it) a few chocolate chips. Fruit and nut snacks are widely

available, but read the labels carefully as some are very high in sugar and others include nuts coated in seasonings that may contain gluten.

## *Grab 'n' go starters*

If time is limited, you still have plenty of nutritious gluten-free foods to choose from. Stock up on wholesome foods that are easy to eat and that you can take with you as you're running out the door. And the foods don't have to be traditional breakfast foods. Here are some suggestions:

- ✓ Carob pieces
- ✓ Cottage cheese (with or without fruit) in travel packaging
- ✓ Dried fruit, such as raisins, sultanas, apricots, cranberries or banana chips
- ✓ Fresh fruit or 'fruit in a cup' products
- ✓ Fruit and nut mix
- ✓ Fruit straps or fruit bars
- ✓ Gluten-free crackers with cheese slices
- ✓ Hard-boiled eggs
- ✓ Low-fat yoghurt
- ✓ Nuts, such as peanuts, almonds, walnuts, macadamias and cashews



If you know you're rushed in the morning, pack a breakfast-on-the-go meal the night before. Put a bag of fruit and nut mix, yoghurt, an apple and a small juice or water bottle in a lunch box in the fridge. And don't forget a spoon for the yoghurt!

## Gluten-free Muesli

Try this basic recipe for starters, and then play around with it for variety.

**Prep time:** 15 minutes • **Servings:** 6–8

Ingredients	Directions
<b>3 cups gluten-free cornflakes</b>	<b>1</b> Mix all ingredients together and store in an airtight jar. Proportions and ingredients can be varied according to taste and availability.
<b>3 cups gluten-free brown rice puffs</b>	
<b>1 cup rolled rice flakes</b>	
<b>1 cup rice bran straws</b>	
<b>1 cup soy flakes</b>	
<b>75 g (½ cup) almonds</b>	
<b>90 g (½ cup) chopped dried apricots</b>	
<b>180 g (1 cup) sultanas</b>	

**Tip:** Optional additions include other dried fruits, such as currants, raisins, dried apple; other nuts, such as hazelnuts, brazil nuts; and other ingredients — for example, psyllium, LSA (ground linseed, sunflower and almond) mix and lecithin.

**Per serving (7 serves):** Kilojoules 1,436; Fat 9.1 g (Saturated <1 g); Sodium 126 mg; Carbohydrate 55 g (Dietary Fibre 8.1 g); Protein 7.9 g.

## Bircher Muesli

Use this European recipe for a special breakfast or when you've invited friends over for brunch. It's truly delicious.

**Prep time:** 30 minutes, plus refrigeration time • **Servings:** 6

Ingredients	Directions
120 g (1 cup) rolled rice flakes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 Place rolled rice flakes in a bowl and pour enough milk over to cover (about 1 cup).</li> <li>2 Cover with plastic wrap and refrigerate for several hours or overnight.</li> <li>3 Add lemon rind, orange juice, apple, almonds, honey, sugar, yoghurt and cream (if using) and mix well.</li> <li>4 Cover and refrigerate until well chilled.</li> <li>5 Stir in sultanas and serve.</li> </ol>
250 ml (1 cup) milk (approx.)	
Grated rind of 1 lemon	
Juice of 1 orange	
1 apple, grated	
2 tablespoons chopped almonds	
2 tablespoons honey	
1 teaspoon sugar	
¾ cup Greek-style plain yoghurt	
¼ cup thick cream (optional)	
2 tablespoons sultanas	

**Per serving (no cream):** Kilojoules 918; Fat 6.6 g (Saturated 2.4 g); Sodium 59 mg; Carbohydrate 31.9 g (Dietary Fibre 4.1 g); Protein 6.4 g.

**Per serving (with cream):** Kilojoules 1,528; Fat 22.1 g (Saturated 12.6 g); Sodium 79 mg; Carbohydrate 33.2 g (Dietary Fibre 4.1 g); Protein 7.3 g.





## Gluten-free Porridge

You can call this recipe gluten-free porridge or cooked muesli. Some people think raw rice flakes are just a tad too close to horse fodder for comfort (maybe Margaret needs to come clean here and admit that she finds raw rice flakes too close to horse fodder or parrot food). But when well cooked and dressed up in their best gear, they become rather nice comfort food. Rice porridge is quick, easy and great for filling you up on chilly mornings.

**Prep time:** 4 minutes • **Cooking time:** 4 minutes • **Servings:** 1

Ingredients	Directions
<b>½ cup rolled rice (rice flakes)</b>	<b>1</b> Mix dry ingredients in a microwave-proof bowl and just cover with boiling water.
<b>1 tablespoon sunflower kernels or other seeds</b>	<b>2</b> Heat on high for 2 minutes and then stir well.
<b>½ tablespoon chopped nuts</b>	<b>3</b> Add milk (to cover) and heat in the microwave on high for another 2 minutes, or longer if you like it very smooth.
<b>1 tablespoon dried fruit</b>	<b>4</b> Serve as you would a bowl of porridge. Some people like it with brown sugar and milk; others add chopped fresh or tinned fruit, or golden syrup or honey. You can also try some mixed spice to give it extra flavour. Add more milk if desired. Some people like to add a little fruit juice rather than milk at the end. If you need more fibre in your diet, add a teaspoonful — or more if needed — of psyllium husks before cooking.
<b>Milk to taste</b>	

**Tip:** Make sure you use enough dried fruit or the porridge can be very bland. Treat yourself to many different kinds of dried or dehydrated fruit — as well as sultanas or raisins, you can try apricots, mango or pawpaw — for extra flavour.

**Tip:** Mix up a big batch of rice flakes, dried fruit and nuts, store in an airtight container and you have breakfast ready to go. Mix 2 tablespoons each of dried fruit and seeds and 1 tablespoon of nuts per cup of rice flakes. The addition of fresh fruit when serving will provide energy over a longer time. You can also experiment with quinoa flakes for added nutrition and a different flavour.

**Per serving:** Kilojoules 1,623; Fat 15.6 g (Saturated 2.6 g); Sodium 32 mg; Carbohydrate 44.4 g (Dietary Fibre 11.5 g); Protein 11.4 g.

## Blueberry Amaranth Porridge

This porridge is absolutely delicious. If you pine for real porridge, this amaranth version will truly compensate.

**Prep time:** 5 minutes • **Cooking time:** 25 minutes • **Servings:** 4

Ingredients	Directions
1½ cups amaranth (grain, not amaranth puffs)	1 Combine amaranth, water, milk and butter in a heavy saucepan.
2½ cups water	2 Simmer for 20 minutes, stirring occasionally, until mixture becomes thick.
2½ cups milk	3 Stir in cream and blueberries.
2 tablespoons butter	4 Place in four serving bowls and drizzle with maple syrup. Serve immediately.
⅓ cup cream	
1½ cups blueberries	
4 tablespoons maple syrup	

**Vary It!** This porridge is also delicious with cooked apricots instead of blueberries.

**Per serving:** Kilojoules 2,360; Fat 21.1 g (Saturated 12.1 g); Sodium 85 mg; Carbohydrate 75.5 g (Dietary Fibre 6.2 g); Protein 15.5 g.

**Source:** © Ashley Laurel Herndon.



## Power-start your gluten-free day with protein

Protein really does pack a nutritional punch, regulating blood-sugar levels and providing a lot of time-released energy throughout the day. By starting your day with a meal high in protein, you're giving yourself a nutritional boost that can carry you for hours.



Not only does protein provide sustained energy, but it also helps you regulate weight. Protein stimulates the secretion of *glucagon*, a hormone that tells your body to mobilise fat and begin breaking it down. This reduces fat stores and, ultimately, your waistline.

Fortunately, high-protein foods are plentiful in the gluten-free diet. In fact, many of the 'traditional' breakfast foods that aren't gluten-free, such as toast or pancakes, actually offer very little in the way of protein. In contrast, many foods that are inherently gluten-free, such as eggs and meats, are very high in protein.

From a gluten-free standpoint, whether your protein is from plant or animal sources really doesn't matter. Eggs are an obvious source of protein for breakfast (see the following section for recipe ideas using eggs), but you can incorporate plenty of other protein sources into your first meal of the day:

- ✓ Baked beans
- ✓ Dairy products (low-fat milk, cheese and yoghurt)
- ✓ Gluten-free lean bacon or ham slices
- ✓ Lean sirloin or steak strips
- ✓ Nuts
- ✓ Smoothies (you can find recipe ideas under 'Starting Your Day Smoothly')
- ✓ Tinned tuna or salmon

## The Incredible, Edible Egg

Eggs offer more value than many people realise. They're extremely nutritious, containing all the essential amino acids, and countless vitamins and antioxidants. They're also convenient, inexpensive and easy to prepare.



Have you ever wondered how to tell whether your eggs are raw or hard-boiled? Take them for a spin. A hard-boiled egg spins freely and a raw one doesn't. This happens because the hard-boiled egg is solid, so everything spins in one direction all at once. The raw egg sloshes around and doesn't allow a fast spinning motion.

## Eggs in a Bread Basket

This is a fun way to serve eggs and toast, especially if you have kids in the house. Because gluten-free breads tend to be smaller than other breads, you may want to put two slices side by side, cutting shapes in the touching edges to create the cut-out area that the egg goes into.

**Prep time:** 5 minutes • **Cooking time:** 5 minutes • **Servings:** 4

Ingredients	Directions
<b>4 slices gluten-free bread</b> <b>4 tablespoons margarine</b> <b>4 eggs</b>	<b>1</b> Heat a large non-stick frying pan over medium-high heat. While the pan is heating, butter both sides of each piece of bread.
	<b>2</b> In the centre of each bread slice, cut out a circle about the size of an egg. You can use a knife to cut the circle, or use a biscuit cutter to make cute shapes.
	<b>3</b> Make sure the pan is hot enough that if you put a drop of water on it, the water sizzles. When the pan is hot, put all the bread — slices and cut-outs — on the pan to fry.
	<b>4</b> When the bottom side of the bread is golden brown, after about 2 minutes, turn the slices and cut-outs.
	<b>5</b> Crack an egg into the hole in the centre of each slice of bread. You may find you have too much egg and that it covers the bread. That's okay.
	<b>6</b> When the second side of bread is golden brown, after about 2 minutes, turn it again to cook the egg on the other side. Cook the egg until it's the firmness you enjoy and serve the 'eggs in a basket' with the cooked cut-outs as decorative additions.

**Tip:** If you want to cut out a lot of the cholesterol, toss the yolks and simply make this recipe with the whites.

**Per serving:** Kilojoules 1,100; Fat 18.6 g (Saturated 5.8 g); Sodium 431 mg; Carbohydrate 16 g (Dietary Fibre <1 g); Protein 8.4 g.



## Cracking tips for eggshell chips

Tired of chasing that elusive little chip of eggshell around the bowl when you've cracked an egg? Try this simple trick. Crack the egg on a flat surface, not the side of a bowl or cup. Crack firmly enough to crush some of the shell, but not too firmly or you'll end up with egg all over the

benchtop. Then break open the shell with your fingers over the bowl. You'll rarely have to go fishing for slippery bits of shell again. (And if you need some help separating the egg yolk from the white, see the figure below called '3 Ways to Separate an Egg'.)

### 3 ways to Separate an Egg

- ① Crack the egg in half, over a bowl...



...and pass the yolk from 1 shell to the other, allowing the white to gradually fall into the bowl below.



- ② Crack the egg and break the egg into your cupped hand held over a bowl. Gently, relax fingers, allowing the white to spill through into the bowl below.



- ③ Use an egg separator! Place it over a small bowl or glass. Crack the egg open and let it fall into the centre.



The white will slip through the slots and the yolk will stay in the separator.

## Instant Eggs

Eating protein for breakfast is recommended, but for those in a desperate hurry, it's sometimes hard to do. Try this quick way of preparing an egg and then create your own versions with what you have in the kitchen.

**Prep time:** 3 minutes • **Cooking time:** 1 minute • **Servings:** 1

Ingredients	Directions
<b>1 teaspoon butter or margarine</b> <b>1 egg</b> <b>1 teaspoon milk</b> <b>Salt and pepper</b> <b>Chopped basil or other herbs</b> <b>1 heaped teaspoonful of one of the following: sweet corn, finely chopped celery, spring onions, sliced olive, fetta or other cheese, cooked pumpkin OR ½ teaspoon of sweet chilli sauce OR ¼ teaspoon of curry powder</b>	<p><b>1</b> Grease the bottom and sides of a small microwave-proof bowl (dessert bowl size). If time is at a premium, you don't have to grease the bowl first — it will just make it a tad easier to clean later on. Add the egg, milk, herbs and salt and pepper to taste and beat with a fork to mix.</p> <p><b>2</b> Mix in one of the extra ingredients suggested, such as sliced olive.</p> <p><b>3</b> Heat in microwave on high until centre is just cooked. You'll have to experiment because microwave ovens vary and the timing is important. Try 50 seconds first and if your egg is still runny, cook it for another 10 seconds, or as necessary. Don't overcook or the egg will become rubbery and tasteless. Some fillings take a little longer.</p> <p><b>4</b> Turn out onto a slice of hot buttered toast.</p>

**Per serving:** Kilojoules 442; Fat 8.7 g (Saturated 2.7 g); Sodium 106 mg; Carbohydrate <1 g (Dietary Fibre <1 g); Protein 6.6 g.



## Fetta Frittata

This recipe is one of Margaret's all-time favourites. It's a winner with her grandchildren and a big hit at leisurely brunches in the garden with friends (don't forget the champagne).

**Prep time:** 20 minutes • **Cooking time:** 15 minutes • **Servings:** 6

Ingredients	Directions
<b>1 tablespoon butter or margarine</b>	<b>1</b> Heat butter/margarine in a small frying pan over medium heat. Gently fry the finely chopped shallots or onion, then add other vegetables and cook until they've softened.
<b>3 shallots or ½ onion</b>	
<b>½ cup grated carrot</b>	
<b>1 cup grated zucchini</b>	<b>2</b> Add eggs and pepper. Salt isn't needed as the fetta is usually very salty. Tilt the frying pan from side to side so that the eggs cover all the vegetables.
<b>1 cup chopped mushrooms</b>	
<b>6 large eggs, beaten</b>	<b>3</b> Add fetta and chopped basil and press into the egg mixture. As it cooks, loosen the egg mixture around the edges of the pan and allow any uncooked egg to run underneath.
<b>Pepper</b>	
<b>100 g (½ cup) fetta cheese</b>	<b>4</b> When almost cooked, sprinkle with cheese, wrap the handle of the frying pan in foil and pop under the grill for a minute or two to brown the cheese.
<b>½ cup chopped fresh basil (1 teaspoon of dried basil will do, but it's not as good)</b>	
<b>1 cup grated tasty cheese</b>	<b>5</b> Gently slide frittata on to a serving plate, or cut into serving-sized segments in the pan with a spatula. Serve hot with gluten-free toast.

**Vary It!** Add finely chopped gluten-free ham, pitted olives and sun-dried tomatoes, artichokes, or use cooked vegetables (cubes of cooked pumpkin or sweet potato are good). It can be spiced up by adding sweet chilli sauce. Frittata also tastes delicious cold for lunch or sliced into savoury nibbles.

**Per serving:** Kilojoules 1,012; Fat 18.9 g (Saturated 9.3 g); Sodium 420 mg; Carbohydrate 1.5 g (Dietary Fibre 1 g); Protein 16.4 g.

## Little Egg and Bacon Pies

These delicious morsels have no crust and are baked in muffin trays. Use gluten-free bacon or ham and serve warm. They can be taken on a picnic in their tray — a sure-fire winner.

**Prep time:** 20 minutes • **Cooking time:** 20 minutes • **Serves:** 12

Ingredients	Directions
12 thin slices rindless gluten-free bacon or ham (ham is easier to use than bacon)	1 Preheat oven to 180°C and grease a 12-hole muffin tray.
12 eggs	2 Line each muffin hole with a slice of bacon or ham. Drop a broken egg into each one.
2 teaspoons whipping cream (you can substitute plain yoghurt or gluten-free mayonnaise)	3 Drizzle each muffin hole with a little cream (or gluten-free mayonnaise or plain yoghurt) and sprinkle with salt and pepper to taste. Sprinkle with chopped parsley and parmesan cheese.
Salt and pepper	4 Bake for 15 to 20 minutes or until the egg is set. Remove from oven and set aside for minutes. Loosen with a knife and serve hot, or cool on a wire rack for later use.
2 tablespoons chopped parsley	
4 tablespoons grated parmesan cheese	

**Tip:** If you've only seen grated parmesan in the shaker packs, for adding to pasta or other dishes, look for solid parmesan in the deli section, or at the deli counter. Store in an airtight container in the fridge and grate it as you need it. Other tasty cheese will do if necessary, but if you want real flavour, go for the real parmesan.

**Per serving:** Kilojoules 436; Fat 6.7 g (Saturated 2.4 g); Sodium 409 mg; Carbohydrate <1 g (Dietary Fibre 0 g); Protein 10.9 g.





## French Toast

French toast reminds some people of easy elegance. It's ridiculously easy to make but somehow suggests an air of sophistication, especially if you serve it with caster sugar and strawberries.

**Prep time:** 5 minutes • **Cooking time:** 6 minutes per slice (less if using a sandwich press)

• **Servings:** 6

Ingredients	Directions
4 eggs ¼ cup milk ¼ teaspoon cinnamon (optional) 2 tablespoons butter 6 slices gluten-free bread	<b>1</b> In a medium bowl, combine the eggs, milk and cinnamon (if desired). Beat the mixture with a whisk or fork until well blended.
	<b>2</b> Melt some of the butter in a large frying pan over medium heat, or heat sandwich press or toaster oven.
	<b>3</b> Dip each slice of bread in the egg mixture, coating the bread well on both sides. Use a spatula and tongs and handle with care. Don't leave the bread in the egg mixture too long — French toast made with gluten-free bread can very easily turn into Le French Mush.
	<b>4</b> Place the bread in the frying pan or sandwich press. Cook the bread until golden brown. If using a frying pan turn after about 3 minutes.
	<b>5</b> Serve the French toast warm. You can top the toast with golden syrup, caster sugar and/or sliced strawberries, or make a savoury version by leaving out the cinnamon and adding your favourite dried herbs — get creative.

**Tip:** If you have a toaster bag you can use it to make French toast. You don't need to grease the bag. Be careful when taking the bag out of the toaster — you'll need an oven mitt because the bags get very hot.

**Per serving:** Kilojoules 725; Fat 9.1 g (Saturated 4.8 g); Sodium 309 mg; Carbohydrate 16.4 g (Dietary Fibre <1 g); Protein 6.6 g.

## Simple Smoothie

This recipe is the foundation smoothie from which all other smoothies are born: simple, delicious and just waiting for you to enhance it with nutritious ingredients and a creative style all your own. This smoothie combines the sweetness of bananas and honey with the slight tartness of strawberry yoghurt.

**Preparation time:** 4 minutes • **Servings:** 2

Ingredients	Directions
½ cup milk	<b>1</b> Put all the ingredients in a blender.  <b>2</b> Mix until smooth.
1 cup strawberry yoghurt	
2 ripe bananas	
1 teaspoon honey	
¼ cup ice cubes	

**Vary It!** You can make a smoothie countless ways — be creative and use ingredients you have on hand. Play with the portion sizes and types of ingredients you use to get the taste and nutritional value that suits you. The only fruit that doesn't work well is citrus.

**Per serving:** Kilojoules 1,129; Fat 6.2 g (Saturated 3.9 g); Sodium 106 mg; Carbohydrate 42.2 g (Dietary Fibre 2.2 g); Protein 10.2 g.



If you have bananas lying around that are a little too brown for your taste, or strawberries that are getting a tad mushy, toss them in a smoothie. Bananas and other fruits, especially when at the tail end of being aesthetically acceptable, sweeten smoothies and add loads of nutritional value.

## Starting Your Day Smoothly

Smoothies are a great way to start the day. These thick, smooth drinks use a foundation of fruit or fruit juice, milk and yoghurt or ice cream. No need for any fancy equipment — any blender, immersion hand-blender, or even a shaker cup will work. Not only are smoothies delicious and easy to whip up, but you can easily sneak a lot of nutritious things into them without anyone knowing. Creamy, rich, refreshing and energising, smoothies suit any taste and any mood. The only thing limiting your options is your creativity.

Another great starter is that all-time favourite, the pancake, or its second cousin, the drop scone. Bring on a plate of these and watch the early morning grumbles disappear.



## Pancakes

Pancakes have been cherished as a favourite breakfast staple for centuries. You can also use this batter to make waffles — just follow the cooking instructions that came with your waffle iron. Dress up your waffles and pancakes by adding sliced bananas to the batter and serve sprinkled with sugar and lemon juice, jam or honey, or with fresh fruit and whipped cream.

**Prep time:** 10 minutes • **Cooking time:** 5 minutes per pancake • **Servings:** 8

Ingredients	Directions
<b>Non-stick spray</b> <b>1 cup gluten-free plain flour mixture (see Chapter 9, or use a commercial plain flour mix)</b> <b>1 teaspoon xanthan gum</b> <b>1 teaspoon gluten-free baking powder</b> <b>2 teaspoons vanilla</b> <b>2 eggs, beaten</b> <b>2 tablespoons vegetable oil</b> <b>1 cup milk</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 Heat a frying pan over medium heat. To see whether the pan is at the right temperature, let a drop of water fall in the pan — if the water sizzles immediately and moves around, the pan's hot enough. Spray the pan lightly with non-stick spray.</li> <li>2 In a medium mixing bowl, combine the flour mixture, xanthan gum and baking powder. Add the vanilla, eggs, oil and milk. Stir the batter until moistened, using a whisk to remove any lumps.</li> <li>3 Use a large spoon to drop about <math>\frac{1}{3}</math> cup batter onto the hot griddle or pan (to make mouse pancakes, drop one large spoonful of batter and use two smaller ones for ears).</li> <li>4 Bubbles should begin to form in about 3 minutes. When they do, lift the pancake slightly with a spatula to see whether the underside is golden brown. If it is, flip the pancake over. This time you won't see bubbles to know when the pancake is browning, so you'll have to check occasionally. Usually pancakes take 2 to 3 minutes to become golden brown on the second side.</li> </ol>

**Tip:** Try using 'melted' berries for a deliciously healthy topping. Put fresh or frozen whole strawberries, raspberries or blueberries in a saucepan with a little sugar, mash the berries slightly and add a tiny bit of water. Heat the mixture slowly until the sugar dissolves in the juice.

**Per serving:** Kilojoules 741; Fat 7.9 g (Saturated 1.9 g); Sodium 46 mg; Carbohydrate 20.3 g (Dietary Fibre 1.7 g); Protein 4.7 g.

## Scottish Drop Scones

Originating in the highlands of Scotland (Hoots, mon), this recipe has been handed down through the generations to our 'Real Cook', who adapted it to be gluten-free. Her grandmother, who migrated in the 1920s, called them 'griddle scones'. She did not have a sweet tooth, so replaced the golden syrup in the recipe with some grated cheese. Split and toasted the next day, they're nearly as good.

**Prep time:** 15 minutes • **Cooking time:** 10–15 minutes • **Servings:** 15 scones

Ingredients	Directions
200 g (1 cup) gluten-free plain flour mix	1 Place flour in a medium mixing bowl, add egg(s) and milk; beat well.
1 large or 2 small eggs	2 Add melted butter or oil, baking powder and salt; beat well. If mix is very dry, add a little milk, but don't make the batter runny or you will end up with pikelets instead.
125 ml (½ cup) milk	3 Spoon batter onto preheated, greased frying pan to make 6 or 7 scones. Cook 4 to 5 minutes or until set and medium brown. Carefully turn over and cook a further 4 to 5 minutes or until firm when pressed. Split and serve hot with butter and jam, or top half a scone with a poached egg.
2 tablespoons melted butter, margarine or oil	
2 teaspoons gluten-free baking powder	
¼ teaspoon salt	

**Per serving (1 scone):** Kilojoules 336; Fat 3.1 g (Saturated 1 g); Sodium 75 mg; Carbohydrate 10.6 g (Dietary Fibre <1 g); Protein 2.1 g.



## *Brighten Your Breakfast with a Muffin*

We love muffins because they're easy to make, no-fuss and almost everyone loves to eat them, whether for breakfast, lunch or as a snack. They are sweet enough to satisfy the 'sweet tooth' (or should that be 'sweet teeth') who love all things sweet and sugary, yet not too sweet for those who definitely don't. Start with a basic recipe to get an idea of how long muffins take to cook in your own oven and how sweet you prefer them, and then branch out and try some of the other recipes. When you decide how you like your muffins, you can experiment to your heart's content. Margaret loves the muffins with a savoury flavour, like zucchini and sun-dried tomato. Some possible additions are basil, pesto, chopped walnuts and parmesan cheese. Experiment a little and surprise your guests with a freshly baked zucchini and walnut muffin with their eggs. You'll need to make lots because they will go like hot — well, like hot muffins!



Here are some tips to remember when making muffins:

- ✓ Adding a teaspoon of xanthan or guar gum improves the texture of your muffins so they are less likely to crumble.
- ✓ Replace rice flour with brown rice flour if you want to increase the fibre content, or use one of the basic flour mixes in Chapter 9 and add 1 to 2 teaspoons of gluten-free baking powder. If possible, use a mix of flours because rice flour alone tends to make rather dry muffins.
- ✓ Non-stick muffin trays still need to be either greased or lined with muffin papers. A gluten-free non-stick spray product is both convenient and saves on fat intake.
- ✓ Be careful not to overbake or your muffins will be hard and dry.
- ✓ Two egg whites can be substituted for one whole egg to reduce cholesterol.
- ✓ Adding  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup cooked apple or apple sauce to a basic mix creates a softer, moister muffin.

## Fruit and Nut Muffins

This recipe produces a nice, substantial muffin. If you want to serve muffins for breakfast, you can prepare this mixture and leave overnight, ready to cook the next morning.

**Prep time:** 20 minutes • **Cooking time:** 20–25 minutes • **Serves:** 12 muffins

Ingredients	Directions
1 egg	1 Preheat oven to 180°C and grease or line a 12-hole muffin tray.
3 tablespoons olive oil	
3 tablespoons honey	2 Mix egg, oil, honey, milk and vanilla in a large bowl.
1 cup milk	
1 teaspoon vanilla	3 Sift in flour and bicarbonate soda, then add the xanthan gum and rice bran and mix well. If you don't want to use rice bran, or dislike the flavour, replace with $\frac{3}{4}$ cup of another gluten-free flour.
1 cup gluten-free self-raising flour	
1 heaped teaspoon bicarbonate soda	4 Stir in fruit and nuts. (Cover and refrigerate overnight for early morning baking.)
$\frac{3}{4}$ teaspoon xanthan gum	
1 cup rice bran	5 Divide mixture evenly into the muffin holes.
1 cup currants and/or sultanas	
1 cup chopped nuts	6 Bake 20 minutes (fan forced) or 25 minutes until golden brown. Serve buttered if you wish.

**Per serving (1 muffin):** Kilojoules 1,144; Fat 13.7 g (Saturated 2.5 g); Sodium 301 mg; Carbohydrate 31.2 g (Dietary Fibre 4.9 g); Protein 6.2 g.



## Banana and Choc Chip Muffins

This recipe calls for gluten-free self-raising flour — the commercial self-raising flour mixes are really good. If you use your own plain flour mix (refer to Chapter 9), you need to add gluten-free baking powder.

**Prep time:** 15 minutes • **Cooking time:** 25–30 minutes • **Serves:** 12 muffins

Ingredients	Directions
1½ cups gluten-free self-raising flour	1 Preheat oven to 180°C and grease or line a 12-hole muffin tray.
½ cup sugar	2 Mix flour, sugar, bicarbonate soda and xanthan gum.
¼ teaspoon bicarbonate of soda	3 Mix together egg, butter or margarine, sour cream or milk and add to dry ingredients.
1 teaspoon xanthan gum	4 Add banana and choc chips and mix lightly until combined. Don't overmix.
1 egg, beaten	5 Divide evenly between muffin holes and cook for 25 to 30 minutes.
2 tablespoons butter or margarine (melted)	
1 cup sour cream or milk	
2 mashed bananas	
½ cup choc chips	

**Per serving (1 muffin):** Kilojoules 748; Fat 5.3 g (Saturated 2.4 g); Sodium 342 mg; Carbohydrate 30.5 g (Dietary Fibre 1.6 g); Protein 2.1 g.

## Berry Muffins

Just in case you're still looking for that absolutely perfect muffin, here is one last recipe. These muffins have a particularly soft texture and with the addition of fresh or frozen raspberries are truly delicious. The apple sauce adds little to the flavour but really improves the texture. You can use either fresh or frozen berries (if using frozen fruit, don't thaw it first).

**Prep time:** 20 minutes • **Cooking time:** 20–25 minutes • **Serves:** 12 medium-sized muffins

Ingredients	Directions
<b>300 g (1½ cups) rice flour</b> <b>1 teaspoon gluten-free baking powder</b> <b>½ teaspoon bicarbonate soda</b> <b>½ teaspoon salt</b> <b>1 teaspoon xanthan gum</b> <b>50 g (¼ cup) sugar</b> <b>125 ml (½ cup) canola oil</b> <b>2 eggs</b> <b>1 cup unsweetened apple sauce (use stewed apples or a can of apple baby food)</b> <b>½ teaspoon vanilla</b> <b>½ cup frozen or fresh raspberries, blueberries, berry mix or dried cranberries</b>	<p><b>1</b> Preheat oven to 180°C and grease or line a 12-hole muffin tray.</p> <p><b>2</b> In a medium mixing bowl combine rice flour, baking powder, bicarbonate soda, salt, xanthan gum and sugar.</p> <p><b>3</b> Add oil, eggs, apple sauce and vanilla, stirring until just combined. Lightly fold in chosen berries.</p> <p><b>4</b> Spoon into muffin holes. Bake for 20 to 25 minutes or until muffins are starting to brown and are firm to the touch when pressed.</p>

**Per serving:** Kilojoules 867; Fat 10.6 g (Saturated 1.1 g); Sodium 151 mg; Carbohydrate 26.4 g (Dietary Fibre 1.1 g); Protein 3 g.





## Buttering up to muffins

A flavoured butter adds that perfect finishing touch. For a special treat, or to dress up plain, basic muffins, try some of these mouth-watering ideas:

✓ **Date nut butter:** In a small bowl beat until fluffy ½ cup softened butter, 3 tablespoons gluten-free icing sugar, 3 tablespoons finely chopped dates and ¼ cup finely chopped walnuts or pecans.

✓ **Honey butter:** In a small bowl beat ½ cup softened butter with ¼ cup honey until fluffy.

✓ **Orange butter:** In a small bowl beat ½ cup softened butter with 1½ teaspoons grated orange peel and 3 tablespoons gluten-free icing sugar until fluffy.

✓ **Spicy butter:** In a small bowl beat until fluffy ½ cup softened butter, 3 tablespoons brown sugar, ¼ teaspoon cinnamon, ¼ teaspoon allspice and ⅛ teaspoon nutmeg.

Use any of these on muffins, pancakes, toast or bread to create a tempting treat any time of the day. Use either butter or margarine, as you wish.

## Chapter 11

# Snacking on Appetisers, Nibbles and Wraps

### *In This Chapter*

- ▶ Making snack attack finger foods
- ▶ Checking out different kinds of dips
- ▶ Wrapping it up

**E**very great get-together begins with great-tasting appetisers, whether you're at a casual gathering of friends and family or a formal function. Not only do appetisers whet the appetite, but they also whet the imagination, setting the stage for the meal to come.

But appetiser anticipation can quickly turn to disappointment for someone on a gluten-free diet because, more often than not, appetisers mean gluten — in, under, over and around. And the challenge that faces a party planner is working out what to serve that's both delicious *and* gluten-free. If you find yourself paralysed with appetiser anxiety, never fear. You find ideas in this chapter for appetisers, as well as for snacks and nibbles to satisfy those between-meal hunger pangs. Just don't blame us if everyone's too full for the main course.

### *Recipes in This Chapter*

- 🍷 Spicy Corn Fritters
- 🍷 Zucchini and Haloumi Fritters
- ▶ Rice Cake Melts
- 🍷 Quinoa Snacks
- 🍷 Artichoke and Spinach Dip
- 🍷 Guacamole
- 🍷 Mango Salsa
- ▶ Vietnamese Rice Wraps
- ▶ Spicy Chicken Rolls
- ▶ Chicken Nori Rolls
- ▶ Asian Pork Lettuce Wraps



## *Fun Finger Foods and Nibbles*

People love to eat with their fingers. And as long as you're wearing jeans so you can wipe your sticky fingers, what's the harm in dining with your digits? In this section, we give you great ideas for recipes that help get the party started with fun finger foods.

## Spicy Corn Fritters

This delicious snack is made from polenta. Once considered a peasant food (like its cousin corn grits), polenta is an Italian cornmeal mush that's becoming more and more popular. You can find polenta at some supermarkets and at health food shops. For this appetiser, the polenta adds more than just flavour — it actually holds the corn balls together. (Use the leftover polenta as a side dish, mixed with grated tasty cheese.)

**Prep time:** 15 minutes • **Cooking time:** 50 minutes • **Servings:** 4

Ingredients	Directions
<b>1 cup polenta</b>	<b>1</b> In a large saucepan, bring 1.2 litres (5 cups) salted water or gluten-free stock to the boil. Sprinkle the polenta into the water, stirring continuously. Cook for about 40 minutes on low heat, until polenta thickens, stirring frequently.
<b>1 cup canned corn</b>	
<b>2 fresh red chillies, seeded and finely chopped</b>	<b>2</b> Put the corn, chilli, garlic, lime leaves, coriander, eggs and green beans into a large bowl. Add ½ cup cooked polenta and mix ingredients well. Use your hands to form balls about the size of golf balls. Set them on a plate.
<b>1 teaspoon crushed garlic (about 2 cloves)</b>	
<b>10 kaffir lime leaves, finely chopped (found in Thai sections of Asian markets)</b>	<b>3</b> Heat the oil in a wok, fry pan or deep-fryer to a high temperature. You know the oil is hot enough when you add a small drop of water to the oil and it pops. (Be careful, though. More than a drop and it may spit and burn you.)
<b>3 tablespoons chopped fresh coriander leaves</b>	
<b>2 eggs, beaten</b>	<b>4</b> Turning the fritters occasionally, cook them in the oil until they're brown and crispy on the outside (about 7 minutes). Remove the fritters from the wok, fry pan or deep-fryer with a slotted spoon and let them drain on paper towels.
<b>¼ cup finely sliced green beans</b>	
<b>½ cup vegetable oil (for frying)</b>	

**Per serving:** Kilojoules 1,230; Fat 17 g (Saturated 3 g); Sodium 226 mg; Carbohydrate 28 g (Dietary Fibre 4 g); Protein 7 g.

## Zucchini and Haloumi Fritters

These delicious fritters are best eaten immediately after cooking or the haloumi becomes a little tough.

**Prep time:** 10 minutes • **Cooking time:** 30 minutes • **Servings:** 40 fritters

<i>Ingredients</i>	<i>Directions</i>
300 g zucchini, coarsely grated	1 Squeeze the grated zucchini with your hands to remove as much moisture as possible.
4 spring onions, thinly sliced	
200 g haloumi, coarsely grated	2 Combine zucchini with spring onions, grated haloumi, dill, eggs and flour and season with black pepper.
1 tablespoon chopped dill	
2 eggs	3 Heat oil in a pan to medium hot. Shape mixture into fritters using a heaped teaspoonful each time and fry until golden brown, about 2 minutes each side.
30 g (¼ cup) plain gluten-free flour	
Cracked black pepper	4 Remove fritters, let them drain on paper towel and keep warm.
¼ cup oil	
½ cup plain yoghurt	5 Serve with yoghurt and a sprig of fresh dill.
Extra dill for garnish	

**Per serving (per fritter):** 142 Kilojoules; Fat 2.5 g (Saturated 0.9 g); Sodium 162 mg; Carbohydrate 1.2 g (Dietary Fibre 0.1 g); Protein 1.6 g.





## Helpful hints if you're relying on frying

It may not be one of the healthier modes of cooking, but frying is, nonetheless, a common cooking method, especially for many appetisers. Here are some important tips that may help you create the perfect crunch:

- ✓ **Use oil you designate for gluten-free foods.** If you're preparing gluten-containing foods and gluten-free ones, make sure you cook the gluten-free foods first, change the oil, or be scrupulous in straining out any bits of fried material. (Although gluten doesn't dissolve in oil, tiny gluten-containing crumbs or bits of batter can be hard to see.)
- ✓ **Choose the right oil.** Some oils, like sesame oil, aren't meant to be heated to the very high temperatures deep-frying requires. Canola or vegetable oils are some of the
- best deep-frying oils, because they have a high smoking point. Olive oil isn't recommended for frying. Find an oil that matches the flavour profile of the food you're cooking and turn down the heat if your oil begins to smoke, which indicates the oil is degrading. Degrading oil can affect the flavour of the food.
- ✓ **Don't overload the basket or pan.** If you're too impatient, you may be tempted to 'hurry' the cooking process by cooking as much as you can at once. Overloading can result in uneven cooking and may even cause the food to absorb extra oil.
- ✓ **Filter and clean often.** If the oil gets smoky or has debris in it, throw it out and start with new oil.

## Rice Cake Melts

For a quick snack with a little more oomph than a plain rice cake, try this idea. But be warned — rice cakes are highly flammable and if you turn your back on the grill, your snack will go up in smoke! Top each rice cake with tomato paste and your choice of toppings, such as asparagus spears, chopped artichoke hearts, cooked chicken pieces with gluten-free mayonnaise, avocado, tuna, or finely sliced capsicum. These combinations work well — hummus, beetroot slices and cheese, or basil pesto instead of tomato paste, asparagus spears and cheese.

**Prep time:** 3–5 minutes • **Cooking time:** 1 minute (but don't look away!) • **Servings:** 2

Ingredients	Directions
Tomato paste	<b>1</b> Spread tomato paste right over the rice cakes.
2 thick rice cakes	<b>2</b> Top with ham and olives. Cut the cheese to fit and place over the top.
1/3 cup gluten-free ham, cut into narrow strips	<b>3</b> Preheat grill and grill the rice cakes until the cheese starts to brown. Watch carefully because rice cakes burn very quickly and can ignite.
1 tablespoon chopped, pitted olives	<b>4</b> Serve immediately because the rice cakes cool rapidly.
2 thin slices mozzarella or tasty cheese	

**Per serving:** Kilojoules 647; Fat 8.8 g (Saturated 4.7 g); Sodium 516 mg; Carbohydrate 8.9 g (Dietary Fibre <1 g); Protein 9.4 g.



## Quinoa Snacks

For a healthy snack at home, try mixing cooked quinoa with your favourite dip or salsa mix. (See Chapter 12 for a quick recipe.) The crunchy, chewy consistency provided by the quinoa makes it a really satisfying snack. To prepare quinoa, follow instructions on the packet, or use leftover quinoa. Add grated carrot or finely chopped celery for added crunch.

**Prep time:** 3 minutes • **Servings:** 1

Ingredients	Directions
$\frac{2}{3}$ cup cooked quinoa	<b>1</b> Mix quinoa together with dip or salsa.
1 tablespoon of your favourite dip or salsa	

**Per serving:** 636 Kilojoules; Fat 0.03 g (Saturated 0 g); Sodium 104 mg; Carbohydrate 27.3 g (Dietary Fibre 3.7 g); Protein 5.7 g.

**Vary It!** You can use your imagination to invent delicious mixes. Try spicy dips or salsas, olive dip, a mix of low-fat cream cheese and sweet chilli sauce, or roast pumpkin mashed with basil. To make the snack more substantial, add chopped cucumber, chopped nuts or seeds, chopped olives, grated vegetables — or, really, whatever takes your fancy. For a hot snack, top with grated parmesan and pop in the microwave to heat.

## Digging into Dips and Dippers

Whether you're dipping veggies, corn chips or crisps, a few good dips go a long way, and you can vary your repertoire of basic recipes to create exciting gluten-free grazeables. Although many homemade dips are inherently gluten-free, others require just a few tweaks here and there to make them safe for anyone avoiding gluten.

**WARNING!**



Double-dipping is *not* allowed, especially if some of the guests are eating gluten-containing foods. After people have dunked ordinary crisps or dry biscuits into the dip, it's no longer gluten-free. Find a spare plate or bowl, or ask the hostess for one, scoop out a generous dollop of the dip you can eat and keep it safe for your own use.

Of course, dips aren't just for dipping. Use them as fillings for hollowed baked potatoes or halved hard-boiled eggs. Or put them on pancakes (you can find a recipe in Chapter 10) or corn tortillas — you can roll the filling into a wrap and then eat the whole thing as a tasty snack, or slice it into stylish roll-ups.

## Artichoke and Spinach Dip

You won't find this one in *Dieting For Dummies*, but it is gluten-free! Use this cheesy dip with corn tortilla chips, rice crackers or vegetables. Or if you have a favourite gluten-free bread, slice it thinly, toast it and spread the dip on top.

**Prep time:** 20 minutes • **Cooking time:** 25 minutes • **Servings:** 12

Ingredients	Directions
250 g low-fat cream cheese	1 Preheat the oven to 180°C. Let the cream cheese warm to room temperature.
¼ cup gluten-free mayonnaise	
½ teaspoon crushed garlic (about 1 clove)	2 In a large bowl, cream together the cream cheese, mayonnaise, garlic, basil and salt and pepper. Setting aside a few teaspoons of each cheese to use as a topping, add the parmesan, romano and mozzarella cheeses. Mix until everything is well blended.
1 teaspoon fresh basil	
Salt and pepper to taste	3 Add the artichoke hearts and spinach and mix again.
½ cup grated parmesan cheese	
½ cup grated romano cheese	4 Spray a large ovenproof serving dish with non-stick spray, pour in the dip and top it with the cheese you set aside in step 2.
¼ cup grated mozzarella cheese	
440 g jar artichoke hearts, drained and chopped	5 Bake the dip for about 25 minutes or until the top begins to brown and the cheese melts.
½ cup spinach, drained and finely chopped	
Non-stick spray	

**Per serving:** Kilojoules 582; Fat 12 g (Saturated 6 g); Sodium 292 mg; Carbohydrate 3 g (Dietary Fibre 0 g); Protein 5 g.





## Guacamole

Guacamole is an avocado-based dip that originated in Mexico. Most guacamole recipes start with fresh, peeled avocados and add lime (or lemon) juice, tomatoes, onions, coriander, garlic and spices. The juice actually keeps the guacamole from turning brown when you expose it to the air. Leaving the avocado pit in the guacamole until just before you serve it also decreases browning. For this guacamole, feel free to kick it up a notch with your favourite hot sauce.

**Prep time:** 15 minutes • **Servings:** 6

Ingredients	Directions
<b>2 ripe avocados</b>	<b>1</b> Peel the avocados, remove the flesh from the pits and cube the flesh. Save the pits.
<b>1 small-to-medium ripe tomato, diced</b>	
<b>½ small red onion, chopped</b>	<b>2</b> In a medium bowl, combine the avocado flesh, tomato, onion, jalapeño, lime juice, coriander, Worcestershire sauce and salt and pepper.
<b>½ teaspoon finely chopped jalapeño chilli</b>	
<b>4 tablespoons lime juice</b>	<b>3</b> Mix all the ingredients well, keeping the guacamole lumpy. Place the avocado pit in the dip and remove the pit just before serving.
<b>2 teaspoons chopped fresh coriander leaves</b>	
<b>2 teaspoons gluten-free Worcestershire sauce</b>	
<b>Salt and pepper to taste</b>	

**Per serving:** Kilojoules 435; Fat 8 g (Saturated 2 g); Sodium 117 mg; Carbohydrate 8 g (Dietary Fibre 5 g); Protein 2 g.

## Mango Salsa

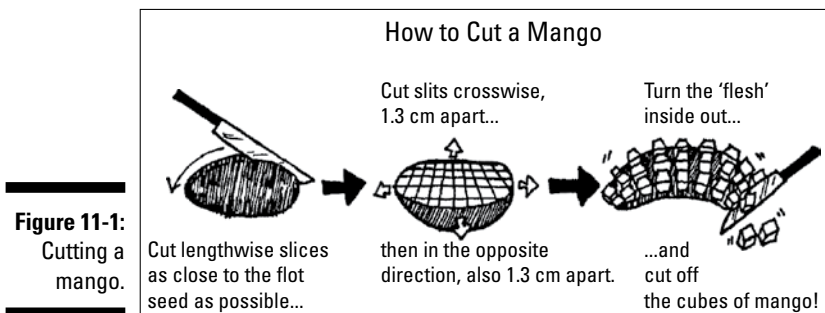
Salsas come in endless forms and flavours. Fresh mango salsa is versatile and easy to make. You can serve it as a dip or use it to dress up main courses, putting it over grilled pork, chicken or salmon. You can also use it to make fish tacos — just spoon this salsa over cooked fish and wrap the mixture in a corn tortilla or in a gluten-free taco shell with chopped or grated salad vegetables and sour cream.

**Prep time:** 20 minutes • **Servings:** 6

Ingredients	Directions
<b>1 ripe mango, peeled and diced finely (about 1 cup)</b> <b>½ medium red onion, finely chopped</b> <b>1 jalapeño chilli, minced</b> <b>1 large tomato, diced</b> <b>¼ cup chopped fresh coriander leaves</b> <b>4 tablespoons lime juice</b> <b>Salt and pepper to taste</b>	<p><b>1</b> Combine the mango, onion, jalapeño, tomato, coriander, lime juice and salt and pepper in a bowl; mix them until well blended. Don't mix so hard that you mash the mango — the salsa should contain chunks.</p> <p><b>2</b> Chill the salsa for an hour or more to blend all the flavours.</p>

**Tip:** Figure 11-1 shows how to dice a mango. With that big seed in the middle, they aren't easy to work with.

**Per serving:** Kilojoules 146; Fat 0 g (Saturated 0 g); Sodium 101 mg; Carbohydrate 9 g (Dietary Fibre 1 g); Protein 1 g.



## Simple but sexy spreads

The difference between a dip and a spread is consistency. A dip is creamier, so even a fragile dipper can withstand the pressure of a good dig through a dip. On the other hand, you usually serve a spread with spreading knives and put it on crackers or rice thins. Today, several widely available varieties of rice or corn crackers or rice thins make the perfect crackers for spreads. Consider using these ideas to keep your guests happy but still have plenty of time left to enjoy the company:

- ✓ **Sweet chilli cream cheese:** Put a block of low-fat cream cheese on a serving platter. Top it with sweet chilli sauce. It's not too

hot, but the sauce adds a spicy, semi-sweet topping to the cream cheese.

- ✓ **Brown sugar on baked brie:** Place a wedge or round of brie cheese on an ovenproof serving platter. Top the cheese with a layer (about 1 cm thick) of light brown sugar. Bake at 180° C for 8 minutes or until the inside of the cheese appears to be soft.
- ✓ **Crab cream cheese:** Put a block of low-fat cream cheese on a serving platter. Drain a can of crab meat and spread the crab meat evenly over the top of the cream cheese. Drizzle a tasty, spicy sauce over the top (make a pattern if you're feeling artistic).

## Going Wild with Wraps

Wraps are quite popular at the moment and they offer never-ending possibilities for gluten-free dishes. The only limits to what you can make into a wrap are your creativity and your sense of adventure. Use corn tortillas, gluten-free crêpes, rice wraps, Japanese nori seaweed sheets or lettuce for your wrapper, and then let your imagination run wild as you concoct tasty fillings depending on which type of wrapper you're using.



If you're having trouble thinking of what to put in your wraps, try these ideas:

- ✓ **Salad wrap:** Actually, any salad works well in a wrap. Chop the salad vegetables more finely than usual and avoid thin dressings — gluten-free mayonnaise holds things together and adds some moisture if you're using tortillas, which can be rather dry.
- ✓ **Fish wraps:** Mix small pieces of cooked fish with chopped or grated salad vegetables, add some Mango Salsa from the recipe in this chapter, roll it all up in a gluten-free tortilla and you've got yourself a tasty snack!
- ✓ **Chicken and mayo wrap:** Mix chopped cooked chicken with gluten-free mayonnaise, grated vegetables and chopped chives.
- ✓ **Leftovers wrap:** Seriously, every fridge on the planet has something in it that you can make into a wrap. Go with it. Mix. Blend. Be wild and crazy and clean out the refrigerator at the same time.

## Rice rolls

Rice rolls are a great type of wrap. Available in Asian markets and stores, rice paper wrappers come from a paste of ground rice and water, which are stamped into rounds and dried. When you moisten pieces of rice paper, the brittle sheets become flexible, making them perfect for wraps. Rice paper wrappers can be tricky to use, but they're well worth it after you get the hang of working with them.



The secrets to making great rice rolls are to use the freshest ingredients, to moisten the rice paper wrappers until they're pliable but not too wet and to roll the bundles tightly. Here are some tips and tricks:

### 1. Soak them.

To make the rice paper wrappers pliable for folding, you need to soak them one at a time for about 4 to 5 seconds until they're soft. Although some people simply use warm water for soaking, others believe the key to making a rice wrap that's pliable but doesn't fall apart is in the soaking. If your wrappers fall apart, try this for your soaking mixture:

2 cups warm water

2 tablespoons sugar

¼ cup cider vinegar

### 2. Drain the wrappers on a flat surface.

You can use your hands to take the wrappers out of the water and lay them flat on a cutting board or clean, damp tea towel. Don't put them on top of each other, though, or they'll stick together and you'll never get them apart. Pat them dry. Handling rice paper wrappers can be tough, because they tend to stick to themselves. Be patient. With a few attempts, you can get the hang of handling them.

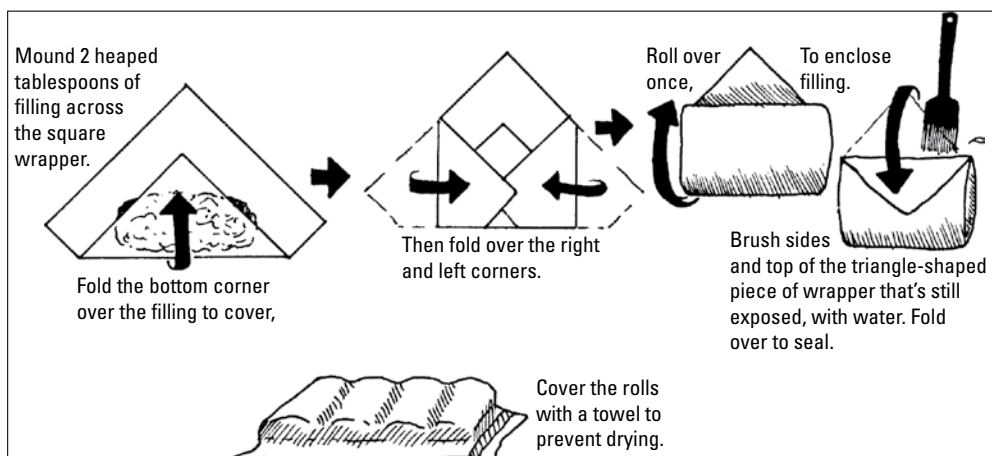
### 3. Layer the ingredients in the wrapper.

Folding rice paper wrappers can be tricky: If they're not sticking to themselves, the wrappers seem to be ripping in all the wrong places. To avoid ripping, keep your fingers moistened and don't overfill the softened wrappers. The easiest way to prevent tearing is to layer the filling mixture. If your wrap tears, don't abandon it; simply wrap another rice paper around the outside.

#### 4. Fold with finesse.

Figure 11-2 shows how to fold these wraps.

**Figure 11-2:**  
Rolling and  
folding rice  
paper rolls.



## Rice roll challenge

When good friends come over for a meal, it's fun to make your own rice rolls around the table. Prepare many different fillings and gluten-free sauces, put an electric frypan (or two) containing warm water in the middle of the table for guests to soften their own rice

paper and let everyone make their own rice wraps. It will probably develop into a hilarious competition — who can stuff the most filling in the wrap without it collapsing, or come up with the most bizarre combination of fillings and sauces.

## Vietnamese Rice Wraps or Summer Rolls (Goi Cuon)

Get on a summer roll. Goi cuon (pronounced *goy koong*) is a fresh counterpart to the spring roll, which is fried. Summer rolls are delicious, nutritious and gluten-free. You can make them with the rice paper wraps we cover in the preceding section and fill them with raw vegetables, such as cos lettuce, grated carrots, cucumber, spring onions, bean sprouts, radish sprouts, alfalfa sprouts, mint and basil. Some people add shiitake mushrooms and tofu. If using meat inside these rolls, you can choose between cooked chicken, pork, prawns, fish or fish cake. For a vegetarian summer roll, substitute tofu. In some Asian shops you can buy smaller rice paper wraps. If you use these, chop your fillings much more finely and use less than suggested in these recipe steps.

**Prep time:** 30 minutes • **Servings:** 1

Ingredients	Directions
<b>1 sheet of rice paper wrapper</b> <b>2 peeled and cooked prawns, cut lengthwise and sliced</b> <b>3 pieces washed and dried lettuce, torn to about the size of a deck of cards</b> <b>3 fresh mint leaves</b> <b>1 tablespoon radish sprouts</b> <b>1 tablespoon bean sprouts</b> <b>2 tablespoons rice vermicelli, soaked in warm water until soft</b> <b>5 very thin slices of cooked pork</b>	<p><b>1</b> Soak a single rice wrapper in hot water or in a soaking mixture (see the 'Rice rolls' section earlier in this chapter) for 4 to 5 seconds. Drain the wrapper on a flat surface and pat it dry.</p> <p><b>2</b> Layer the ingredients in the rice wrapper. For instance, spread the prawn pieces and then follow that with the lettuce, mint, radish and bean sprouts, vermicelli and pork.</p> <p><b>3</b> Fold the bottom corner of the wrapper toward the centre, and then fold the short ends over the filling. Roll the wrapper gently — but firmly and tightly — until you've formed a neat, oblong bundle. Slice each roll in half at a slight diagonal. If a rice roll breaks, don't abandon it, simply wrap another square of rice paper around the outside.</p>

**Tip:** This recipe makes one wrap. If you're going to make several wraps at once, you may want to gather the ingredients and separate them into bowls. You can refrigerate the ingredients for up to 3 hours before putting the wraps together.

**Per serving:** Kilojoules 640; Fat 3 g (Saturated 1 g); Sodium 118 mg; Carbohydrate 18 g (Dietary Fibre 1 g); Protein 17 g.



## Spicy Chicken Rolls

This tasty chicken filling goes well with the blandness of the rice wrapper. You can vary your fillings by trying out different spices or sauces like tandoori sauce, hoisin sauce or sweet chilli sauce if you can find gluten-free versions. You can use some of the tomato mixes sold as gluten-free pasta sauce with chicken, fish or slivers of cooked beef.

**Prep time:** 35 minutes • **Cooking time:** 20 minutes • **Servings:** 4

Ingredients	Directions
70 g rice vermicelli	1 Break vermicelli into small pieces and put into a bowl of boiling water until soft (usually 8 to 10 minutes, but check the instructions on the pack). Drain well.
1 teaspoon each cumin, ginger and turmeric	
1 garlic clove, crushed	2 Combine spices, garlic, oil and lemon juice in a medium bowl. Mix in chicken pieces, coating well with the spices. Add yoghurt and mix well.
1 tablespoon olive oil	
1 tablespoon lemon juice	3 Line a tray with foil, spread out the chicken pieces and cook under a preheated grill for 5 to 10 minutes, turning a couple of times, until cooked through.
400 g skinless chicken fillets, either thighs or breasts, cut into bite-sized pieces	
½ cup gluten-free Greek-style plain yoghurt	4 Soak a rice paper sheet in warm water until it is soft and spread on to a clean, dry tea towel. Place 2 teaspoons of vermicelli, some chicken pieces and a teaspoon of gluten-free mayonnaise on the rice paper, moisten hands and carefully roll it up. Cover the roll with a slightly damp tea towel and repeat with other rolls.
Rice paper sheets	
Gluten-free mayonnaise	

**Per serving:** Kilojoules 1,508; Fat 16.1 g (Saturated 4.3 g); Sodium 292 mg; Carbohydrate 27.7 g (Dietary Fibre <1 g); Protein 25.5 g.

## *Nori rolls or sushi*

You might know these tempting snacks better as sushi. Although they seem ideal for someone on a gluten-free diet, the problem with the commercial ones is finding out whether the fillings, particularly the 'seafood' and the mayonnaise, contain gluten, or if soy sauce has been added.

Whatever the name, homemade nori rolls are ideal for the gluten-free snacker and not too hard to make once you get your technique under control. Dried seaweed sheets are gluten-free and you can find them in large supermarkets or Asian shops. If you follow these simple tips, they're not too fiddly to make for yourself and then you can be sure the ingredients are totally gluten-free. Don't be put off by the preparation time — these are so much fun to make and very impressive to serve.



Follow these hints:

- ✓ **Prepare your fillings.** Do all the chopping and grating and have your fillings — and sticky rice — ready for assembling the rolls.
- ✓ **Place a seaweed sheet on plastic, or a bamboo mat.** You can just use your fingers, but some people find it easier to roll the seaweed sheet with something underneath it.
- ✓ **Use a wet spoon to spread rice.** First moisten your hands and a tablespoon with cold water, place a tablespoonful of cooked rice in the centre of the sheet and spread it thinly right across the sheet, leaving 1 to 2 centimetres clear at the upper and lower edges. Keep hands and spoon wet while working.
- ✓ **Place fillings in the centre.** Place strips of chicken, tofu, gluten-free ham and so on along the lower end of your seaweed sheet, but not right at the bottom, so that they run the entire width of the sheet. Layer additional fillings, spreading evenly. Don't overfill or your roll will split.
- ✓ **Drizzle sauce over the top.** If you're using a sauce or gluten-free mayonnaise, drizzle this across the fillings.
- ✓ **Moisten the top edge of the seaweed sheet.** This helps keep the completed roll together.
- ✓ **Roll the seaweed sheet from the lower edge.** Hold the edge closest to you with both hands (and the plastic or bamboo mat if you're using this to get started) and roll up to make a tight log.
- ✓ **Wrap each roll.** Wrap rolls in plastic as they're completed. Keep the wrapped rolls in the refrigerator for at least an hour, up to 24 hours.
- ✓ **Trim the ends with a very sharp knife.** Serve whole or cut with a sharp knife into 6 to 8 pieces. Don't aim for perfection — they will still taste great even if they're a bit wobbly.



## Chicken Nori Rolls

**Prep time:** 45 minutes • **Cooking time:** 20 minutes • **Servings:** 12 large rolls

Ingredients	Directions
<b>2 chicken breasts, cut into thin strips</b> <b>2 tablespoons gluten-free teriyaki, soy or tamari sauce</b> <b>1¾ cups short-grain or sushi rice (uncooked)</b> <b>2 tablespoons rice vinegar</b> <b>1 tablespoon sugar</b> <b>1 cup carrot peeled and grated into long strips with a vegetable peeler</b> <b>1 small cucumber, seeded and cut into long, thin strips</b> <b>Fresh baby spinach leaves, washed and dried</b> <b>12 sushi sheets (roasted seaweed sheets)</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 Marinate chicken strips in teriyaki, soy or tamari sauce for at least an hour.</li> <li>2 Stir chicken pieces in a frying pan over medium heat until cooked through.</li> <li>3 Cook rice according to your usual method. Gently heat rice vinegar and sugar in a saucepan until sugar has dissolved, and stir a portion into hot rice, fanning away the steam. Add more rice vinegar if mix is too dry.</li> <li>4 Assemble rolls as described in 'Nori rolls or sushi' earlier in this chapter.</li> <li>5 Serve whole, cut in half, or in slices as finger food with dipping sauces, such as gluten-free soy or tamari sauce, wasabi and pickled ginger if desired.</li> </ol>

**Tip:** You can vary the fillings to suit your taste or provide variety for a party. Try slices of thin omelette, black mushrooms, avocado strips, tofu, sandwich tuna, flavoured tuna and so on.

**Per serving (per roll):** Kilojoules 851; Fat 3.4 g (Saturated 1 g); Sodium 232 mg; Carbohydrate 26.6 g (Dietary Fibre 1.3 g); Protein 15.7 g.

## *Exploring lettuce wraps*

You can fill lettuce wraps with any kind of meat, seafood, poultry, egg, vegetable and cheese combinations. Just avoid fillings that are too wet or your lettuce will go soggy instantly. Keep these tips in mind to ensure lettuce wraps are a success:

- ✓ **Use large, pliable leaves.** Consider iceberg, red lettuce and radicchio leaves. Core the lettuce and soak it in ice water for a couple of hours to help you get the leaves off the head without tearing them.
- ✓ **Dry the lettuce before serving.** After you've removed the leaves, let them drain individually, and then put them on a tea towel in the fridge for a couple of hours to make them crisp.
- ✓ **Serve the lettuce chilled.** Lettuce leaves hold together better when they're chilled (they tend to collapse into limp, lifeless leaves when they're warm).
- ✓ **Use a variety of colours, textures and flavours in the filling.** The filling should include bold flavours and lots of varying textures and colours. Look for gluten-free varieties of tasty ingredients like mustards, yoghurt, plum sauce, hoisin sauce and sesame oil in your fillings. When you're trying to decide what to serve, don't forget to check out your stash of leftovers. You might come up with the invention of the year.
- ✓ **Prepare the fillings and sauces ahead of time.** Fillings are usually served chilled, so make them in advance and give yourself time to refrigerate them.
- ✓ **Let your guests assemble their own wraps.** People love to fill their own lettuce wraps, so put the lettuce leaves and fillings where everyone can reach them. If you're happy to have lettuce (or worse) thrown at you, say, 'Lettuce dig in!'

## Asian Pork Lettuce Wraps

The variety of lettuce wraps you can make is endless. This recipe features minced pork and an array of Asian flavours. You can also substitute minced or ground chicken, or chopped tofu for the pork. Serve the wraps with individual containers of peanut sauce or any type of gluten-free Asian dipping sauce.

**Prep time:** 15 minutes • **Cooking time:** 2 minutes • **Servings:** 6

Ingredients	Directions
<b>2 cups cooked minced pork</b>	<b>1</b> In a medium bowl, combine the cooked minced pork, rice vinegar, soy sauce, sesame oil, spring onions, carrot and rice vermicelli. Season the ingredients with salt and pepper and mix them well.
<b>3 tablespoons rice vinegar</b>	
<b>2 tablespoons gluten-free soy sauce</b>	<b>2</b> Cover the mixture and heat it in the microwave on high for about 2 minutes, until the mixture is warm.
<b>2 teaspoons sesame oil</b>	
<b>¼ cup chopped spring onions</b>	<b>3</b> Serve the pork mixture in a serving bowl with a large serving spoon. On a separate platter, arrange a stack of chilled lettuce leaves and the coriander leaves. Let people fill their own wraps.
<b>¼ cup shredded carrot</b>	
<b>1 cup cooked rice vermicelli</b>	
<b>Salt and pepper to taste</b>	
<b>8–10 chilled lettuce leaves</b>	
<b>Coriander leaves</b>	

**Per serving:** Kilojoules 808; Fat 11 g (Saturated 4 g); Sodium 446 mg; Carbohydrate 8 g (Dietary Fibre 1 g); Protein 13 g.

## Chapter 12

# Souping Up Salads and Vegetable Dishes

### *In This Chapter*

- ▶ Making great soups
- ▶ Finding a fresh perspective on salads
- ▶ Cooking new ways with vegetables

**S**oups, salads and vegetable dishes can be just as important as the main meal. In fact, they can be the meal itself. But many soups are thickened with flour, salads are often dressed up and topped off with gluten-laden goodies and sometimes vegetable dishes are smothered in white sauce or cheesy sauce that make them off-limits to people enjoying a gluten-free lifestyle.

So should you just forget about those bowls of hot, creamy soup and crunchy croutons? Are you stuck with boring salads of just lettuce and tomatoes? And limited to the old gluten-free standbys of rice and potatoes? No way! In this chapter, you find some interesting ideas for soups and salads, as well as fresh ways to serve delicious vegetables.

Some of the recipes in this chapter use chicken stock but are otherwise vegetarian. To make them completely vegetarian, simply use vegetable stock, or chicken-flavoured vegetarian stock cubes (available at most supermarkets).

### *Recipes in This Chapter*

- ▶ Beef and Eggplant Soup
- Zucchini Soup
- Minted Green Pea Soup
- Favourite Lentil Soup
- Asian Salad Dressing
- ▶ Caesar Salad
- ▶ Caesar Salad Dressing
- Broccoli and Avocado Salad
- Fresh Summer Salsa
- Lemon Quinoa Crunch
- Rice, Fetta and Chickpea Salad
- Barbecued Mushrooms with Goat's Cheese
- Bok Choy and Mushroom Stir-fry
- Warm Eggplant Salad with Quinoa
- Vegetable Pancakes
- ▶ Microwave Soft Polenta with Parmesan
- ▶ Polenta Wedges with Ratatouille
- ▶ Sweet Potato and Pumpkin
- Mexican Roasted Potatoes



## Souping It Up

Soup has been a versatile and important part of the diet since people invented waterproof containers about 5,000 years ago. Soups can be hot, cold, thick, thin, creamy, chunky, elegant or simple. You can create them from leftover food, cutting costs and helping to clear the fridge. Soups are comforting, satisfying and nutritious.

But commercial soups often contain flour, pasta, barley or other ingredients that make them taboo. Fortunately, great-tasting gluten-free soups are easy to make and even pasta-based soups are a breeze. When you make soups yourself, they're generally more wholesome and you get to choose what goes in them, so you're bound to love them even more.



You can make small serves of delicious soup or stock from leftover vegetable peel and scraps. Much of the goodness in vegetables lies just beneath the skin, but all too often we remove and discard this highly nutritious part. When preparing a meal, thoroughly wash your vegetables and save all the peelings and bits and pieces you would normally put into the bin or compost. For example, the skin from pumpkin, sweet potato, well-scrubbed potatoes, pea pods, ends of beans, outer leaves of green vegetables like spinach and cabbage, spinach and broccoli stalks, celery heads (great for flavour), ends of zucchini, capsicum or eggplants etc. Place everything into a plastic container with a lid and store it in the refrigerator. Add more each day for up to four days then place in a saucepan, cover with cold water, and simmer for 1 hour (covered). Use whatever you have on hand for extra flavour. For example, salt, pepper, a little grated ginger, a bunch of mixed herbs, chopped tomatoes, spice or lemon peel. Cool and strain, discarding vegetables. Add seasonings to taste and use as soup or stock, or freeze for later use in casseroles, gravy and sauces.

### Make no bones about it

The origin of the expression to 'make no bones about it' actually has to do with soup. Today it means to speak frankly and directly — to have no difficulty or hesitation in saying what you want to say. But when a version of the phrase

appeared in 1154, the author was referring to soups that didn't have any bones in them; diners wouldn't hesitate to swallow the soup, because they wouldn't have to eat around the bones.

## Beef and Eggplant Soup

Eggplant seems a strange ingredient in soup, but it breaks up during cooking and adds flavour and body to this hearty soup.

**Prep time:** 30 minutes • **Cooking time:** 45 minutes • **Servings:** 6–8

Ingredients	Directions
2 tablespoons olive oil or salad oil	1 Heat oil and butter in a large saucepan over medium heat and gently fry onion until soft.
2 tablespoons butter or margarine	2 Add meat and break up well with a fork as it browns.
1 medium onion, chopped	3 Add eggplant, garlic, carrot, celery, tomatoes and their liquid (break up tomatoes with a spoon), stock, salt, sugar, pepper and nutmeg.
500 g lean beef mince	4 Bring to the boil; cover and reduce heat and simmer for about 30 minutes.
1 medium eggplant, diced	5 Add pasta, cover and simmer until pasta is cooked.
2 garlic cloves, crushed	6 Sprinkle parmesan cheese over each serving.
½ cup each chopped carrot and sliced celery	
800 g can tomatoes	
500 ml (2 cups) beef stock (you can use gluten-free stock cubes or powder)	
½ teaspoon salt	
1 teaspoon sugar	
½ teaspoon each ground pepper and nutmeg	
½ cup uncooked gluten-free pasta	
Grated parmesan cheese	

**Per serving (serves 7):** Kilojoules 1,358; Fat 15 g (Saturated 4.3 g); Sodium 518 mg; Carbohydrate 27.6 g (Dietary Fibre 4.2 g); Protein 18.6 g.



## Zucchini Soup

This recipe is another favourite with Margaret's family and friends. The tarragon makes all the difference to this delicious soup. It also tastes wonderful cold, with sour cream on top.

**Prep time:** 20 minutes • **Cooking time:** 45 minutes • **Servings:** 6–8

Ingredients	Directions
<b>1 tablespoon oil</b>	<b>1</b> Heat oil in a large saucepan and gently fry the onion (but don't allow it to brown or you'll spoil the lovely green colour of the soup). Add potatoes, zucchini, salt, pepper and tarragon and cook over a low heat for 10 minutes, stirring to avoid vegetables sticking or turning brown.
<b>1 onion, peeled and chopped</b>	
<b>1 medium potato, peeled and cut into thin slices</b>	
<b>6 medium zucchinis, chopped</b>	
<b>Salt and pepper</b>	<b>2</b> Add stock and simmer, covered, for 20 minutes or until vegetables are soft. Allow to cool.
<b>2 teaspoons dried tarragon</b>	
<b>4 cups chicken stock (or use gluten-free chicken stock cubes or powder)</b>	<b>3</b> Puree soup in a blender.
	<b>4</b> Reheat when needed and serve with a dollop of sour cream or yoghurt and a sprinkle of parsley if desired.

**Per serving (serves 7):** Kilojoules 242; Fat 2.9 g (Saturated <1 g); Sodium 322 mg; Carbohydrate 5.2 g (Dietary Fibre 1.9 g); Protein 1.8 g.

## Minted Green Pea Soup

Cold soups make a delicious change in summer. This one is quick, easy and refreshing on a hot night.

**Prep time:** 10 minutes • **Servings:** 3–4

Ingredients	Directions
<b>500 g bag frozen green peas, slightly thawed</b>	<b>1</b> Puree all ingredients in a blender. Adjust seasoning and serve with warmed gluten-free bread rolls or toast.
<b>250 ml (1 cup) gluten-free chicken stock</b>	
<b>250 ml (1 cup) buttermilk or plain yoghurt</b>	
<b>2 to 3 shallots, chopped</b>	
<b>¼ cup fresh mint leaves</b>	
<b>½ teaspoon salt</b>	

**Per serving:** Kilojoules 615; Fat 2.8 g (Saturated 1.4 g); Sodium 484 mg; Carbohydrate 15.7 g (Dietary Fibre 7.3 g); Protein 10.5 g.





## Favourite Lentil Soup

Lentils have somehow acquired a bad reputation and it's true that they can be a real turn-off if not cooked with imagination. But lentils are high in protein and fibre and deliciously filling, especially in cold weather. Don't worry; this soup is also high in taste and really not too serious!

**Prep time:** 20 minutes • **Cooking time:** 2–3 hours • **Servings:** 6

Ingredients	Directions
<b>2 teaspoons olive oil</b>	<b>1</b> Place the olive oil and onion in a large saucepan and sauté until the onion is soft.
<b>1 medium onion, chopped</b>	
<b>875 ml (3½ cups) gluten-free chicken stock</b>	<b>2</b> Add the remaining ingredients. Cover and bring to the boil.
<b>200 g (1 cup) brown lentils, washed thoroughly</b>	
<b>1 carrot, chopped</b>	<b>3</b> Reduce the heat and simmer for 1 hour or until the soup is of desired thickness, up to 2 or 3 hours, stirring occasionally.
<b>1 stick celery, chopped</b>	
<b>225 g (approx.) fresh or canned tomatoes with juice, chopped</b>	
<b>2 garlic cloves, finely chopped</b>	
<b>½ teaspoon ground allspice</b>	
<b>½ teaspoon dried thyme</b>	
<b>Salt and freshly ground pepper to taste</b>	

**Per serving:** Kilojoules 219; Fat 1.7 g (Saturated <1 g); Sodium 426 mg; Carbohydrate 5.5 g (Dietary Fibre 2.1 g); Protein 2.5 g.

## *Serving Salads with Style*

Many coeliacs have bad feelings about salads. Why? Because they're utterly fed up with the sad little statement they hear so often in cafés: 'Sorry, we don't have anything gluten-free today — but you *could* have the salad.' Oh, yes — have the salad. We could enjoy some lovely lettuce and tomato and capsicum, while our companions just have to make do with crusty focaccia loaded with avocado, sun-dried tomatoes and chicken, or a big bowl of steaming soup and a boring old hot, crusty bread roll.

Okay, we know people out there just love a bowl of salad for lunch or dinner (apologies to them for disparaging salads), but we suspect many coeliacs feel bad about the salad word because it too often *is* just rabbit food — lettuce, tomato and thick chunks of capsicum. Minus the bread roll that adds a bit of substance to the meal for your regular diner. But read on and be encouraged.

It's not only the celebs who are undergoing complete makeovers on a regular basis. The common salad is right up there too, so there's no limit to what you can try in a salad these days: Potato, rice, quinoa, pasta, roasted vegetables, cheeses, fruit, a huge variety of leafy green relatives of the traditional iceberg lettuce, as well as basil and other herbs.

We have included a range of salads — some of the old favourites and some interesting new ones — that you will relish. At least you won't have to endure rabbit food at home, or when visiting your wonderful friends who have purchased their own copy of this book.

## *Serving salads with green, leafy stuff*

Salads make it easy to combine interesting grains, fruits, vegetables and meats in one dish. As a complete meal or an accompaniment, salads are nutritious and delicious, and they're especially great on a hot, summer day, when they make for a cool, quick dinner.

Most of these salads start with a basic bed of greens or a variety of lettuce types. Prewashed salad mix is quick and easy but, of course, you can use any type of lettuce or salad green you want. Remember that the darker the lettuce, the more nutritious it probably is.

From there, the options are endless. Here are a few of our personal favourites:

- ✔ **Caesar Salad:** See recipe later in this chapter.
- ✔ **Cool as a Cucumber Salad:** In a medium-sized bowl, mix 2 finely chopped cucumbers (peeled and seeded) with  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup plain yoghurt,  $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon onion salt or 3 chopped shallots, lemon juice and black pepper to taste. Put it over a bed of greens and top it with diced tomatoes.
- ✔ **Grilled Garlic Chicken Salad:** In a small bowl, mix  $\frac{3}{4}$  cup gluten-free Italian salad dressing with 2 teaspoons crushed garlic and a sprinkle of chilli flakes. Add  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup sliced red capsicum and  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup sliced mushrooms to the dressing and toss them so they're well coated. Take the capsicums and mushrooms out of the dressing, setting the remaining dressing aside. Grill the capsicums, mushrooms and 6 chicken thighs or half breasts. Place salad greens on plates and add the grilled vegetables and chicken. Drizzle the remaining dressing on top.
- ✔ **Thai Beef Salad:** Start with a bed of greens and add  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup mint leaves (torn into large pieces), half a cucumber (peeled and sliced), several thinly sliced pieces of grilled rump steak, 2 tablespoons chopped peanuts, and lime wedges (for garnish). Top the salad with an Asian salad dressing like the one later in this section.
- ✔ **Warm Beet Salad:** In a large saucepan, steam or cook approximately 250 grams of green beans until they're tender (about 8 minutes). Add a small can of baby beets (drained and sliced thickly) and warm them over medium heat until they're heated through. Drain the beans and the beets. Meanwhile, in a screw-top glass jar, combine about 3 tablespoons orange juice, 3 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil, 1 tablespoon balsamic vinegar, 2 teaspoons crushed garlic and a dash of white pepper. Shake the dressing well. Lay out some mixed greens, place the beans and beets on top of them and coat with the dressing.

## Asian Salad Dressing

Most commercial Asian salad dressings use soy sauce and nearly all of them contain wheat. Asian salad dressing is easy to make yourself. To keep it gluten-free, use gluten-free soy or tamari sauce. This dressing can also double as a marinade for meats or tofu.

**Prep time:** 5 minutes • **Servings:** 8

Ingredients	Directions
<b>½ cup white vinegar</b> <b>¼ cup gluten-free soy sauce</b> <b>2 tablespoons water</b> <b>1 teaspoon sesame oil</b> <b>1 teaspoon toasted sesame seeds</b> <b>½ cup canola oil</b>	<b>1</b> Combine the vinegar, soy sauce, water, sesame oil and sesame seeds in a jar with a tight-fitting lid and shake the mixture well. <b>2</b> Add the oil and shake again.

**Per serving:** Kilojoules 393; Fat 10 g (Saturated 1 g); Cholesterol 0 mg; Sodium 460 mg; Carbohydrate 0 g (Dietary Fibre 0 g); Protein 1 g.



## Caesar Salad

Most people love Caesar salad, and you can make it in a number of ways. Cooked chicken is a popular addition. In some places the real chefs prepare it at the table, gently mixing one ingredient at a time.

**Prep time:** 20 minutes • **Servings:** 6–8

<i>Ingredients</i>	<i>Directions</i>
<b>Caesar Salad Dressing (see the following recipe)</b>	<b>1</b> Remove outer leaves and base of cos lettuces, rinse well and drain on a tea towel.
<b>2 cos lettuces</b>	
<b>4 rashers bacon</b>	<b>2</b> Grill or fry bacon, drain on a paper towel and chop into pieces.
<b>4 thick slices gluten-free bread</b>	
<b>Vegetable oil</b>	<b>3</b> Cut the bread into cubes and deep-fry. For a lower-fat version, put cubes on a baking tray and drizzle oil over them. Season with fresh herbs or seasoned salt and bake until lightly brown. Drain on a paper towel.
<b>4 hard-boiled eggs</b>	
<b>8 anchovies</b>	<b>4</b> Cut boiled eggs into halves and drain anchovies.
<b>Parmesan cheese, very finely sliced for garnish</b>	<b>5</b> Place lettuce in a large bowl, gently mix in anchovies and egg and drizzle dressing over the top. Sprinkle with parmesan and serve immediately.

**Per serving (serves 7):** Kilojoules 1,090; Fat 19.2 g (Saturated 6.2 g); Sodium 618 mg; Carbohydrate 9.3 g (Dietary Fibre <1 g); Protein 13.1 g.

## Caesar Salad Dressing

Ingredients	Directions
<b>1 egg</b> <b>½ cup lemon juice</b> <b>½ cup extra-virgin olive oil</b> <b>2 teaspoons crushed garlic (about 4 cloves)</b> <b>¾ cup grated fresh parmesan</b> <b>2 tablespoons gluten-free Worcestershire sauce</b> <b>2 anchovies</b> <b>Ground pepper to taste</b>	<b>1</b> Crack the egg into a microwave-proof dish and cover it with paper towel. Heat the egg in the microwave on high for 10 seconds.  <b>2</b> Combine the egg, lemon juice, olive oil, garlic, parmesan, Worcestershire sauce, anchovies and pepper in a blender or small food processor and process the dressing until smooth. If it's too runny, add a little extra parmesan. If it's too thick, add more lemon juice or olive oil.

**Per serving:** Kilojoules 778; Fat 17 g (Saturated 4 g); Sodium 450 mg; Carbohydrate 3 g (Dietary Fibre 0 g); Protein 6 g.



## Broccoli and Avocado Salad

Try this fresh salad on a hot night with a chicken or fish meal. The broccoli can be replaced with cauliflower florets or chunks of zucchini for variety. If you're into spicy food, chopped chilli on top adds colour and extra zip.

**Prep time:** 15 minutes • **Cooking time:** 15 minutes • **Serves:** 4

Ingredients	Directions
<b>3 cups broccoli florets</b>	<b>1</b> Steam broccoli until tender but not too soft. Cook asparagus in boiling water for 5 minutes. Refresh broccoli and asparagus under cold water and pat dry with paper towel.
<b>1 cup asparagus pieces</b>	
<b>1 small lettuce or a bag of mixed lettuce</b>	<b>2</b> Wash lettuce, pat dry and break into pieces if necessary.
<b>1 medium-sized avocado</b>	
<b>Lemon juice</b>	<b>3</b> Peel and halve avocado, chop into pieces and sprinkle with lemon juice to prevent browning.
<b>¼ cup chopped spring onions</b>	
<b>2 tablespoons olive oil</b>	<b>4</b> Place lettuce, avocado, broccoli, asparagus and spring onions in a bowl.
<b>4 tablespoons white or apple cider vinegar</b>	
<b>¼ teaspoon mustard</b>	<b>5</b> Mix oil, vinegar, mustard, pepper and salt together and pour over salad.
<b>Pepper and salt to taste</b>	
<b>1 dessertspoon sesame seeds, sunflower seeds or chopped nuts</b>	<b>6</b> Sprinkle toasted sesame seeds, sunflower seeds or chopped nuts on top.

**Per serving:** Kilojoules 803; Fat 13.9 g (Saturated 2.1 g); Sodium 50 mg; Carbohydrate 13.5 g (Dietary Fibre 6.8 g); Protein 5.0g.

## Fresh Summer Salsa

It's not exactly a salad, but this delicious fresh mixture can be used as a topping for grilled meats, vegetables and fish or as a dip with corn chips. Make some for your next barbecue and watch it disappear.

**Prep time:** 10 minutes • **Serves:** 6

Ingredients	Directions
<b>3 large tomatoes, finely chopped</b> <b>2 shallots, sliced</b> <b>1 garlic clove, finely chopped</b> <b>1 small fresh chilli (optional)</b> <b>¼ cup finely chopped fresh coriander leaves</b> <b>1 tablespoon lime or lemon juice</b> <b>2 teaspoons olive oil</b> <b>¼ teaspoon salt</b>	<b>1</b> In a medium-sized resealable container, combine all the ingredients. Cover and shake gently to mix. <b>2</b> Store, covered, in the refrigerator for up to 3 days.

**Per serving (serves 4):** Kilojoules 189; Fat 2.5 g (Saturated <1 g); Sodium 163 mg; Carbohydrate 2.9 g (Dietary Fibre 1.9 g); Protein 1.5 g.

### Don't fear the fat on salads

Most people are well aware that smothering their salads in fatty salad dressings turns a healthy meal into a high-fat, health-sabotaging indulgence. So they opt for fat-free salad dressings and believe they're making a healthy choice. But a study published by the *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition* shows that people may be compromising the nutritional value of their salads when they do that, because dietary fat is necessary for the absorption of nutrients from fruits and vegetables. In the study, people who ate salads with fat-free salad dressing

absorbed far less of the helpful nutrients and vitamins from spinach, lettuce, tomatoes and carrots than those who ate their salads with a salad dressing containing fat.

Keep in mind, though, that you don't have to get the fat from your dressing and you don't have to eat much fat to help with the absorption of these important nutrients. Eating just a handful of nuts or a quarter of an avocado gives you plenty of dietary fat to help with absorption.







## *Adding oomph to your salads*

Toss it in and mix it up. You can add many different things to your salad to create interest and provide more nutrition at the same time:

- ✓ **Beans and legumes:** Try green beans, kidney beans, black beans or chickpeas. They not only add flavour, but also lots of fibre.
- ✓ **Bok choy:** Oh boy — bok choy is crisp and flavoursome.
- ✓ **Cherry tomatoes:** Several varieties of cherry or mini tomatoes are available and they come in different colours and shapes.
- ✓ **Crumbled bacon:** Of course, bacon adds some fat, but it also adds flavour.
- ✓ **Crumbled cheese:** Be creative, using cheeses like fetta, ricotta or freshly grated romano or parmesan. Bocconcini looks great in a salad and adds an interesting texture.
- ✓ **Diced gluten-free ham or salami:** These meats add protein and flavour to a salad.
- ✓ **Fruit:** Grapes, pineapple, rockmelon, kiwifruit, strawberries — a variety of fruits can enliven a salad.
- ✓ **Greens:** Iceberg lettuce forms a good basis but is less nutritious than some other salad greens. Consider cos, kale, baby spinach, basil and other greens to increase the vitamin, mineral and fibre content — not to mention the flavour.
- ✓ **Mushrooms:** These add a lot of minerals and an interesting flavour.
- ✓ **Nuts:** Any kind of nut will do. They add nutrients, crunch and flavour.
- ✓ **Olives:** Try some of the new varieties appearing in supermarkets.
- ✓ **Onions:** Red onions are popular in salads. Shallots are quick and easy and add nutrients, too.
- ✓ **Radishes:** Not only do these add a zip to your salad, but they also have potassium and vitamin C.
- ✓ **Raisins:** Also try similar toppings like dried cranberries.
- ✓ **Raw broccoli:** Broccoli adds flavour and crunch. Broccoli is loaded with cancer-fighting nutrients and calcium.
- ✓ **Shredded cabbage:** In the same family as broccoli, cabbage contains nutrients that are important for cancer prevention.
- ✓ **Sprouts:** Loaded with fibre and nutrients, sprouts are a great addition to any salad. And they're easy to grow yourself. See the 'Sprout 'em yourself' sidebar for tips on growing your own sprout garden.

## Sprout 'em yourself

Sprouts are a great source of protein, fibre and vitamins A, B and C, and they're loaded with antioxidants. Research suggests that broccoli sprouts actually have higher levels of cancer-fighting compounds than fresh broccoli.

You can buy special containers to grow sprouts, or do it simply with a few starter items. You can also grow sprouts in soil, just like any other plant, but most people grow them in jars. For that, you need:

- ✓ A large jar
- ✓ Cheesecloth or nylon netting
- ✓ A rubber band
- ✓ 1 tablespoon of sprout seeds (alfalfa, radish, mung bean or buckwheat are good sprout starters), available at nurseries or online
- ✓ Water

Here's what you do:

### 1. Put 1 tablespoon of seeds into the jar.

Cover the seeds with water and tighten the cheesecloth or nylon netting over the jar

opening with a rubber band. Let the seeds soak overnight.

### 2. Drain the water from the jar through the cheesecloth. Leave the jar on a shelf, in a cupboard, or under the kitchen sink.

If you keep the jar in the dark, the sprouts grow white; if you expose the jar to light, the sprouts come out green.

### 3. Rinse and drain the seeds once a day or more.

This step is the most important because the seeds need to be moist but not wet. If you don't rinse the seeds often enough, they may start to go mouldy. If you notice a bad smell from your sprouting seeds, they're probably no good. Toss them and start over again.

In less than a week, the sprouts should be ready to eat. To harvest them, just use scissors to cut the edible sprouts away from the roots, leaving what you don't need. The rest keep growing and you can use them later.

## *Move Over, Mashed Potatoes: Trying New Ways with Vegetables*

A very old favourite, the humble mashed potato, has recently come back into fashion with the trendy new title of 'potato mash' (Yay! says Margaret, who has been a clandestine mashed-potato fan during the dark times when it was oh, so last century). Delicious comfort food it is, but there's also hot competition to get onto the plate now, with more interesting accompaniments on the scene, like quinoa, millet, polenta, buckwheat, chickpeas and beans.

We've tried to incorporate a few recipes using these alternative grains, mixing them with vegetables to provide you with those all-important vitamins.



A new grain on the scene is quinoa (pronounced keen wah). Considered an ancient food because it was one of three staple foods of early South American civilisation, quinoa was then — and still is — known as the Mother Grain. Boasting nearly 20 per cent protein in some varieties, quinoa has more protein than any other grain. And it's a complete protein, with a good balance of all the essential amino acids. It's also high in fibre, vitamins and minerals. You can use it as a substitute in recipes for couscous or tabouli, which are made from wheat, or just about any other grain. Refer to Chapter 9 for more on using quinoa.

## Lemon Quinoa Crunch

Crunchy, colourful, tangy and nutritious, you can serve this dish at room temperature or cold (we prefer cold). This food makes a great standalone side dish or salad substitute. In fact, because quinoa contains all the amino acids your body can't produce on its own, this grain can be the main dish. You may want to double the recipe, because the leftovers are fantastic — this dish gets better each day as the flavours infuse the grain.

**Prep time:** 15 minutes • **Cooking time:** 15 minutes • **Servings:** 6

Ingredients	Directions
¼ cup lime or lemon juice ¼ teaspoon white pepper ¼ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper ¼ cup sliced marinated jalapeño peppers ¼ teaspoon coarse salt ¼ cup olive oil 1½ cups quinoa 3 cups water ¾ cup peeled, seeded and diced cucumber ¾ cup seeded and diced tomato 1 cup sliced red capsicum — use red and yellow or green for colour ¼ cup chopped spring onions ¼ cup chopped Italian parsley ¼ cup chopped fresh mint Salt and pepper to taste	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 Make a vinaigrette by whisking together the juice, white pepper, black pepper, jalapeño, coarse salt and olive oil. Set the mixture aside.</li> <li>2 Place the quinoa in a fine sieve and wash it under running water, rubbing it with your hands for a few minutes. Drain well.</li> <li>3 In a large pot, combine the water and quinoa. Bring the mixture to a boil, lower the heat and simmer, uncovered, for 10 to 15 minutes, or until the quinoa is barely tender. Don't overcook it. Strain the quinoa, drain it thoroughly and let it cool. Don't rinse it.</li> <li>4 Mix the quinoa with the other ingredients. Add a little salt and pepper to taste (you don't need much, because this dish has plenty of flavour). Serve it at room temperature or cold.</li> </ol>

**Per serving:** Kilojoules 1,088; Fat 12 g (Saturated 2 g); Sodium 240 mg; Carbohydrate 34 g (Dietary Fibre 4 g); Protein 7 g.



## Rice, Fetta and Chickpea Salad

This dish is loaded with flavour. Try using brown rice instead of white.

**Prep time:** 15 minutes • **Resting time:** 1 hour • **Servings:** 6

Ingredients	Directions
<b>½ cup lemon juice</b>	<b>1</b> Make the dressing by whisking together the lemon juice, garlic, olive oil, and salt and pepper.
<b>2 teaspoons crushed garlic (about 4 cloves)</b>	
<b>¼ cup extra-virgin olive oil</b>	<b>2</b> In a large serving bowl, combine the rice, chickpeas, fetta cheese, parsley, dill, spring onions and capsicum.
<b>Salt and pepper to taste</b>	
<b>3 cups cooked brown rice, cooled to room temperature</b>	<b>3</b> Pour the dressing over the rice mixture and mix well. Let it sit at least an hour before serving. Serve at room temperature or cold.
<b>410 g can chickpeas, drained</b>	
<b>1 cup finely diced fetta cheese</b>	
<b>½ cup chopped fresh parsley</b>	
<b>¼ cup chopped fresh dill</b>	
<b>4 spring onions, thinly sliced</b>	
<b>½ cup roasted capsicum</b>	

**Per serving:** Kilojoules 1,516; Fat 17 g (Saturated 5.5 g); Sodium 859 mg; Carbohydrate 41.4 g (Dietary Fibre 5.3 g); Protein 9.8 g.

## Barbecued Mushrooms with Goat's Cheese

These mushrooms make the perfect starter when you're cooking on the barbecue. A little bit of goat's cheese goes a long way and it's perfect with mushrooms. We love an excuse to buy those nice big flat mushrooms.

**Prep time:** 10 minutes • **Cooking time:** 5 minutes • **Servings:** 4

Ingredients	Directions
75 ml (1/3 cup) olive oil	1 Preheat a barbecue or chargrill to high.
1 tablespoon lemon juice	2 Whisk 60 ml (1/4 cup) of the oil, lemon juice, garlic, parsley, chives and chilli in a small bowl.
2 garlic cloves, crushed	3 Brush both sides of mushrooms with remaining oil. Barbecue or grill for 1 to 2 minutes on each side or until mushrooms are heated through.
2 tablespoons chopped Italian parsley	4 Place spinach leaves and mushrooms on serving plates. Top each mushroom with goat's cheese, drizzle with dressing and serve immediately.
1 tablespoon chopped chives	
1 red chilli, finely chopped	
4 (about 500 g) flat mushrooms, stalks removed	
1/2 bunch baby English spinach leaves	
75 g goat's cheese	

**Per serving:** Kilojoules 991; Fat 20.6 g (Saturated 4.4 g); Sodium 107 mg; Carbohydrate 2.8 g (Dietary Fibre 4.7 g); Protein 8.2 g.



## Bok Choy and Mushroom Stir-fry

This tasty side dish is great with steak, chicken or sausages.

**Prep time:** 10 minutes • **Cooking time:** 15 minutes • **Servings:** 4

Ingredients	Directions
35 g (¼ cup) pine nuts	<b>1</b> Toast pine nuts in a dry frying pan over medium heat, tossing occasionally, until golden, about 3 to 4 minutes. Set aside.
750 g bok choy	
1 tablespoon canola oil	<b>2</b> Prepare bok choy by discarding any wilted leaves. Cut stalks from leaves. Slice stalks diagonally into 1-cm pieces. Keeping separate, cut leaves into 1-cm strips. Separately wash leaves and stalks; drain.
125 g mushrooms, sliced	
65 ml (¼ cup) rice vinegar	<b>3</b> Place large frying pan or wok over high heat. Add oil and when hot add bok choy stalks, mushrooms and vinegar. Stir-fry until most of the liquid evaporates and vegetables begin to brown, about 8 to 10 minutes. Add bok choy leaves; stir-fry until they are just wilted. Stir in tomatoes and sprinkle with toasted pine nuts.
125 g cherry tomatoes, quartered	

**Per serving:** Kilojoules 584; Fat 11.2 g (Saturated <1 g); Sodium 24 mg; Carbohydrate 3.4 g (Dietary Fibre 4.2 g); Protein 4.5 g.

## Warm Eggplant Salad with Quinoa

A nourishing salad with a bit of body that's delicious when served piping hot, but equally yummy cold.

**Prep time:** 30 minutes • **Cooking time:** 25 minutes • **Servings:** 4

Ingredients	Directions
<b>1 medium eggplant (diced into 1-cm pieces)</b> <b>2 tablespoons olive oil, or olive oil spray</b> <b>1 small onion, halved and finely sliced</b> <b>2 cloves garlic, crushed</b> <b>1 stalk celery, chopped</b> <b>1 cup quinoa, cooked</b> <b>1½ cup tomato passata or crushed tomatoes</b> <b>1 tablespoon tomato paste</b> <b>½ cup olives, pitted</b> <b>1 tablespoon capers</b> <b>1 tablespoon honey</b> <b>1 tablespoon balsamic vinegar</b> <b>2 tablespoons each of fresh chopped basil and parsley</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 Spread chopped eggplant on grilling tray, spray or drizzle with olive oil and grill until softened and lightly browned. Turn and repeat with the other side. Allow to cool.</li> <li>2 Heat oil in a heavy pan and gently fry onion until it begins to colour. Add garlic and celery and sauté for 1 minute.</li> <li>3 Stir in the quinoa, passata, tomato paste, olives, capers, honey and balsamic vinegar.</li> <li>4 Add eggplant and simmer for 10 minutes, stirring occasionally.</li> <li>5 Stir in basil and parsley and season to taste. Place in serving dish and top with shaved parmesan, or serve cold with other salads.</li> </ol>

**Per serving:** Kilojoules 216; Fat 8.6 g (Saturated 1.3 g); Cholesterol 0 mg; Sodium 363 mg; Carbohydrate 30.8 g (Dietary Fibre 8.2 g); Protein 5.0 g.





## Vegetable Pancakes

A great way to get vegetables into your fussy eaters. Try them cold for picnics and in lunch boxes too. You can try adding different herbs for variety.

**Prep time:** 30 minutes • **Cooking time:** 30 minutes • **Servings:** 20 pancakes

Ingredients	Directions
<b>1 large raw potato, finely grated</b>	<b>1</b> Rinse and drain grated potato twice with cold water to remove starch. Squeeze dry and put in a large mixing bowl.
<b>3 medium carrots, finely grated</b>	
<b>1 medium zucchini, finely grated</b>	<b>2</b> Add grated carrot, zucchini and parsnip, the spring onions and salt. Let stand 10 to 15 minutes until vegetables release some liquid, but don't squeeze.
<b>1 large parsnip, finely grated</b>	
<b>¾ cup finely sliced spring onions</b>	<b>3</b> Stir rice flour, egg yolks and pepper into vegetable mixture.
<b>1 teaspoon salt</b>	
<b>150 g (¾ cup) rice flour</b>	<b>4</b> Beat egg whites until stiff peaks form. Gently fold into batter.
<b>3 large or 4 medium eggs, separated</b>	
<b>¼ teaspoon pepper</b>	<b>5</b> Heat a large non-stick frying pan over medium heat until hot. Lightly grease with oil. For each pancake, pour ¼-cup batter onto pan and spread into an 8- to 10-cm round. Cook until lightly browned, turn to cook the other side.
<b>1 tablespoon vegetable oil</b>	

**Per serving (per pancake):** Kilojoules 242; Fat 1.9 g (Saturated <1 g); Sodium 143 mg; Carbohydrate 8.1 g (Dietary Fibre <1 g); Protein 2.2 g.

## Microwave Soft Polenta with Parmesan

Polenta, another relatively new grain on the block, is a nutritious, versatile, filling and inexpensive starch food used in place of potatoes and rice in the gluten-free diet. You never get lumps when you use the microwave to cook your polenta.

**Prep time:** 5–10 minutes • **Cooking time:** 10 minutes • **Servings:** 2–3

Ingredients	Directions
65 g (½ cup) polenta or cornmeal	1 Whisk polenta, chicken stock, water and pepper in a medium microwave-proof bowl.
250 ml (1 cup) gluten-free chicken stock	2 Microwave on high for 4 minutes; whisk thoroughly.
250 ml (1 cup) water	3 Microwave for 3 minutes more until smooth and thickened; stir in cheese. Serve immediately.
Dash of pepper	
2 tablespoons grated parmesan cheese	

**Tip:** Soft polenta can be kept, tightly covered with foil, and set over simmering water for up to 4 hours. Stir occasionally and add a bit more liquid if too thick.

**Per serving (serves 3):** Kilojoules 392; Fat 1.9 g (Saturated 1 g); Sodium 251 mg; Carbohydrate 15.3 g (Dietary Fibre <1 g); Protein 3.6 g.



## Polenta Wedges with Ratatouille

Polenta has a soft texture when cooked, but it can be cooled, sliced and fried to make a really interesting addition to your vegetables, whatever they are. This recipe, pairing polenta with an easy ratatouille, is just delicious. With grated or very finely sliced cheese or some crumbled fetta, it makes a tasty lunch dish or a filling accompaniment. For extra nutrition, add a can of drained chickpeas to the ratatouille mixture and cook a little longer until the chickpeas have softened.

**Prep time:** 30 minutes • **Cooking time:** 45 minutes • **Serves:** 4–6

Ingredients	Directions
<b>3 cups chicken stock (or use gluten-free stock cubes)</b> <b>1 cup water</b> <b>1 cup polenta</b> <b>⅓ cup parmesan cheese</b> <b>1 large or 2 small onions</b> <b>1 eggplant</b> <b>3 zucchinis</b> <b>1 red capsicum</b> <b>½ cup olive oil</b> <b>400 g can tomatoes (avoid the thickened ones)</b> <b>1 teaspoon salt</b> <b>1 teaspoon sugar</b> <b>2 tablespoons basil pesto</b> <b>¼ cup (60 ml) tomato paste</b> <b>¼ cup chopped Italian parsley</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 Bring stock and water to boil in a large saucepan, add polenta gradually, simmer and stir until the polenta thickens. Stir in the parmesan.</li> <li>2 Press polenta into an oiled 22-cm round cake tin, cover and refrigerate until set (about 30 minutes).</li> <li>3 While polenta is cooling, chop onions, eggplant, zucchinis and capsicum into small cubes, about 2 cm in size.</li> <li>4 Heat ¼ cup of olive oil in a heavy pot and cook cubed vegetables until the onions are slightly browned, adding more oil if the vegetables are sticking.</li> <li>5 Add tomatoes (undrained), salt, sugar and pesto and simmer until the mixture thickens but the vegetables are still firm, about 15 minutes. Add tomato paste and parsley.</li> <li>6 Turn the polenta out on to a board and slice into wedges. Heat the remainder of the olive oil in a frying pan and fry wedges until browned on both sides. Drain on paper towel.</li> <li>7 Serve ratatouille hot with the polenta wedges.</li> </ol>

**Tip:** You can vary the ratatouille to suit the vegetables you have on hand. Garlic adds flavour and green beans, broccoli pieces, pitted olives, fresh asparagus, chopped celery or different herbs all work well.

**Per serving (serves 6):** Kilojoules 1,248; Fat 19.9 g (Saturated 2.7 g); Sodium 805 mg; Carbohydrate 23.8 g (Dietary Fibre 4.3 g); Protein 4.6 g.

## Sweet Potato and Pumpkin

If you never use your microwave for anything except defrosting peas and heating cups of tea that have gone cold, here is a simple, tasty dish to try. This recipe is perfect for lunch with a green salad, or as a side dish with something plain like a grilled chop and green vegetables.

**Prep time:** 25 minutes • **Cooking time:** 20 minutes • **Serves:** 6

Ingredients	Directions
2 rashers bacon	<b>1</b> Remove rind and fat from bacon. Place bacon between paper towels. Cook on high/100 per cent in the microwave for 2 minutes or until crisp, and then dice.
500 g sweet potato	
500 g butternut pumpkin	<b>2</b> Peel and thinly slice sweet potato and pumpkin. Slice spring onions.
3 spring onions	
250 g light sour cream	<b>3</b> Place potato and pumpkin in layers in a 25-cm microwave-proof flan dish. Cover and cook on high/100 per cent for 8 to 10 minutes or just until tender.
60 ml (¼ cup) milk	
1 egg	<b>4</b> Combine light sour cream, milk and egg. Pour over potato and pumpkin. Sprinkle with bacon, spring onions and cheese. Cook on medium/50 per cent for 6 to 8 minutes. Brown under a grill if desired.
½ cup grated cheddar cheese	

**Tip:** If you're conscious about the saturated fat content in this recipe, try using low-fat milk.

**Per serving:** Kilojoules 167.8; Fat 14.3 g (Saturated 8.9g); Sodium 216 mg; Carbohydrate 3.0 g (Dietary Fibre 0.15 g); Protein 6.9 g.



## Mexican Roasted Potatoes

Why not play around with this traditional recipe by using sweet potato, or a mix of potato and sweet potato to lower the GI in this dish? (For a reminder about GI, refer to Chapter 6.)

**Prep time:** 15 minutes • **Cooking time:** 40 minutes • **Servings:** 4

Ingredients	Directions
<b>1 kg all-purpose potatoes, cut into bite-sized pieces</b>	<b>1</b> Preheat oven to 220°C.
<b>2 tablespoons olive oil</b>	<b>2</b> Toss potato pieces with olive oil in a large baking dish and stir in salt, spring onions, ground cumin, chilli powder and chilli flakes if using.
<b>1 ¼ teaspoons salt</b>	<b>3</b> Roast for 35 minutes, stirring once.
<b>2 tablespoons chopped spring onions</b>	<b>4</b> Prior to serving stir in chopped coriander. Serve topped with a dollop of low fat yoghurt or sour cream.
<b>¾ teaspoon ground cumin</b>	
<b>¾ teaspoon Mexican-style chilli powder</b>	
<b>¼ teaspoon chilli flakes, optional</b>	
<b>1 tablespoon chopped fresh coriander leaves</b>	
<b>Low fat yoghurt or sour cream for serving</b>	

**Per serving:** Kilojoules 1,234; Fat 7.0 g (Saturated 1.0 g); Sodium 760 mg; Carbohydrate 53.5 g (Dietary Fibre 5.8 g); Protein 6.5 g.

## Chapter 13

# Enjoying the Main Event

### *In This Chapter*

- ▶ Preparing delicious chicken dishes
- ▶ Choosing and cooking meat and seafood
- ▶ Going vegetarian

**H**ome-cooked dinners are one of life's great pleasures. But these days, many people are so busy that finding the time for cooking is a real challenge; top that with the idea of working within the boundaries of a gluten-free diet and you can easily fall into the trap of throwing together the same three or four meals each week.

On the plus side, however, avoiding gluten isn't really difficult when it comes to main dishes. Many of the main dishes you cooked in the past contain no gluten anyway and they probably featured large in your repertoire. By making some simple substitutions (you can get ideas for these in Chapter 9), you can make almost anything gluten-free. The traditional roast dinner you may have grown up on poses only minor problems — the gravy and the stuffing, if needed. These can be made using alternative gluten-free flours and grains. In the past, pasta has been a problem, but with so many good gluten-free products on the market, it's no longer an issue.

We've tried to keep it simple, avoiding recipes with too many ingredients or a list of instructions so long that halfway down your eyes glaze over and you default to the usual stir-fry or grill. This is a *For Dummies* book, after all.

In this chapter, you find a useful collection of recipes to keep you and your family contentedly tucking in at dinner time.

### *Recipes in This Chapter*

- ▶ Chicken Quinotto with Mushrooms
- ▶ Spiced Moroccan Chicken with Quinoa
- ▶ Asian-Inspired Baked Chicken
- ▶ Steak and Peanut Pepper Noodles
- ▶ Titus Chan's Beef Tomato Stir-fry
- ▶ Beef Marinade
- ▶ Lamb and Eggplant Tagine
- ▶ Pork, Bok Choy and Noodle Stir-fry
- ▶ Easy Quiche
- ▶ Simple Salmon and Quinoa Loaf
- ▶ Szechwan Scallops with Orange Peel
- ▶ Salmon Steaks with Basil
- Vegetarian Lasagne
- Chickpea Curry in a Hurry
- Fresh Harvest Penne



## Choosing Chicken

Chicken is a great source of protein, as well as niacin, vitamins B6 and B12, vitamin D, iron and zinc. Gram for gram, skinless chicken is one of the lowest-fat meats around. Although breast meat definitely has the lowest fat content, even skinless dark meat is comparatively low in fat and most of the fat it does have is unsaturated — the good kind.



Dark meat is dark because birds use their leg and wing muscles more, so those muscles require more oxygen. *Myoglobin* is an iron-containing protein that transfers oxygen from the blood to the muscles, changing the colour of the meat — and providing you with more iron.

### Skinless or skinful? It's really not so sinful

The skinny on skin is that although people often think cooking chicken with the skin off is healthier, it actually isn't. Kilojoule-wise, the meat is the same whether you cook it with the skin on or off, and leaving it on actually helps the chicken retain moisture and intensifies its flavour. Roast

the chicken with it on and then — if you have the willpower — peel it off and throw it away. Although some people like to remove the skin to reduce the fat content, others feel it's okay to eat it once in a while as a treat. So if you're into occasional indulgences, go for it!

## Chicken Quinotto with Mushrooms

Never heard of *quinotto*? That's not surprising, because Margaret just invented it. But you *have* heard of risotto, right? This dish is a risotto made from quinoa, making it quinotto! This is a new kind of comfort food for a cold night, but substituting quinoa for arborio rice means the meal is packed with goodness.

**Prep time:** 30 minutes • **Cooking time:** 40 minutes • **Servings:** 4–5

Ingredients	Directions
1 tablespoon olive oil	<b>1</b> Fry half the chicken pieces in oil until brown on all sides. Remove from heat and repeat with the rest of the chicken. Set aside.
500 g chicken thighs, cut into bite-sized pieces	
1 onion, chopped	
1 garlic clove, crushed	<b>2</b> Add more oil if necessary and fry onion until lightly brown. Add garlic, ginger and other spices and stir for 1 minute. Add mushrooms and stir quickly.
1 teaspoon finely grated ginger	
1½ teaspoon ground coriander	<b>3</b> Add quinoa and gluten-free stock and bring to the boil.
1½ teaspoon cumin	
1 teaspoon turmeric	<b>4</b> Reduce heat and simmer for 20 minutes, stirring to avoid sticking, until liquid is absorbed. The quinoa should be soft and moist, but not runny. Add chicken pieces and cook for 5 minutes.
1½ teaspoon black mustard seeds	
1 cup button or chopped mushrooms	<b>5</b> Remove from heat and stir in coriander leaves. Allow to stand for 2 to 3 minutes, covered.
1 cup quinoa, rinsed and drained	
2 cups chicken or vegetable stock, or water	<b>6</b> Serve topped with yoghurt and additional coriander leaves.
1 tablespoon fresh coriander leaves, chopped	
Extra coriander leaves for serving	

**Per serving:** Kilojoules 1,661; Fat 11.4 g (Saturated 2.5 g); Sodium 283 mg; Carbohydrate 35.4 g (Dietary Fibre 3.9 g); Protein 34.6 g.





## Spiced Moroccan Chicken with Quinoa

If you love spices, just reading this easy recipe sets your tastebuds dancing with delight. Although it's tasty, it's not too hot, so give it a try.

**Prep time:** 20 minutes • **Cooking time:** 30 minutes • **Servings:** 6

Ingredients	Directions
<b>1 kg chicken fillets, either thigh or breast, cut into pieces</b>	<b>1</b> Preheat oven to 200°C.
<b>1½ teaspoons each ground cumin, paprika</b>	<b>2</b> Place chicken pieces in a large ovenproof baking dish in a single layer.
<b>1 teaspoon each cinnamon, ground ginger</b>	<b>3</b> In a small bowl combine all the spices, salt, garlic, lemon juice and olive oil to make a paste. Rub chicken all over with paste and add chicken stock to baking dish.
<b>½ teaspoon each ground coriander, saffron powder, salt flakes</b>	<b>4</b> Bake for about 30 minutes, basting twice, or until cooked through.
<b>¼ teaspoon each turmeric, cayenne pepper, ground cloves</b>	<b>5</b> While the chicken is baking, prepare quinoa. Place quinoa and water or stock in a saucepan and cook for 15 minutes or until liquid is absorbed, stirring occasionally. Remove from heat, cover and allow to stand for 3 minutes, and then fluff up with a fork.
<b>1 garlic clove, crushed</b>	<b>6</b> Serve chicken on a bed of quinoa with a bowl of yoghurt flavoured with chopped fresh mint leaves.
<b>Juice of 1 large lemon</b>	
<b>65 ml (¼ cup) olive oil</b>	
<b>100 ml (½ cup) gluten-free chicken stock</b>	
<b>1 cup quinoa (lightly rinsed)</b>	
<b>2 cups water or stock</b>	

**Tip:** Moroccan chicken makes wonderful finger food for a party. Cut the chicken into bite-sized pieces before cooking and reduce the cooking time to avoid overcooking. Serve with minty yoghurt for dipping.

**Per serving:** Kilojoules 1,741; Fat 14.6 g (Saturated 2.8 g); Sodium 532 mg; Carbohydrate 23.2 g (Dietary Fibre 2.4 g); Protein 42.2 g.

## Asian-Inspired Baked Chicken

This very simple chicken dish can be put together in a few minutes and has all the great flavours of Asia. You don't need to brown the chicken before baking as the dark sauce colours the meat appealingly. The chicken pieces should be approximately the same size and dark meat on the bone is recommended. Serve with a lot of plain boiled rice to soak up the juices and a green vegetable or salad.

**Prep time:** 10 minutes • **Cooking time:** 45 minutes to 1 hour • **Servings:** 4

Ingredients	Directions
1 kg chicken thigh cutlets, thigh pieces or drumsticks, skinned (dark meat is best)	1 Preheat oven to 180°C.
90 ml (⅓ cup) gluten-free soy sauce	2 Select a baking dish large enough to hold the chicken pieces in a single layer.
60 ml (¼ cup) tomato sauce	3 Mix the remaining ingredients in a bowl then pour over the chicken. Bake for 45 minutes to 1 hour, depending on how thick the pieces of chicken are. Turn the pieces over once or twice while cooking.
125 ml (½ cup) pineapple juice	
1 garlic clove, crushed	
1 tablespoon grated fresh ginger (or 1 teaspoon powdered ginger)	

**Per serving:** Kilojoules 1,641; Fat 18.1 g (Saturated 5.5 g); Sodium 1,631 mg; Carbohydrate 8.6 g (Dietary Fibre <1 g); Protein 49.2 g.

## Eating Meat

Yes, you can have your steak and eat it, too. And your pork and lamb and emu and croc and kangaroo, if that appeals. If you're a newly diagnosed coeliac, you may be low in iron and red meat helps to get your iron levels back to normal. Red meat is important in the diet because it contributes crucial dietary nutrients such as iron, zinc, vitamin B12 and protein.

However, the word is out, loud and clear, about moderation in red meat consumption. Eating too much red meat slightly increases your chances of developing bowel cancer. The Cancer Council of Western Australia recommends small serves of red meat — 65 to 100 grams cooked, about the size of the palm of your hand — no more than three or four times a week. So when you're eating red meat, don't think of it as the main ingredient of the meal. Add a lot of delicious vegetables or salad, rice, pasta or potatoes.



## Steak and Peanut Pepper Noodles

In this tasty dish, crunchy, colourful vegetables mixed with some of your favourite gluten-free noodles serve as a bed for thinly sliced steak covered in a spicy peanut sauce. Really delicious.

**Prep time:** 25 minutes • **Marinating time:** 2 hours • **Cooking time:** 15 minutes • **Servings:** 4

Ingredients	Directions
½ cup white vinegar ½ cup olive oil 4 tablespoons gluten-free soy sauce 4 tablespoons peanut butter 2 tablespoons chopped fresh coriander leaves 1 teaspoon crushed garlic (about 2 cloves) ½ teaspoon crushed red chilli 500 g lean top sirloin steak Gluten-free noodles or vermicelli 1½ cups finely sliced cabbage 1½ cups chopped bok choy 1 cup finely chopped spinach 1 cup grated carrot ½ cucumber, thinly sliced (for garnish) ½ yellow summer squash, halved and thinly sliced (for garnish) ¼ cup chopped peanuts	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 Combine the vinegar, oil, soy sauce, peanut butter, coriander, garlic and chilli in a blender. Cover and blend the dressing until it's well mixed.</li> <li>2 Trim the fat from the meat. Put the steak in a shallow, non-metallic dish and pour about one-third of the dressing from Step 1 over the meat. Cover and marinate the meat in the refrigerator for 2 hours, turning occasionally. Chill the remaining dressing.</li> <li>3 Preheat the griller. Drain the meat, throwing away the dressing it was marinating in. Grill the steak until it's cooked the way you like it, turning once halfway through. This should take about 8 to 12 minutes, depending on the thickness of the meat and how you like your steak cooked.</li> <li>4 Cook the noodles according to the package directions, making sure they're al dente (slightly firm and not overcooked). Drain them and set them aside (if you're not ready to mix them with the vegetables yet, stir in a little oil to stop them from going gluggy and sticking together).</li> </ol>

- 5 While the meat is cooking, combine the noodles, cabbage, bok choy, spinach and carrots in a medium-sized mixing bowl. Add about half of the remaining dressing to the noodle-veggie mixture and stir until it's well mixed.
- 6 When the meat is done, slice it into thin slices across the grain. To assemble this dish, serve the noodle-veggie mixture on each person's plate. Put a few slices of meat on top of the noodle mixture. Garnish the dish with a few slices of cucumber and squash. Drizzle the remaining dressing mixture over each plate and top with peanuts.

**Tip:** You can try different vegetables or salad ingredients, as long as they're grated or very thinly sliced.

**Per serving:** Kilojoules 2,397; Fat 37 g (Saturated 7 g); Sodium 1,229 mg; Carbohydrate 30 g (Dietary Fibre 4 g); Protein 33 g.



## Titus Chan's Beef Tomato Stir-fry

This recipe came from a charming Chinese cooking expert back in the 1970s — he called it his best stir-fry. You can find gluten-free oyster sauce as well as hoisin sauce in supermarkets and Asian stores and either will do in this recipe. The vegetables can be varied — try green beans, broccoli and carrot.

**Prep time:** 20 minutes • **Marinating time:** 30 minutes • **Cooking time:** 10–15 minutes  
• **Servings:** 4

Ingredients	Directions
<b>250 g lean beef</b> <b>Beef Marinade (see the following recipe)</b> <b>1 tablespoon oil</b> <b>½ green capsicum, cut into 2.5 cm squares</b> <b>1 medium onion, cut into medium slivers</b> <b>125 ml (½ cup) water or gluten-free chicken stock (approx.)</b> <b>1 tablespoon brown sugar</b> <b>3 tablespoons tomato sauce or paste</b> <b>2 tomatoes, cut into chunks</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 Thinly slice beef into stir-fry strips. Partially freezing the meat prior to slicing makes this step easy.</li> <li>2 Combine the marinade ingredients in a small bowl. Add meat and marinate for at least 30 minutes.</li> <li>3 Heat a large frying pan with 1 tablespoon oil until hot. Brown the meat, including marinade mixture, for 1 minute.</li> <li>4 Add capsicum and onion and stir-fry for 3 minutes.</li> <li>5 Add water or chicken stock, brown sugar and tomato sauce or paste. Stir-fry for 3 minutes or until vegetables are tender. Add more liquid, if desired, for consistency.</li> <li>6 Add tomatoes and stir through until just barely cooked. Serve immediately over steamed rice.</li> </ol>
<b>Beef Marinade</b> <b>¼ teaspoon each bicarbonate soda, sugar, sesame oil and salt</b> <b>1 teaspoon each maize cornflour, peanut oil, gluten-free soy sauce and gluten-free oyster sauce</b> <b>2 teaspoons sherry</b>	

**Per serving:** Kilojoules 608; Fat 4.4 g (Saturated 1.5 g); Sodium 439 mg; Carbohydrate 9.3 g (Dietary Fibre 2.1 g); Protein 15.2 g.

## Lamb and Eggplant Tagine

Rich and delicious, this Middle Eastern dish incorporates a traditional mix of spices and dried fruit. You can cook it in a beautiful tagine if you have one, or use a large, heavy pan and ladle the mixture into a casserole for serving. Don't be put off by the number of ingredients — you have meat and vegetables all in one dish.

**Prep Time:** 25 minutes • **Cooking Time:** 1¼ hours • **Servings:** 6

<i>Ingredients</i>	<i>Directions</i>
<b>1 eggplant, cut into 1 cm cubes</b> <b>3 tablespoons olive oil</b> <b>1 kg lean, boneless lamb (leg, rump or shoulder)</b> <b>2 onions, chopped into large chunks</b> <b>2 garlic cloves, chopped</b> <b>½ teaspoon turmeric</b> <b>1 teaspoon cumin</b> <b>2 teaspoons harissa</b> <b>2 cups water</b> <b>400 g can chopped tomatoes (unthickened)</b> <b>1 cinnamon stick</b> <b>½ teaspoon ground black pepper</b> <b>Salt to taste</b> <b>2 tablespoons chopped coriander leaves</b> <b>400 g sweet potato or pumpkin, peeled and cut into 2–3 cm cubes</b> <b>1 carrot, cut into sticks</b> <b>2 zucchinis, sliced thickly</b> <b>⅓ cup raisins or chopped dates</b>	<b>1</b> Toss eggplant in 1 tablespoon oil and grill until golden. Set aside. <b>2</b> Cut lamb into 2 cm cubes. Heat the remaining oil in a heavy pan and cook lamb, onion and garlic until lamb has lost its pink colour. <b>3</b> Lower heat and add turmeric, cumin and harissa, stir for 1 minute, then add 2 cups water. <b>4</b> Add eggplant, tomatoes, cinnamon stick, pepper, salt and coriander. Bring gently to the boil, cover and simmer for 30 minutes. <b>5</b> Add remaining vegetables, cover and cook a further 30 minutes or until lamb and vegetables are tender. Stir in raisins or dates and cook a further 5 minutes. <b>6</b> Serve with rice or freshly baked Quick Bread (see Chapter 14).

**Per serving:** Kilojoules 1,824; Fat 19.8 g (Saturated 6.2 g); Sodium 184 mg; Carbohydrate 22.3 g (Dietary Fibre 4.8 g); Protein 40.1 g.



## Cooking with pork

Porky the Pig's not so porky anymore. That's because farmers these days have changed their breeding and production methods to make the pork much leaner and healthier. In fact, if you buy a lean piece of pork and cut all the fat off the edges, it's about the same as chicken in terms of kilojoules, cholesterol and fat. Lean pork doesn't have fat to keep it moist, so it's especially important not to overcook it, or it'll get tough and dry. Pork should be cooked to about 65 to 70°C to ensure that it is cooked through.



You should let meat stand for about 10 to 15 minutes before you carve it. This is called a *resting period* and it allows the juices to be redistributed so your meat turns out moister. But the meat's temperature continues to rise about 5 to 10 degrees during this time, so you need to stop cooking a little early to allow for this rise in temperature.

Here are a few ways you can tell whether pork is done:

- ✓ **Use a thermometer.** Stick the thermometer into the thickest part of the cut. At 70°C, it's medium-done and safe to eat.
- ✓ **Prick it.** If you prick it with a fork, the juice that comes out should be clear, not pink.
- ✓ **Cut it open.** When you cut into the meat, it should be white.



If you're watching your fat intake, pork tenderloin is a good choice. Nearly as low in saturated fat as chicken breast meat, it's one of the leanest meats available.

## Pork, Bok Choy and Noodle Stir-fry

Sesame oil has a really distinctive flavour that's perfect in this dish. You could easily substitute chicken or beef for the pork specified.

**Prep time:** 15 minutes • **Cooking time:** 15 minutes • **Serves:** 4

Ingredients	Directions
200 g vermicelli rice noodles	<b>1</b> Cook noodles as directed on the package until just tender. Drain.
1 red chilli	
500 g pork loin or neck fillet	<b>2</b> Remove seeds from chilli and finely chop. Be careful not to touch your face or eyes. Some people wear disposable gloves for this job. Trim pork and slice thinly. Cut base from bok choy and separate leaves. Wash thoroughly, and then cut into bite-sized pieces.
1 bunch baby bok choy	
1 tablespoon sesame oil	<b>3</b> Heat sesame oil in a wok or large heavy frying pan over medium-high heat. Cook chilli and pork until meat is browned. Push pork to the side and add mushrooms, spring onions and capsicum. Cook for 3 minutes.
250 g mushrooms, cleaned and thinly sliced	
3 spring onions, sliced diagonally into 1 cm pieces	<b>4</b> Add bok choy and sesame seeds and cook for 2 to 3 minutes or until bok choy is wilted but still crisp.
1 small red capsicum, cut into thin strips	
1 tablespoon toasted sesame seeds	<b>5</b> Add noodles to pan and cook until heated through.

**Per serving:** Kilojoules 1,677 Fat 9.1 g (Saturated 1.8 g); Sodium 180 mg; Carbohydrate 44.4 g (Dietary Fibre 3.5 g); Protein 32.7 g.





## Easy Quiche

For a quick and easy recipe that's sure to please, you can't go past this one. Baked in a square or rectangular pan and cut into little squares, this is great for party snacks too. The bacon or ham can be left out to make it vegetarian.

**Prep time:** 20 minutes • **Cooking time:** 40–45 minutes • **Servings:** 6

Ingredients	Directions
<b>1 cup gluten-free self-raising flour</b>	<b>1</b> Preheat oven to 180°C.
<b>1 cup tasty cheese, grated</b>	<b>2</b> Combine all ingredients and pour into a pie dish or shallow baking tray.
<b>1 carrot, grated (medium size)</b>	
<b>1 zucchini, grated (medium size)</b>	<b>3</b> Bake for approximately 40 to 45 minutes until the centre is cooked.
<b>1 onion, finely chopped (medium size)</b>	
<b>1 small can corn kernels</b>	
<b>½ cup oil</b>	
<b>5 eggs, lightly whisked</b>	
<b>Salt and pepper</b>	
<b>4 rashers gluten-free bacon or ½ cup ham, chopped (optional)</b>	

**Per serving:** Kilojoules 1,818; Fat 30.8 g (Saturated 8.1 g); Sodium 739 mg; Carbohydrate 25.6 g (Dietary Fibre 2.9 g); Protein 13.3 g.

## *Diving into seafood*

Seafood has been an important source of protein and other nutrients in diets around the world since, well, since people started catching fish. Fish and shellfish usually contain significant amounts of zinc, which studies show is important for thinking and memory.

Although many recipes call for batters or crumbs, you can easily modify the recipes so they're gluten-free but still delicious.



### **Merry marinades**

Besides adding flavour, acidic marinades also tenderise foods. The enzymes in the acids break down the muscle and connective proteins in the meat, making the meat less tough. Here are some tips for marinating:

- ✓ Refrigerate meat to avoid the growth of harmful bacteria. The temperature at which you marinate doesn't affect the meat's tenderness.
- ✓ Poultry and fish can turn to mush or become tough if you marinate them too long. Poultry does well when marinated up to 4 hours, and about 30 minutes is a good amount of time to marinate seafood.
- ✓ Natural tenderisers include pineapple, figs, pawpaw, kiwifruit, mango, honeydew, wine, citrus, vinegar, tomato, yoghurt and buttermilk.
- ✓ Don't use aluminium containers — only glass, ceramic, stainless steel or plastic. When you marinate in metals other than stainless steel, the metal and the acidic marinade produce a chemical reaction.
- ✓ Never re-use a marinade. If you're going to use some of the marinade for a sauce, take out the amount you need and set it aside before you marinate the meat or seafood. After you've marinated food in a marinade, throw the marinade away.

## Simple Salmon and Quinoa Loaf

You'll love this quick to prepare dish, especially with the addition of nourishing quinoa.

**Prep time:** 10 minutes • **Cooking time:** 30 minutes • **Servings:** 4

Ingredients	Directions
<b>415 g can salmon</b>	<b>1</b> Drain salmon and reserve the liquid.
<b>⅔ cup milk (approx.)</b>	<b>2</b> Add sufficient milk to the salmon liquid to make one cup
<b>½ cup quinoa (lightly rinsed)</b>	<b>3</b> Pour liquid into a saucepan, add quinoa and bring to the boil.
<b>2 beaten eggs</b>	<b>4</b> Simmer gently for 15 to 20 minutes, stirring occasionally until liquid has been absorbed.
<b>3 tablespoons lemon juice</b>	<b>5</b> Mix other ingredients thoroughly, and stir in cooked quinoa.
<b>2 teaspoons finely grated lemon rind</b>	<b>6</b> Spoon into a microwave-proof dish and smooth top.
<b>2 shallots (chopped)</b>	<b>7</b> Microwave on high for 7 to 10 minutes. Allow to stand for 5 minutes.
<b>1 tablespoons chopped parsley</b>	<b>8</b> Serve hot with vegetables, or cold with salads.
<b>Salt and pepper to taste</b>	

**Per serving:** Kilojoules 1,305; Fat 10.0 g (Saturated 3.2 g); Sodium 423 mg; Carbohydrate 17.4 g (Dietary Fibre 1.6 g); Protein 31.4 g.

## Szechwan Scallops with Orange Peel

This simple Szechwan dish can impress anyone. If you're not a seafood lover, you can use chicken instead of scallops.

**Prep time:** 15 minutes • **Marinating time:** 1 hour • **Cooking time:** 15 minutes • **Servings:** 6

Ingredients	Directions
1 large orange	1 Preheat the oven to 100°C.
500 g large scallops	2 Use a vegetable peeler or sharp knife to cut the peel from the orange in 2.5 cm wide pieces, being careful not to cut into the white part of the peel. Cut the pieces into thin strips about 5 cm long and put them on a small biscuit tray. Bake them for about 15 minutes to dry them out.
2 tablespoons gluten-free soy sauce	3 In a non-metallic medium bowl, mix the scallops, soy sauce, sherry, spring onions, capsicum and ginger. Cover and refrigerate the mixture for an hour or so.
2 tablespoons dry sherry	4 In a small bowl, mix the cornflour, sugar and orange juice. Cover and refrigerate this mixture for about an hour.
5 spring onions, cut into 3 cm pieces	5 When you're almost ready to serve the meal, heat half the oil in a large frying pan or wok over medium heat. Stir-fry the orange peels until they're crisp, about 2 minutes. Drain the peels on paper towels.
½ cup sliced red capsicum	6 Turn the heat to high. Use the remaining oil to stir-fry the scallop mixture until the scallops are just cooked through, about 1 to 2 minutes on each side. Stir the orange-juice mixture and then add it to the scallops. Stir-fry the mixture until the sauce is slightly thick and it coats the scallops.
1 teaspoon grated ginger	7 Spoon the scallop mixture onto a serving platter and sprinkle it with the orange peels. Add as much chilli as you like to spice it up.
2½ teaspoons maize cornflour	
¾ teaspoon sugar	
½ cup orange juice	
¼ cup olive oil	
½ teaspoon (or to taste) crushed chilli	

**Per serving:** Kilojoules 799; Fat 10 g (Saturated 1 g); Sodium 513 mg; Carbohydrate 7 g (Dietary Fibre 1 g); Protein 16 g.



## Salmon Steaks with Basil

Australia produces great salmon and the supply is available virtually all year. Boiled potatoes and a green salad or steamed asparagus perfectly complement this simple dish. If salmon is too expensive, substitute another fish.

**Prep time:** 10 minutes • **Marinating time:** 1–2 hours • **Cooking time:** 10 minutes

Ingredients	Directions
60 ml (¼ cup) olive oil 60 ml (¼ cup) fresh lemon juice 2 large garlic cloves, crushed 1½ cups fresh basil leaves 4 salmon steaks	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1 Put the ingredients (except for the salmon steaks) into a blender or food processor and puree just until the basil leaves are minced.</li><li>2 Put half the marinade and the salmon steaks into a heavy plastic bag or glass bowl. Seal or cover and refrigerate for 1 to 2 hours. Save remaining marinade for basting.</li><li>3 Preheat the grill. Put steaks on a lightly oiled rack. Grill 10 to 15 cm from the heat, turning once and brushing with reserved marinade several times. Steaks are done when the thickest part is barely opaque when tested with a fork.</li></ol>

**Per serving:** Kilojoules 1,579; Fat 26.2 g (Saturated 4.7 g); Sodium 79 mg; Carbohydrate <1 g (Dietary Fibre <1 g); Protein 34.5 g.

## Enjoying Vegetarian Dishes

Typically, the vegetarian diet relies heavily on pasta, breads, pilafs, various forms of wheat, and meat replacements — all of which are usually loaded with gluten. But plenty of vegetarian dishes are naturally gluten-free and you can easily convert a lot more. Plenty of evidence now shows that reducing meat intake is good for your body — and good for the planet too. Many absolutely mouth-watering dishes also use lentils, chickpeas and other pulses, and when you get into the habit of getting your protein from yummy vegetarian dishes, you may not miss meat at all.

### Ginger: Tastes good and does good

Some people refer to ginger as a root, but it's actually a *rhizome*, an underground stem. One is depicted in the following figure. Most commonly used in Indian and Asian dishes, it has a peppery, sweet flavour when it's fresh.

When dried, it's actually got a bit of a spicy kick. Ginger is also a stimulant for the circulatory system and some cultures consider it an aphrodisiac.



## *Vegetarian Lasagne*

This dish is easy to make and a hit with guests, who may never have a clue that what they're eating is gluten-free. Be sure to double the recipe and freeze a pan of lasagne for later. When you're ready, take it straight from the freezer to a 180°C oven and heat it for an hour and a half, uncovering it 15 minutes before it's done. This lasagne is even better the next day as leftovers!

**Prep time:** 25 minutes • **Cooking time:** 1 hour, 30 minutes • **Servings:** 10

<i>Ingredients</i>	<i>Directions</i>
<b>½ cup grated tasty cheese</b>  <b>½ cup grated mozzarella cheese</b>  <b>½ cup grated parmesan cheese</b>  <b>2 large jars pasta sauce</b>  <b>¼ cup chopped fresh basil</b>  <b>1 teaspoon onion powder</b>  <b>¼ teaspoon white pepper</b>  <b>Sea salt to taste</b>  <b>1 tablespoon vegetable oil</b>  <b>½ cup diced zucchini</b>  <b>¼ cup sliced black olives</b>  <b>¼ cup sliced mushrooms</b>  <b>¼ cup chopped onions</b>  <b>½ cup chopped spinach</b>  <b>Non-stick spray</b>  <b>250 g packet of gluten-free lasagne sheets, uncooked</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 Preheat the oven to 180°C degrees.</li> <li>2 In a large mixing bowl, combine the cheeses. In a medium bowl, mix together the pasta sauce, basil, onion powder, pepper and salt. Set aside both mixtures.</li> <li>3 Heat the oil in a large frying pan over medium-high heat. Gently fry the zucchini, olives, mushroom and onion for 4 minutes or until the onion begins to soften. Toss through the spinach and cook until just wilted. Don't overcook the vegetables (remember, they still cook when the lasagne bakes). Set this mixture aside.</li> <li>4 Spray a shallow 23 × 32 cm baking dish with non-stick spray. In the baking dish, layer the lasagne as follows: Place one-third of the sauce mix on the bottom of the dish, followed by a layer of uncooked pasta (just enough to cover the sauce), half the cheese mixture and half the vegetable mixture. Repeat this layering process with another third of the sauce, another layer of pasta, most of the remaining cheese and the rest of the vegetables. Finish with the last third of sauce on the top.</li> <li>5 Top the lasagne with the remaining cheese.</li> <li>6 Cover the lasagne with aluminium foil and bake it for 1 hour. Remove the foil and bake for a further 30 minutes or until the top is golden brown. Cool the lasagne for at least 15 minutes before cutting into it.</li> </ol>

**Vary It!** Be creative and use whatever veggies you prefer.

**Tip:** For extra flavour, try adding a teaspoon of crushed garlic.

**Per serving:** Kilojoules 812; Fat 7.4 g (Saturated 3.4 g); Sodium 562 mg; Carbohydrate 23.7 g (Dietary Fibre 2.2 g); Protein 8 g.

## Chickpea Curry in a Hurry

Chickpeas are low fat, low GI, a great source of protein and have a nice nutty flavour. This easy recipe will become a favourite. The sweet potato can be replaced with pumpkin or potato for variety.

**Prep time:** 15 minutes • **Cooking time:** 20–25 minutes • **Servings:** 4

<i>Ingredients</i>	<i>Directions</i>
2 tablespoons vegetable oil	<b>1</b> Heat oil in a large pan and fry onion until softened. Add garlic and fry gently.
1 onion, chopped	
2 garlic cloves, crushed	<b>2</b> Add curry powder, cumin and turmeric and cook for 1 minute.
2 teaspoons curry powder	
1 teaspoon cumin	<b>3</b> Mix in the chopped sweet potato and fry for 3 to 4 minutes.
½ teaspoon turmeric	
250 g sweet potato, peeled and chopped into 2 cm cubes	<b>4</b> Add spinach with its juice, tomatoes and chickpeas. Break up tomatoes and mix well.
250 g frozen spinach, thawed but not drained	
400 g can tomatoes (unthickened)	<b>5</b> Add water, cover and simmer for 15 to 20 minutes until sweet potato is cooked through.
240 g can chickpeas	
½ cup water	<b>6</b> Sprinkle coriander on top and serve with rice.
Coriander leaves, chopped	
Salt and pepper to taste	

**Per serving:** Kilojoules 1,005; Fat 11.2 g (Saturated 1.4 g); Sodium 284 mg; Carbohydrate 22.4 g (Dietary Fibre 8.9 g); Protein 8.5 g.





## Fresh Harvest Penne

This easy-to-prepare vegetarian meal is a great way to use fresh veggies you've grown or bought from a farmers' market. If you can't find gluten-free penne, use another type of gluten-free pasta. Several varieties are now available.

**Prep time:** 30 minutes • **Cooking time:** 20 minutes • **Servings:** 6

Ingredients	Directions
<b>500 g pack gluten-free penne (or any type) pasta</b>	<b>1</b> Cook the pasta as directed, being careful not to overcook it.
<b>2 tablespoons olive oil</b>	
<b>½ medium red onion, diced</b>	<b>2</b> In a large frying pan, heat the olive oil over medium heat. Add the onion, zucchini and squash to the frying pan and sauté, stirring often, for about 5 minutes.
<b>1 cup thickly sliced zucchini</b>	
<b>1 cup thickly sliced yellow squash</b>	<b>3</b> Add the garlic and eggplant to the pan and continue stirring frequently.
<b>1 tablespoon crushed garlic (about 6 cloves)</b>	
<b>1 cup 1½ cm eggplant cubes</b>	<b>4</b> When the eggplant begins to get soft, after about 5 minutes, reduce the heat to low and add the tomato. Continue stirring the mixture for 3 to 4 minutes.
<b>2 medium tomatoes, diced</b>	
<b>⅓ cup chopped fresh basil</b>	
<b>⅓ cup grated parmesan cheese</b>	<b>5</b> Drain the pasta. In a large serving bowl, combine the pasta, vegetables, basil and parmesan cheese.

**Per serving:** Kilojoules 1,054; Fat 6 g (Saturated 1 g); Sodium 64 mg; Carbohydrate 46 g (Dietary Fibre 8 g); Protein 6 g.

## Chapter 14

# Pizza, Pasta and Bread: Foods You Thought Were a Thing of the Past

### *In This Chapter*

- ▶ Perfecting gluten-free pizza
- ▶ Enjoying pasta after all
- ▶ Baking different breads

**B**eing gluten-free doesn't mean you have to give up pizza and pasta and live on rice cakes for the rest of your life. With a little effort you can make really great pizzas, and gluten-free bread just gets better and better all the time.

We've included a range of recipes, from basic to more complex, including ideas for pizza toppings. We even have a very quick and easy bread recipe for the harried and hurried cook.

## *Pizza with Pizzazz*

When you first describe the gluten-free diet to people, they often react with emotion somewhere between disdain and horror. And while you're hastening to tell them the good side of the story, they interrupt, unable to hide the shock in their voices: 'You mean you can't eat pizza?'

The good news is that you *can* eat pizza. Maybe not always of the fast-food variety, but gluten-free pizza is delicious nonetheless. And you don't have to tip the delivery guy anymore.

### *Recipes in This Chapter*

- Asparagus and Artichoke Pizza with Pesto Sauce
- ▶ Lola Workman's Ham and Mushroom Pizza
- Zucchini and Eggplant Pizza
- ▶ Mediterranean Pizza
- Tomato Herb Pizza Sauce
- Alfredo Sauce
- Penne with Pea Sauce
- ▶ Macaroni Bake
- Quick Zucchini and Ricotta Pasta
- Broccoli and Ricotta Penne
- Quick Bread
- Great Gluten-free Bread
- Favourite White Bread
- Besan (Chickpea) Bread



## The passion for pizza goes way back

Although we've associated pizza with Italy for a long time, the credit for pizza really goes way back to ancient Middle Eastern cultures that made flat, unleavened bread in mud ovens. Pizza took the form you're most familiar with in Naples, Italy, where peasants in the Middle Ages made a seasoned flatbread and covered it with cheese.

The mass appeal of the tomato-mozzarella cheese combination is thanks to a Neapolitan

baker named Rafaele Esposito. In 1889, Esposito made a special pizza for the visiting King Umberto I and Queen Margherita. He decorated the pizza to look like the Italian flag, with red tomatoes, white mozzarella cheese and green basil leaves as toppings. The pizza was a hit and, of course, naming it after the queen didn't hurt its popularity; Pizza Margherita is still an Italian favourite.

## *Base: The pizza foundation*

The secret of a good pizza isn't just in the sauce or even the toppings. No matter how delicious your sauce or toppings, they can't disguise a base that's soggy, seriously stodgy or dry as a front lawn in the drought. No, the secret to any great pizza is undeniably in the crusty base.

While our Real Cooks aren't listening, we'll let you in on a secret. Your two authors usually use mixes or pre-made pizza bases because these days they're so good that it hardly seems worth the extra effort to start from scratch. But this is the recipe section of the book, and our editors claim that simply saying 'take pre-made pizza base out of package' isn't good enough. So we're including some pizza base recipes, not just to keep them happy, but also so you can have the choice — and enormous satisfaction — of making your entire pizza yourself if you want to. Homemade always, always tastes better, so if you have the time, go for it. You'll have a ball with your fingers in the dough, and your family and friends will love you for it.

## Asparagus and Artichoke Pizza with Pesto Sauce

This recipe creates a green-looking pizza, which looks great alongside one topped with tomato. It also makes a great change from the tomato flavour.

**Prep Time:** 10 minutes • **Cooking Time:** 20 minutes • **Servings:** Enough for one 30-cm pizza

Ingredients	Directions
1 cup fresh asparagus tips	1 Preheat the oven to 210°C.
½ cup basil pesto	2 Wash asparagus tips and blanch in boiling water for 3 minutes. Rinse in cold water and drain.
30 cm gluten-free pizza base	3 Spread a thin layer of basil pesto over your pizza base and top with asparagus tips, olives, sliced artichokes and mozzarella cheese.
½ cup olives, pitted and sliced	4 Bake until the base is cooked and cheese is bubbly (10 to 15 minutes).
½ cup artichokes sliced	
100 g (½ cup) mozzarella cheese, grated	

**Per serving (100 g):** Kilojoules 5,349; Fat 60.5 g (Saturated 16.5 g); Sodium 3129 mg; Carbohydrate 116.5 g (Dietary Fibre 19.3 g); Protein 53.4 g.



## Lola Workman's Ham and Mushroom Pizza

This delicious, traditional pizza doesn't need yeast.

**Prep time:** 25 minutes • **Cooking time:** 20 minutes • **Servings:** 2 small or 1 medium pizza

Ingredients	Directions
<b>Pizza topping (see the following recipe)</b>	<b>1</b> Grease the sides of two 20-cm sandwich pans (or a pizza tray) and line the bottom of each pan with baking paper.
65 ml (¼ cup) hot water	<b>2</b> Preheat oven to 200°C degrees.
65 ml (¼ cup) olive oil	
1 egg	<b>3</b> Place hot water, oil and lightly whisked egg into a bowl and sift in the combined flours, salt, bicarbonate soda and baking powder.
50 g (¼ cup) besan (chickpea flour)	
100 g (½ cup) potato flour	<b>4</b> Using an electric mixer, beat the mixture for about 1 minute and add the mashed potato.
½ teaspoon salt	
1 teaspoon bicarbonate soda	<b>5</b> Pour into the prepared pans and let stand for 10 minutes.
1 teaspoon gluten-free baking powder	
100 g (½ cup) mashed potato	<b>6</b> Top the pizza base with the chopped ham and grated cheese, garnish with olives and capsicum and cook for about 10 minutes or until the pizza is firm.

### Pizza Topping

250 g (1 cup) mushrooms	<b>1</b> To make the topping, sauté mushrooms in butter until soft and arrange on top of the batter.
1 tablespoon butter	
100 g (½ cup) chopped gluten-free ham	
100 g (½ cup) grated mozzarella cheese	
Olives and capsicum to garnish	

**Per serving (small pizza):** Kilojoules 3,893; Fat 55.8 g (Saturated 19.6 g); Sodium 2,145 mg; Carbohydrate 65.9 g (Dietary Fibre 10 g); Protein 40 g.

## Zucchini and Eggplant Pizza

Grilled vegetables get together with two cheeses for this delicious pizza.

**Prep time:** 20 minutes • **Cooking time:** 20 minutes • **Servings:** 6 slices

Ingredients	Directions
<b>1 medium pizza base, cooked</b> <b>1 medium eggplant, sliced thinly</b> <b>1 medium zucchini, sliced lengthwise</b> <b>1 green or red capsicum, seeded and sliced thickly</b> <b>2 tablespoons vegetable oil</b> <b>Approx. 70 g pizza sauce</b> <b>2 tablespoons chopped fresh basil (or 1 teaspoon dried basil)</b> <b>100 g (½ cup) fetta cheese</b> <b>100 g (½ cup) grated mozzarella cheese</b>	<b>1</b> Preheat the oven to 200°C. <b>2</b> Brush the eggplant, zucchini and capsicum slices with vegetable oil and cook under grill, turning once, until lightly browned. <b>3</b> Spread pizza sauce over pizza base and sprinkle with basil. Add crumbled fetta and grilled vegetables. Sprinkle mozzarella over the top. <b>4</b> Bake until base is golden and cheese is bubbly (10 to 15 minutes).

**Per serving:** Kilojoules 1,528; Fat 18.8 g (Saturated 8.4 g); Sodium 368 mg; Carbohydrate 38.1 g (Dietary Fibre 4.3 g); Protein 10.5 g.



## Mediterranean Pizza

You'll love this twist on a family favourite. Try it this way the first time, and then make up your own variation the next. Tzatziki is a Greek sauce made of yoghurt, garlic and cucumber. Make sure the brand you buy is gluten-free.

**Prep time:** 20 minutes • **Cooking time:** 35 minutes • **Servings:** 6 (2 large pizzas)

Ingredients	Directions
<b>Pizza topping (see the following recipe)</b>  <b>500 g gluten-free bread mix</b>  <b>7 g dried yeast</b>  <b>3 teaspoons dried mixed herbs</b>  <b>Salt and black pepper, to taste</b>  <b>200 ml warm milk</b>  <b>200 ml warm water</b>  <b>50 g (¼ cup) butter, melted</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 Preheat oven to 200°C. Prepare 2 large pizza trays by lining with baking paper.</li> <li>2 Place bread mix, yeast, herbs, salt and pepper in a large bowl. Add warm milk, warm water and melted butter. Using an electric mixer, beat for 3 minutes.</li> <li>3 Spread dough evenly over prepared pizza trays and bake for 10 to 12 minutes.</li> </ol>
<b>Pizza Topping</b>  <b>½ cup tomato purée</b>  <b>1 medium red onion, sliced into rings</b>  <b>¾ cup Kalamata olives</b>  <b>500 g lamb fillets, pan fried and cut lengthwise</b>  <b>250 g (1 cup) cubed feta cheese</b>  <b>2 tablespoons capers, for garnish</b>  <b>½ cup tzatziki dip, for serving</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 Spread pizza bases with tomato purée, top with onion, olives, lamb and feta cheese.</li> <li>2 Return pizza to the oven and bake for 20 minutes or until toppings are warmed through and cheese melts. Garnish with capers and drizzle with tzatziki.</li> </ol>

**Tip:** Cooked pizza bases may be frozen and thawed before toppings are added.

**Per serving:** Kilojoules 2,811; Fat 26.6 g (Saturated 14.4 g); Sodium 935 mg; Carbohydrate 77.6 g (Dietary Fibre 6.2 g); Protein 30.1 g.



The professionals bake their pizzas in really hot ovens. Use a higher temperature than you usually would for baking — 200°C — but keep an eagle eye on your pizza as it bakes. Overcooking in a hot oven will dry out the base and some of the toppings. But soggy bases aren't nice either. Slide a metal spatula under the base to see if it's cooked in the centre.

## *Pizza sauces*

The good news here is that just about any commercial pizza sauce is gluten-free (of course, you still need to check the ingredients to be sure). Second, pizza sauce can be as simple as a little brushed-on olive oil, or you can go to town with your own creations. You might like to try these.

### **MYOP (make your own pizza) parties**

Rarely can an entire group agree on what should go on a pizza. So why not let everyone have exactly what he or she wants by turning the event into a party? If it sounds like fun, give the following a try:

1. **Prepare and cook several pizza bases, or buy ready-made ones.**
2. **Put out toppings — a variety of them — in separate serving bowls.**

Put sauce in one, different types of cheeses in others, gluten-free pepperoni in another, mushrooms, pineapple, anchovies (yum!) in others and so on.

3. **Give each guest a base and let him or her prepare the toppings, making a distinctive**

**pattern to distinguish one pizza from the other.**

4. **Bake the pizzas until the cheese has melted and the crust is golden brown.**

Of course, MYOP parties are about the messiest type of party you can throw, with grated cheese and olives flying. And you always have the ubiquitous show-off who just has to outdo everyone else and create a leaning tower rather than a pizza. Be prepared to clean up afterwards! If you're thinking of doing this with children and you value your sanity, don't attempt it with more than four kids, and never, ever, ever with eight-year-old boys!



## Tomato Herb Pizza Sauce

Traditionalists lean towards this type of sauce, because, well, it's traditional.

**Prep time:** 10 minutes • **Cooking time:** 15 minutes • **Servings:** Enough for one 30 cm pizza

Ingredients	Directions
<b>¼ cup finely chopped onion</b>	<b>1</b> In a medium saucepan, cook the onions and garlic in the olive oil over medium–high heat until they're tender (about 3 minutes).
<b>1 teaspoon crushed garlic (about 2 cloves)</b>	
<b>2 tablespoons olive oil</b>	<b>2</b> Add the tomatoes, oregano, basil, salt and pepper to the pan and continue cooking the sauce over medium heat for a few more minutes.
<b>2 cups chopped or diced tomatoes (including the juice)</b>	
<b>1 teaspoon fresh oregano</b>	<b>3</b> Stir in the tomato paste. Simmer the sauce on low heat for about 10 minutes.
<b>2 tablespoons chopped fresh basil</b>	
<b>½ teaspoon salt</b>	
<b>½ teaspoon black pepper</b>	
<b>3 tablespoons tomato paste</b>	

**Per serving:** Kilojoules 201; Fat 4 g (Saturated 1g); Sodium 154 mg; Carbohydrate 4 g (Dietary Fibre 1 g); Protein 1 g.

## Alfredo Sauce

This sauce is very rich and wicked and goes well with seafood. As it already contains a lot of cheese, you won't need as much cheese on the top of the pizza. (You can also use it on pasta.)

**Prep time:** 10 minutes • **Cooking time:** 10 minutes • **Servings:** Enough for one 30 cm pizza

Ingredients	Directions
3 garlic cloves, chopped	<b>1</b> Sauté the garlic in the butter in a medium saucepan, stirring constantly.
¼ cup butter	
1 cup grated parmesan cheese	<b>2</b> Stir in the parmesan, cream, salt and pepper and cook gently for 5 minutes. Cool slightly before spreading on a pizza base.
¼ cup cream	
Salt and pepper to taste	

**Per serving (100 g):** Kilojoules 2,071; Fat 47.9 g (Saturated 31.2 g); Sodium 768 mg; Carbohydrate 1.5 g (Dietary Fibre <1 g); Protein 15.9 g.

## No More Pining for Pasta

Complaining bitterly about gluten-free pastas was once completely understandable. They used to be gritty, heavy on the (insert flour here) flavour and they went from being *al dente* to *al mush* in a millisecond.

But gluten-free pasta has come a long way, baby. You now have no grounds for feeling deprived, with the improved taste, texture, nutritional value and cookability of today's gluten-free pastas. If you thought pasta was off the menu, or you've stopped eating it because the old pastas weren't very appetising, the recipes in this section get you back on the pasta track.



## Penne with Pea Sauce

If you have a packet of peas in the freezer, pasta in the pantry and an onion, you're already on the way with this dish. On the way home, pick up some fetta, a chunk of parmesan and a bunch of fresh mint and you've got dinner! This is so good you'll make it over and over again.

**Prep time:** 5 minutes • **Cooking time:** 20 minutes • **Servings:** 4

Ingredients	Directions
350 g (1½ cups) gluten-free penne or other short pasta	<b>1</b> Cook pasta according to manufacturer's instructions.
2 tablespoons olive oil	<b>2</b> Heat a wide pan with a lid; add oil and onion and sauté until tender.
1 onion, finely chopped	
500 g (2 cups) frozen peas	<b>3</b> Add frozen peas (no need to defrost) and water. Cover and cook for 2 to 3 minutes or until thawed.
125 g (½ cup) water, approx.	
2 tablespoons finely chopped fresh mint leaves	<b>4</b> With a fork or potato masher, coarsely crush peas to make a rough sauce. Add a bit more water if necessary. Add mint leaves, salt and pepper if needed. Cover and simmer a further 2 to 3 minutes.
Salt and pepper to taste	
150 g (⅔ cup) fetta cheese	<b>5</b> When pasta is cooked, drain and add to pea sauce. Stir through crumbled fetta.
Grated parmesan cheese, to serve	<b>6</b> Serve in bowls and pass the parmesan.

**Per serving:** Kilojoules 2,572; Fat 21.8 g (Saturated 8.6 g); Sodium 529 mg; Carbohydrate 78.4 g (Dietary Fibre 11.9 g); Protein 23.4 g.

## Macaroni Bake

A young mother, desperate to find gluten-free recipes to suit her picky toddler, recommended this recipe that didn't end up on the floor like all the other attempts. It soon became a family favourite.

**Prep time:** 10 minutes • **Cooking time:** 40 minutes • **Servings:** 4

<i>Ingredients</i>	<i>Directions</i>
<b>2 cups gluten-free spiral or macaroni pasta, uncooked</b>	<b>1</b> Preheat oven to 150° C. Grease a medium casserole dish.
<b>4 rashers gluten-free bacon, chopped</b>	<b>2</b> Cook pasta until al dente. Drain.
<b>440 g can gluten-free condensed tomato soup</b>	<b>3</b> While pasta is cooking, sauté bacon or cook in the microwave between two pieces of paper towel for 1 minute and drain.
<b>375 ml (1½ cups) milk</b>	<b>4</b> In the greased casserole dish combine cooked and drained pasta and bacon with tomato soup, milk and cheese.
<b>100 g (1 cup) grated tasty cheese, plus extra for topping</b>	<b>5</b> Top with extra cheese, if desired, and bake for approximately 30 minutes.

**Per serving:** Kilojoules 3,170; Fat 34.9 g (Saturated 17.6 g); Sodium 1,645 mg; Carbohydrate 82.2 g (Dietary Fibre 6.1 g); Protein 29.6 g.



## Quick Zucchini and Ricotta Pasta

It doesn't get much quicker than this. Lemon and zucchini were made for each other! The chilli gives this recipe a kick, but if you don't like spicy food, just leave it out.

**Prep time:** 15 minutes • **Cooking time:** 15 minutes • **Servings:** 2

Ingredients	Directions
<b>300 g gluten-free spaghetti</b>	<b>1</b> Cook spaghetti according to package directions.
<b>60 ml (¼ cup) extra virgin olive oil</b>	<b>2</b> When the spaghetti is nearly cooked heat a large frying pan and add olive oil.
<b>1 clove garlic, finely chopped</b>	<b>3</b> Over medium heat sauté garlic, chilli, lemon rind and zucchini; cook for 1 minute.
<b>1 small red chilli finely chopped (optional)</b>	<b>4</b> Drain cooked spaghetti and toss into zucchini mixture; add half the ricotta and half the parmesan. Add the butter. Mix together and season to taste with salt and pepper.
<b>Rind of 1 lemon, finely grated</b>	<b>5</b> Divide into servings. Crumble remaining ricotta on top and sprinkle with parmesan.
<b>2 medium zucchini, coarsely grated</b>	
<b>150 g (⅔ cup) ricotta cheese</b>	
<b>60 g (¼ cup) grated parmesan cheese</b>	
<b>30 g butter</b>	
<b>Sea salt and freshly ground black pepper</b>	

**Per serving:** Kilojoules 4,736; Fat 59.5 g (Saturated 23.8 g); Sodium 690 mg; Carbohydrate 113.7 g (Dietary Fibre 5.4 g); Protein 30.5 g.

## Broccoli and Ricotta Penne

Broccoli is extra specially good for you and has a long growing season; the other ingredients are easy to pick up or keep on hand. This recipe is quick, easy and very delicious. If you hate parsley — and those who do, hate it with venom — you could try chopped fresh basil or other herbs instead.

**Prep time:** 15 minutes • **Cooking time:** 15 minutes • **Servings:** 6

<i>Ingredients</i>	<i>Directions</i>
<b>500 g (2 cups) gluten-free penne</b>	<b>1</b> Cook penne according to package instructions.
<b>750 g (3 cups) broccoli florets</b>	<b>2</b> Drop broccoli into boiling, salted water for 3 to 4 minutes. Remove and drain well; keep warm.
<b>5 garlic cloves, crushed</b>	<b>3</b> In a small bowl combine crushed garlic, ricotta, olive oil, parsley, salt and pepper.
<b>250 g (1 cup) low-fat ricotta cheese</b>	<b>4</b> Drain penne, first stirring 2 tablespoons of the cooking water into the ricotta mixture.
<b>2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil</b>	<b>5</b> Place penne in a large serving bowl, add ricotta mixture and cooked broccoli and toss well.
<b>3 tablespoons chopped fresh parsley</b>	
<b>Salt and pepper to taste</b>	

**Per serving:** Kilojoules 1,848; Fat 11.3 g (Saturated 3.6 g); Sodium 147 mg; Carbohydrate 65.6 g (Dietary Fibre 9.7 g); Protein 17.1 g.



## *Making Bread*

Gluten-free bread has a reputation. And for years, it was well deserved. But if any food deserves to win the prize for ‘most improved’ in the gluten-free world, it’s definitely bread. In the past, many coeliacs simply gave up on bread and lived on other staples, relying on rice cakes when a sandwich was needed. But thanks to some dedicated bakers and cooks, we can now make — and enjoy — bread again.

Best of all, expert cooks have done an incredible job of combining interesting, alternative flours that not only improve the flavour and texture but also add nutrients as well. Now that gluten-free bread actually tastes good, it’s superior in many ways to that gummy white ‘enriched’ gluten-containing stuff that has more chemicals than a high school chemistry lab. Okay, okay, we do have a way to go, but you must admit that the bread we can now make is better than limp and soggy — or wildly explosive — rice cakes and definitely more filling.

We’ve included a variety of bread recipes here, some to bake in the oven, some for a bread machine and a real quickie for the frying pan. For some bread-making tips and tricks, refer to Chapter 9.

Of course, if you’d rather not have to buy and measure all the recipe ingredients that go into bread, no probs. Many excellent bread mixes are available. Just toss a mix in your bread machine, add a few ingredients and turn it on.

### **'This is *bread*!'**

Danna remembers her first experience with gluten-free bread. In fact, she remembers it vividly, like a bad nightmare that won't go away. Her then-toddler son had recently been diagnosed with coeliac disease and she was more than just a little anxious about feeding him without poisoning him. This was, mind you, back in the 1990s — 1991, to be exact — and gluten-free products were scarce.

She was relieved and downright giddy to discover, in the bowels of a freezer at what was then the only health food shop within an 80-kilometre radius, a loaf of gluten-free bread. Screeching with delight, she pulled out a piece of the bread, chirping, 'Tyler, you can *eat* this!' Before it made it out of the flimsy plastic bag, though, the bread-like substance began to crumble ... and crumble some more. Somehow, she maintained her enthusiasm — albeit waning now — and lowered herself to her toddler son, eager to share with him the newfound treasure that was now nothing but a fistful of

dry, tasteless crumbs. 'Mummy,' he said with sincere confusion, 'This is *bread*!'

Margaret's first experience with gluten-free bread was pretty terrible, too. 'The bread was delivered to my door by courier from Sydney — there was no bread available where I lived. The delivery guy handed it over with a look of dismay. "Jeez," he said. "The lady who has to eat this must be pretty damn sick." As I carried the brick (sorry, I mean loaf) back to the kitchen my heart sank. The brick (sorry again) was like white heavy-duty foam rubber and required the strength of a bear to slice it. There are no printable words to describe the taste. I finally gave the brick to the family dog (that had been known to eat an entire sneaker with relish). She sniffed it, looked anxiously at me, put her tail between her legs and sidled away. Probably the lowest point in my career as a coeliac. But times have changed. I just love the bread — and rolls — I now bake in my bread machine and so do my non-coeliac friends.'



## Quick Bread

You want bread, but have none in the house and no time to bake. Or you just don't want to go to the trouble. This recipe fits the bill pretty well. It's good for serving hot with soup, for chunky sandwiches or making your own focaccias. It makes very good toast. Eat it within two days of baking because it can go mouldy quickly, or slice and pop it in the freezer. You can use an electric frypan, a frying pan with a lid, or a frying pan with a makeshift lid from a cake tin or tray that fits neatly over the top of the frying pan.

**Prep time:** 10 minutes • **Cooking time:** 25–30 minutes • **Servings:** 6

Ingredients	Directions
150 g brown or white rice flour	1 Grease a 20 cm non-stick frying pan and preheat on lowest heat.
50 g (⅓ cup) besan or soy flour	
1½ teaspoons gluten-free baking powder	2 In a medium mixing bowl sift together rice flour, besan or soy flour, baking powder and salt.
¼ teaspoon salt	3 Beat together egg and milk. Add to flour mixture and stir until well combined.
1 egg	
250 ml (1 cup) milk	4 Pour mixture into preheated frying pan and spread evenly over the base.
	5 Cover with a well-fitting lid and cook until the top of the bread is dry to the touch. On lowest heat this will take about 20 minutes.
	6 Using two spatulas, turn the bread over and continue to cook, without a lid, for an additional 5 to 6 minutes. Cool on a wire cake rack.

**Vary It!** To make a more interesting version, try adding ⅓ cup chopped fried shallots and some chopped basil or dried herbs as you add the eggs and milk. To turn this into crunchy garlic bread, make garlic butter from ½ cup butter or margarine, 2 cloves of garlic and chopped parsley, spread on the sliced quickbread and put in the oven for 5 minutes, or pop quickly under the grill.

**Per serving:** Kilojoules 645; Fat 3.2 g (Saturated 1.5 g); Sodium 133 mg; Carbohydrate 23.8 g (Dietary Fibre 1.8 g); Protein 8.2 g.

## Great Gluten-free Bread

This bread is baked in a conventional oven and turns out perfectly every time. LSA mix can be purchased at health food shops and some supermarkets. Weigh your flours if you can, as even commercial cup sizes vary.

**Prep time:** 15 minutes, plus 1 hour rising time • **Cooking time:** 50–60 minutes

• **Servings:** Makes 16 slices

Ingredients	Directions
135 g ( $\frac{2}{3}$ cup) white rice flour	1 Grease a medium loaf tin.
100 g ( $\frac{2}{3}$ cup) arrowroot	2 In the mixing bowl of your electric mixer combine the rice flour, arrowroot, cornflour, xanthan gum, gelatine, egg replacer, salt, sugar, milk powder, yeast and LSA, if using.
100 g ( $\frac{2}{3}$ cup) maize cornflour	
1½ teaspoons xanthan gum	
1 teaspoon unflavoured gelatine	3 Add the egg and egg white, oil, vinegar and honey.
1 teaspoon powdered egg replacer	4 Add less than the full amount of warm water to begin and start mixing with the electric mixer. Add enough water to make the batter look like cake mixture. Beat on high speed for 3 minutes.
½ teaspoon salt	
1½ tablespoons sugar	
¼ cup dry milk powder or almond meal	5 Spoon into prepared loaf tin. Cover with a loose plastic bag and set in a warm place until it has risen almost to the top of the tin (about 1 hour).
2 teaspoons yeast	6 Preheat oven to 200°C. Carefully remove from plastic bag and place into preheated oven. Bake for 10 minutes, and then cover with foil. Bake 50 to 60 minutes in total.
1 tablespoon LSA (ground linseed, sunflower and almond) (optional)	
1 egg plus 1 egg white	
3 tablespoons canola or other vegetable oil	7 Let bread rest in the tin on a wire rack for 5 minutes, and then turn out of tin onto rack to cool. Slice when cool.
½ teaspoon apple cider vinegar	
2 teaspoons honey	
250 ml (1 cup) very warm water, approx.	

**Tip:** For a more nutritious and satisfying version of this bread, replace the cornflour with  $\frac{2}{3}$  cup quinoa flour.

**Per serving (slice):** Kilojoules 562; Fat 4.8 g (Saturated <1 g); Sodium 98 mg; Carbohydrate 21 g (Dietary Fibre <1 g); Protein 2.3 g.



## *Bread in a Bread Machine — Or Not*

You can make the recipes in this section in a bread machine or a conventional oven. The steps for each process are the same for both breads.

### *Using a bread machine*

Follow these steps for using a bread machine:

1. **Mix the dry ingredients together in a large bowl.**
2. **Mix the wet ingredients in a medium bowl, add the wet mixture to the dry ingredients and mix roughly, just to combine.**
3. **Quickly put into your machine, set and that's it.**



The quantities given suit machines that hold 3 cups of flour mix. If you want to make smaller loaves, or if your machine has a smaller capacity, cut the recipes down by one-third. Some bread machines allow you to just pop everything straight into the bread pan and the machine does the mixing for you. See the instructions with your model.

### *Baking in a conventional oven*

Follow these steps for baking in your regular oven:

1. **Combine all dry ingredients thoroughly, including the yeast, in a large mixing bowl (all the ingredients should be at room temperature).**
2. **All wet ingredients should also be at room temperature; whisk together before adding to the dry ingredients.**
3. **Using an electric mixer, beat the combined wet and dry ingredients for about 10 minutes.**

The appearance of the dough as it's being mixed should be stiffer than a cake batter, but not as stiff as biscuit dough. Flours will vary in their ability to absorb moisture. If the dough appears too dry, add liquid, one tablespoon at a time to achieve the desired result.

4. **Allow the batter to rise for approximately one hour.**
5. **Bake at 180°C for 45 to 60 minutes.**

To test if the bread is ready, use a toothpick. When inserted into the loaf, it should come out clean.

## Favourite White Bread

Try this recipe for a light, easy-to-manage loaf. Measuring cup sizes vary, so weigh the flour if you can.

**Prep time:** 35 minutes • **Rising and cooking time:** 2 hours • **Servings:** 12–14 slices

Dry ingredients	Directions
<b>200 g (1½ cups) white rice flour</b> <b>60 g (½ cup) potato flour</b> <b>60 g (½ cup) arrowroot or tapioca flour</b> <b>40 g (⅓ cup) maize cornflour</b> <b>3 teaspoons xanthan gum</b> <b>3 tablespoons sugar</b> <b>1½ teaspoons salt</b> <b>1 tablespoon egg replacer (optional)</b> <b>⅔ cup milk powder</b> <b>2¼ teaspoons dry yeast</b>	<p><b>For breadmaker:</b></p> <p><b>1</b> Follow instructions for your breadmaker, adding first wet ingredients then dry unless otherwise instructed. Bake as directed for your model of breadmaker.</p>
	<p><b>For oven-baked bread:</b></p> <p><b>1</b> Combine all dry ingredients, including yeast, in a large bowl.</p>
	<p><b>2</b> In a smaller bowl, combine wet ingredients, whisking thoroughly, then add to dry ingredients.</p>
	<p><b>3</b> Using an electric mixer, beat for 10 minutes. If mixture appears too stiff add a little more water, 1 teaspoonful at a time.</p>
	<p><b>4</b> Place in greased bread pan, cover with a cloth and allow to rise for one hour.</p>
	<p><b>5</b> Bake at 180°C for 45 to 60 minutes. Test with a fine skewer or toothpick. When cooked, skewer should come out clean.</p>
<b>Wet ingredients</b> <b>3 large eggs, lightly beaten</b> <b>1 teaspoon cider vinegar</b> <b>60 ml (¼ cup) canola oil</b> <b>375 ml (1½ cups) water</b>	<p><b>6</b> Remove from tin and cool on metal rack before slicing.</p>

**Per serving (loaf):** Kilojoules 11,181; Fat 101 g (Saturated 23.4 g); Sodium 4,489 mg; Carbohydrate 382.2 g (Dietary Fibre 21.9 g); Protein 64.4 g.



## Besan (Chickpea) Bread

Besan flour has an interesting flavour and is great for a change. It's also high in fibre. Tapioca flour will give you a nice, 'chewy' texture.

**Prep time:** 40 minutes • **Cooking time:** 2 hours • **Servings:** 12–14 slices

### Dry ingredients

200 g (1 cup) besan flour

200 g (1 cup) brown rice flour

200 g (1 cup) arrowroot or  
tapioca flour

100 g (½ cup) maize cornflour

4 teaspoons xanthan gum

3 tablespoons brown sugar

1½ teaspoons salt

1 tablespoon egg replacer,  
optional

½ cup milk powder

2¼ teaspoons dry yeast

### Wet ingredients

3 large eggs, lightly beaten

1 teaspoon cider vinegar

3 tablespoons olive oil

335 ml (1½ cups) water

### Directions

#### For breadmaker:

- 1 Follow instructions for your breadmaker, adding first wet ingredients then dry unless otherwise instructed. Bake as directed for your model of breadmaker.

#### For oven-baked bread:

- 1 Combine all dry ingredients, including yeast, in a large bowl.
- 2 In a smaller bowl, combine wet ingredients, whisking thoroughly, then add to dry ingredients.
- 3 Using an electric mixer, beat for 10 minutes. If mixture appears too stiff add a little more water, 1 teaspoonful at a time.
- 4 Place in greased bread pan, cover with a cloth and allow to rise for one hour.
- 5 Bake at 180°C for 45 to 60 minutes. Test with a fine skewer or toothpick. When cooked, skewer should come out clean.
- 6 Remove from tin and cool on metal rack before slicing.

**Per serving (loaf):** Kilojoules 15,436; Fat 101.9 g (Saturated 36.8 g); Sodium 4,505 mg; Carbohydrate 591.1 g (Dietary Fibre 35.1 g); Protein 99.4 g.

## Chapter 15

# Getting Your Just Desserts

### *In This Chapter*

- ▶ Delightfully decadent desserts
- ▶ Delicious cakes
- ▶ Indulgent biscuits and slices
- ▶ Sweets and treats for the health-minded

**W**hen you've cleared away the main course, everyone eagerly anticipates one thing and it's not doing the dishes. It is, of course, dessert. A gluten-free diet can, however, mean missing out on that delicious dessert, that slice of birthday cake, or those sweet treats for morning or afternoon tea. But if you think the gluten-free lifestyle puts an end to decadence and indulgence, this chapter surely makes you think again.

If your idea of dessert is a bowl of sliced strawberries or a fruit and cheese platter, that's great. You probably won't use most of these recipes. For those who enjoy dessert but want to exercise a little restraint we've put together some fruit-based ideas to satisfy your wholesome-and-healthy sweet tooth. And for those sugar and cream babies who just can't live without their sweet treats, we've included recipes for melt-in-the-mouth cakes, delicious biscuits, slices and other wicked indulgences. If it's a not-quite-so-sweet-and-sugary muffin you're craving, Chapter 10 has many great muffin ideas.

### *Recipes in This Chapter*

- 🍰 Hot Fudge Pudding
- 🍰 Fresh Mango Mousse
- 🍰 Little Teff Puffs
- 🍰 Friands
- 🍰 Last-minute Fruit Cake
- 🍰 Favourite Flourless Chocolate Cake
- 🍰 Flourless Almond Cake
- 🍰 Apricot Fruit Loaf
- 🍰 Sweet Sorghum Blueberry Loaf
- 🍰 Boiled Chocolate Cake
- 🍰 1-2-3 Fruit Cake
- 🍰 Choc Cherry Slice
- 🍰 Caramel Cornflake Biscuits
- 🍰 Chocolate Pistachio Macarons
- 🍰 Chocolate Chip Biscuits
- 🍰 No Sugar Fruit Balls
- 🍰 Blueberry Layers



## Delighting in Desserts

Whether you're eating at home with the family, dining out or entertaining, a delicious dessert rounds off the meal and leaves everyone satisfied and feeling content. Gluten-free desserts are generally not difficult to make. Often you can use a regular recipe, just substituting a mix of gluten-free flours for the wheat flour.



Choose lighter flours and avoid the strongly flavoured soy flour unless your dessert contains a lot of spices. A bit of trial and error may be needed until you find the best combinations.

When serving a wickedly indulgent dessert, keep the servings small and complement them with a colourful array of fresh fruit and low-fat ice cream. Unless you're cooking for a ravenous family, quickly pop the leftovers away in the freezer for a lovely treat later on, rather than wolfing down the entire concoction, licking the plate (and bowl and beaters — and serving spoon, of course) and then wishing desperately that you had been a tad more disciplined.



In most cultures, dessert comprises sweet, decadent foods. But in some cultures, dessert isn't sweet at all but is simply a course consisting of very strong flavours, like cheeses. The word comes from the Old French *desservir*, which means 'to clear the table'.



Gluten-free baking involves the 'C-Factor'. Yes, you guessed it! The 'Crumble' factor. Spring-form cake tins with removable bases make it much easier to separate cake from cake tin without encountering a catastrophe. See an example spring-form cake tin in Figure 15-1.

**Figure 15-1:**  
The cylinder  
of the pan  
unlatches,  
allowing the  
bottom to be  
removed.



## Hot Fudge Pudding

If you don't already know this recipe, you'll certainly be glad you found it. A surprise layer of thick chocolate sauce forms under the cake and rises to the top during baking. So easy to make and absolutely delicious!

**Prep time:** 20 minutes • **Cooking time:** 40 minutes • **Servings:** 8

Ingredients	Directions
200 g (1 cup) white rice flour	1 Preheat oven to 180°C.
150 g (¾ cup) caster sugar	
2 tablespoons pure unsweetened cocoa	2 Mix rice flour, caster sugar, 2 tablespoons cocoa, baking powder and salt in an ungreased square 23-cm baking dish.
2 teaspoons gluten-free baking powder	
¼ teaspoon salt	3 Mix in milk, oil and vanilla with a fork until smooth. Stir in nuts. Spread mixture evenly.
125 ml (½ cup) milk	
2 tablespoons vegetable oil	4 Sprinkle with brown sugar and ¼ cup cocoa.
1 teaspoon vanilla	
125 g (1 cup) chopped nuts	5 Pour hot water carefully over the back of a spoon so it is evenly dispersed over the batter. DO NOT STIR.
220 g (1 cup) brown sugar	
25 g (¼ cup) pure unsweetened cocoa, extra	6 Bake 40 minutes. Serve warm with ice cream or cream.
435 ml (1¾ cups) very hot water	

**Per serving:** Kilojoules 1,752; Fat 13.4 g (Saturated 2.6 g); Sodium 103 mg; Carbohydrate 68.6 g (Dietary Fibre 2.1 g); Protein 7.3 g.





## Fresh Mango Mousse

The perfect dessert to make when mangoes are at their cheapest and best. Adding the lime or lemon juice really sparks the flavour up a notch. This is simple to make but your guests will think you have gone to a lot of trouble.

**Prep time:** 25 minutes • **Refrigeration and cooling time:** 3–4 hours • **Servings:** 6

Ingredients	Directions
<b>1 tablespoon gelatine</b>	<b>1</b> In a small saucepan sprinkle gelatine over lime or lemon juice. Heat gently, stirring until gelatine has dissolved. Cool.
<b>3 tablespoons lime or lemon juice</b>	
<b>700 g fresh mango pulp, puréed</b>	<b>2</b> Place mango purée in a medium bowl and stir in dissolved gelatine. Add whipped cream and fold through until well blended.
<b>300 ml cream, whipped to soft peaks</b>	
<b>1½ tablespoons pistachios, chopped</b>	<b>3</b> Stand bowl in a bowl of ice and water. Stir from time to time until the mixture starts setting around the edges.
	<b>4</b> Spoon into six serving dishes. Cover and refrigerate until completely set. Sprinkle with chopped pistachios to serve.

**Tip:** Refer to Chapter 11 for an easy way to attack that delicious mango flesh.

**Per serving:** Kilojoules 861; Fat 13.3 g (Saturated 7.5 g); Sodium 14 mg; Carbohydrate 16.3 g (Dietary Fibre 2.1 g); Protein 4.4 g.

## Little Teff Puffs (*Syrnike*)

The ancient grain teff is used in this adaptation of *syrnike*, a traditional recipe from Russia. These little puffs can be eaten as a sweet snack, dressed up as a dessert or even eaten at breakfast.

**Prep time:** 12 minutes • **Cooking time:** 5–10 minutes • **Servings:** 12 puffs

Ingredients	Directions
1 egg	1 Beat the egg and mix in the ricotta or cottage cheese.
1 cup ricotta or cottage cheese	
2 tablespoons raw sugar	2 Add sugar, flours, vanilla and salt, mixing each ingredient in well.
2 tablespoons teff flour	
2 tablespoons gluten-free self-raising flour	3 Drop by teaspoon into heated oil in a frying pan or griddle and cook for 2 minutes till light golden brown. Turn carefully, flatten slightly and cook another 2 minutes or until golden brown.
½ teaspoon vanilla essence	
Pinch of salt	4 Turn out on to plate and keep warm until all puffs are cooked.
1 tablespoon oil	
	5 Eat hot from the pan sprinkled with icing sugar, or serve with sour cream and honey, maple syrup or jam.

**Tip:** These puffs can be savoury, too. Cut down the sugar to ½ tablespoon, and stir in 2 chopped spring onions and 1 tablespoon chopped parsley. Add 1 teaspoon mixed herbs if desired and cook as before. Savoury puffs make a delicious accompaniment for soup.

**Per serving:** Kilojoules 259; Fat 3.0 g (Saturated 1.3 g); Sodium 77 mg; Carbohydrate 5.2 g (Dietary Fibre 0.2 g); Protein 3.0 g.



## *Having Your Cake — and Eating It Too*

Margaret thought she was pretty cool with cakes in the kitchen until she had to bake gluten-free. At first, one collapsed-cake crisis led to another crumbled-cake catastrophe, time after time. For her first gluten-free Christmas she ate her Christmas cake out of the cake tin with a spoon. Slightly bizarre, but it showed initiative (or maybe desperation!). Her children quickly invented names for these culinary creations. A 'dippy cake' was one that collapsed in the middle, a 'spong' was a sad little sponge that sulked in the bottom of the cake tin instead of rising spectacularly, and a 'worm farm' was a cake with little hollow tunnels winding through it.

But that was before the Clever Cooks came onto the gluten-free scene, before user-friendly gluten-free flours were available and before the appearance of magic xanthan gum. You can make truly delicious gluten-free cakes now — cakes that hold their icing high on any table and keep everyone contented and satisfied.



Provided you're not pigging out on fat and sugar-loaded desserts and cakes on a daily basis, or you have a weight or blood sugar problem, we think it's fine to splurge now and then, on the basis that those on a gluten-free diet are already well behind in the Department of Sweet Treats. And if you're an incorrigible sweet tooth, sweet treats do seem to play a role in keeping your spirits up at times when you're in the gluten-free dumps. The key to satisfying your sweet cravings without sacrificing your good health is to keep the servings small and not too frequent.

### **Baking better cakes**

A few little tips from our Real Cooks will help you bake cakes that taste great and look fantastic too.

- ✓ Use unsalted butter when baking; that way salt won't mask the flavour of your other ingredients.
- ✓ Melt chocolate the easy way in the microwave. Microwave a small amount in a microwave-proof bowl on medium for 1 to 2 minutes, until almost melted. Remove from microwave and stir chocolate until completely melted.
- ✓ To bake cakes evenly and quickly, use steel or heavy duty baking pans. Glass pans absorb heat too quickly and tend to over-brown the outside edges. Steel pans will give a better result than aluminium pans.
- ✓ We know, we know. It's a nuisance, and you haven't got time, but your cakes will turn out better if you sift the flour first. Our Real Cooks would say three times — but we won't be watching. It's because most gluten-free flours are heavier than wheat flour.

## Friands

Friands are easy to make and everyone seems to like them. Muffin trays work just as well as friand moulds and the poppy seeds are optional.

**Prep time:** 20 minutes • **Cooking time:** 30 minutes • **Servings:** 10–12 friands

Ingredients	Directions
<b>100 g (½ cup) rice flour</b> <b>270 g (1⅔ cups) gluten-free icing sugar</b> <b>150 g (1½ cups) almond meal</b> <b>2 tablespoons poppy seeds (optional)</b> <b>Finely grated rind of 1 large orange</b> <b>5 egg whites</b> <b>180 g (¾ cup) butter, melted and cooled, or vegetable oil</b> <b>90 g (¼ cup) orange marmalade (optional)</b>	<p><b>1</b> Preheat oven to 200°C. Grease a 10-friand baking tray or line a 12-hole muffin tray with foil cupcake liners.</p> <p><b>2</b> Sift flour and icing sugar into large mixing bowl. Stir in almond meal, poppy seeds and orange rind.</p> <p><b>3</b> Use electric beaters or hand whisk to lightly whisk egg whites in a large bowl until frothy but not firm. Fold beaten egg whites into almond mixture. Add melted butter or vegetable oil and stir until combined.</p> <p><b>4</b> Spoon mixture into prepared trays to ¾ full. Bake for 25 minutes or until golden. Let stand for 5 minutes before turning onto a wire rack. If desired, melt marmalade over gentle heat and brush the tops of the warm friands before cooling.</p>

**Vary It!** Leave out the poppy seeds, orange rind and melted marmalade, but add a blueberry or some chocolate chips to the top of each friand before baking.

**Per serving (serves 12):** Kilojoules 1,496; Fat 22.2 g (Saturated 2.4 g); Sodium 27 mg; Carbohydrate 34.9 g (Dietary Fibre 1.8 g); Protein 4.9 g.



## Last-minute Fruit Cake

We're not suggesting that you leave making this cake until Christmas Eve, but if you did it would still be delicious the next day. This excellent cake uses canola oil rather than butter, making it a low-cholesterol treat. Vary the fruit to suit your tastes and what you have on hand.

**Prep time:** 40 minutes • **Cooking time:** 1½–2 hours • **Servings:** 24 slices

Ingredients	Directions
250 ml (1 cup) canola oil	1 Preheat oven to 135°C. Line a 20-cm tin with greased brown paper. Two 23 × 13 cm loaf tins can also be used.
330 g (1½ cups) brown sugar	
4 eggs	2 In a large mixing bowl combine oil, brown sugar and eggs and beat for 2 minutes.
600 g (3 cups) gluten-free flour	
375 g (3 cups) chopped nuts	3 In a separate large bowl combine 1 cup of flour with the nuts, pineapple, figs, sultanas, cherries and mixed peel.
155 g (1 cup) glacé pineapple, chopped	
200 g (1 cup) dried figs, chopped	4 Combine remaining flour with baking powder, cloves, salt, allspice, cinnamon and xanthan gum.
150 g (1 cup) sultanas	
225 g (1½ cups) whole glacé cherries	5 Add flour and spice mixture to the combined fruit and mix well.
155 g (1 cup) mixed peel	
1 teaspoon gluten-free baking powder	6 Add flour mix to the oil mixture alternating with orange juice. Stir thoroughly.
1 teaspoon ground cloves	
2 teaspoons each salt, allspice and cinnamon	7 Spoon mixture into prepared tin. Place tin in a pan of water on the lower oven rack.
1 teaspoon xanthan gum	
250 ml (1 cup) orange juice	8 Bake for 1½ to 2 hours. Use a skewer to test for doneness. The skewer should come out clean. Cover with foil if the cake is browning too fast.
Glaze (optional)	
	9 Cool on a rack covered with a clean tea towel until cold. Wrap well in foil.

**Per serving (per slice):** Kilojoules 1,851; Fat 20 g (Saturated 2.2 g); Sodium 288 mg; Carbohydrate 58.4 g (Dietary Fibre 4.4 g); Protein 7 g.

## Favourite Flourless Chocolate Cake

You might already know this classic recipe. You'll want to make it over and over again.

**Prep time:** 20 minutes • **Cooking time:** 40–45 minutes • **Servings:** 8

Ingredients	Directions
125 g dark chocolate	1 Preheat oven to 160°C. Grease an 18 cm spring-form tin. (Not familiar with a spring-form cake tin? Refer to Figure 15-1 earlier in the chapter.)
100 g unsalted butter	
100 g caster sugar	2 Melt chocolate in a double saucepan over low heat. Add butter. Stir when melted and add sugar. Add brandy (or Cointreau or orange juice) and coffee.
1 tablespoon brandy, Cointreau or orange juice	
1 tablespoon prepared black coffee	3 Remove from heat and add almond meal.
100 g almond meal	4 Let cool for a few minutes, then add egg yolks and stir.
3 eggs, separated	
Gluten-free icing sugar, for dusting; flowers, for serving	5 Beat egg whites until firm. Lighten chocolate mixture with a couple of spoonfuls of egg whites, then fold in rest of egg whites and spoon into prepared tin.
	6 Bake for 40 to 45 minutes. Cake will test a little gooey in the centre (this is good because it will be all fudgy and delicious). Don't worry if it seems crumbly on top. Once they taste it, no-one will care in the least.
	7 Cool completely in tin. Remove, sprinkle with icing sugar and decorate with flowers. Or serve this cake with fresh berries and a dollop of cream as a magnificent dessert.

**Per serving:** Kilojoules 1,408; Fat 23.9 g (Saturated 12.2 g); Sodium 34 mg; Carbohydrate 23.5 g (Dietary Fibre 1.9 g); Protein 5.7 g.



## Flourless Almond Cake

Definitely in the wicked category, this cake is really quick and easy to make and is sure to delight.

**Prep time:** 15 minutes • **Cooking time:** 55 minutes • **Servings:** 6–8

Ingredients	Directions
250 g butter (unsalted is best) 250 g sugar 6 medium eggs, beaten 250 g almond meal	<b>1</b> Preheat oven to 170°C.
	<b>2</b> Spray a medium-sized spring-form cake tin with non-stick spray.
	<b>3</b> Cream butter and sugar, and then slowly add eggs.
	<b>4</b> Mix in almond meal.
	<b>5</b> Pour into prepared tin and bake for about 55 minutes, until centre is firm.
	<b>6</b> Cool in tin. Serve with fresh fruit or drizzle melted chocolate over the top to make a thin layer of icing.

**Per serving:** Kilojoules 2,481; Fat 47 g (Saturated 19.4 g); Sodium 55 mg; Carbohydrate 32.9 g (Dietary Fibre 2.8 g); Protein 11.2 g.

## Apricot Fruit Loaf

You can put this fruity delight together in no time at all.

**Prep time:** 10 minutes • **Cooking time:** 45 minutes • **Servings:** 12 slices

Ingredients	Directions
1 cup diced dried apricots	1 Preheat oven to 180°C. Grease a 23 × 13 × 7 cm deep loaf tin.
½ cup sultanas	
1 tablespoon butter	2 Mix apricots, sultanas, butter, caster sugar and water in a microwave-proof bowl. Microwave for 2 minutes.
1 cup caster sugar	
1 cup boiling water	3 Stir in flour and egg, using a wooden spoon.
2 cups gluten-free self-raising flour	
1 egg, lightly beaten	4 Pour into prepared loaf tin and bake for 45 minutes.

**Per serving (per slice):** Kilojoules 879; Fat 1.8 g (Saturated 1 g); Sodium 390 mg; Carbohydrate 45.8 g (Dietary Fibre 2.8 g); Protein 1.4 g.





## Sweet Sorghum Blueberry Loaf

Sorghum has great nutritional benefits and isn't as expensive as some of the other 'ancient' grains. Try it in this simple-to-make loaf — the subtle suggestion of lemon makes this a real winner.

**Prep time:** 30 minutes • **Cooking time:** 1 hour • **Servings:** 12 slices

Ingredients	Directions
<b>115 g (½ cup) butter or margarine</b>	<b>1</b> Preheat oven to 180°C. Line a 23 × 13 × 7 cm deep loaf tin with baking paper.
<b>150 g (¾ cup) raw sugar (or white sugar)</b>	<b>2</b> Cream butter and sugar in a large bowl. Beat in eggs, and then stir in the grated lemon peel.
<b>2 eggs</b>	<b>3</b> In a second bowl sift together flours, xanthan (or guar gum), salt and baking powder.
<b>Lemon zest (finely grated peel) from one lemon</b>	<b>4</b> Add flour mix and milk alternately to the butter and sugar mix.
<b>1 cup gluten-free self-raising flour</b>	<b>5</b> Gently fold in the blueberries. If using frozen fruit, do not thaw first.
<b>½ cup sweet or white sorghum flour</b>	<b>6</b> Bake for one hour. Allow to cool for a few minutes before removing from tin.
<b>1 teaspoon xanthan gum (or guar gum)</b>	<b>7</b> Serve with yoghurt or crème fraîche.
<b>Pinch salt</b>	
<b>1 teaspoon baking powder</b>	
<b>½ cup milk</b>	
<b>1 cup fresh or frozen blueberries</b>	

**Per serving:** Kilojoules 833; Fat 8.4 g (Saturated 5.4 g); Sodium 252 mg; Carbohydrate 27.6 g (Dietary Fibre 0.7 g); Protein 2.0 g.

## Boiled Chocolate Cake

So quick and easy to prepare and very good to eat.

**Prep time:** 30 minutes • **Cooking time:** 40 minutes • **Servings:** 20 slices

Ingredients	Directions
<b>125 g butter</b>	<b>1</b> Preheat oven to 180°C. Grease and line a 20-cm round deep cake tin.
<b>1½ cups caster sugar</b>	
<b>2 tablespoons cocoa</b>	<b>2</b> Place butter, caster sugar, cocoa, water and bicarbonate soda in a saucepan. Bring to the boil over medium–high heat. Reduce heat and allow to boil 1 to 2 minutes while stirring.
<b>1 cup boiling water</b>	
<b>½ teaspoon bicarbonate soda</b>	<b>3</b> Set aside and cool completely (stir occasionally while it is cooling).
<b>2 eggs</b>	
<b>1½ cups gluten-free self-raising flour</b>	<b>4</b> Pour cooled mixture into a mixing bowl and add eggs and sifted flour. Beat until mixture is smooth.
	<b>5</b> Pour into prepared cake tin and bake for approximately 40 minutes.

**Per serving (per slice):** Kilojoules 632; Fat 5.7 g (Saturated 3.6 g); Sodium 237 mg; Carbohydrate 23.7 g (Dietary Fibre <1 g); Protein <1 g.



## 1-2-3 Fruit Cake

Amazing! No butter, no sugar, no eggs, but it works and it tastes really good!

**Prep time:** 5 minutes • **Cooking time:** 1½ hours, plus 4–12 hours soaking time

• **Servings:** 16 slices

Ingredients	Directions
1 kg mixed dried fruit	1 Soak mixed fruit in black coffee for 4 to 12 hours.
2 cups prepared black coffee	2 Preheat oven to 170°C. Grease and line a 20 x 6 cm deep round cake tin.
2 cups gluten-free self-raising flour	3 Stir flour through fruit and coffee mixture.
	4 Pour into prepared tin and bake for approximately 1½ hours.

**Per serving (per slice):** Kilojoules 975; Fat <1 g (Saturated <1 g); Sodium 325 mg; Carbohydrate 54.8 g (Dietary Fibre 4.6 g); Protein 1.4 g.

## Indulging in Biscuits and Slices

You just can't beat homemade biscuits or slices with a cup of coffee or in the lunch box. These recipes are all simple to make and keep well (if you can keep your hands off them for long enough).

### Choc Cherry Slice

Decadent and so delicious, make this when you have people to share it with so that you don't end up eating the lot yourself. If you use good quality chocolate — the darker the better, in our opinion — the finished product will be all the better.

**Prep time:** 20 minutes • **Refrigeration time:** 1 hour • **Servings:** 24

Ingredients	Directions
<b>600 g dark chocolate, chopped</b> <b>500 g desiccated coconut</b> <b>100 g copha, melted</b> <b>400 g can sweetened condensed milk</b> <b>150 g glacé cherries, chopped</b> <b>Red food colouring (optional)</b>	<b>1</b> Use foil to line a 30 × 20 cm slice tin.
	<b>2</b> Melt half the chocolate in the microwave or in a small saucepan and spread evenly over the base of the prepared tin. Refrigerate until set.
	<b>3</b> In a large bowl combine coconut, copha, condensed milk and cherries. Add a few drops of red food colouring (if using) and stir until well mixed.
	<b>4</b> Spoon coconut mixture over cooled chocolate layer, spreading evenly. Refrigerate until set.
	<b>5</b> Melt remaining chocolate and spread evenly over coconut mixture. Return to refrigerator until set. Cut into pieces with a warm knife. Store refrigerated.

**Per serving (slice):** Kilojoules 1,556; Fat 26.9 g (Saturated 23.8 g); Sodium 34 mg; Carbohydrate 29.1 g (Dietary Fibre 4.3 g); Protein 3.7 g.



## Caramel Cornflake Biscuits

This recipe just goes to show that the simple things in life can certainly be delicious!

**Prep time:** 20 minutes • **Cooking time:** 30 minutes • **Servings:** 36

Ingredients	Directions
125 g butter or margarine	1 Preheat oven to 180°C. Line baking trays with baking paper.
110 g (½ cup) brown sugar, lightly packed	2 Combine butter or margarine, brown sugar and caster sugar in a saucepan; heat until butter melts. Remove from heat and cool slightly.
100 g (½ cup) caster sugar	3 Stir in coconut. When cooled, add egg and beat well.
40 g (½ cup) desiccated coconut	4 Place chopped nuts and cornflakes in a large bowl. Pour over the sugar mixture and mix very well.
1 egg	5 Drop mixture by teaspoonfuls onto baking trays. Using fingers, lightly press mixture together. Bake for 10 minutes or until golden brown. Let stand on baking trays for several minutes to firm, then cool on racks until cold.
65 g (½ cup) finely chopped nuts	
3 cups gluten-free cornflakes	

**Per serving (per biscuit):** Kilojoules 320; Fat 4.3 g (Saturated 1.6 g); Sodium 47 mg; Carbohydrate 8.8 g (Dietary Fibre <1 g); Protein <1 g.

## Chocolate Pistachio Macaroons

These light chocolatey treats are delicious with a cup of tea and store well in an airtight container. You can cut the recipe in half for a smaller batch of macaroons.

**Prep time:** 15–20 minutes • **Cooking time:** 25 minutes • **Servings:** 48

Ingredients	Directions
<b>6 large egg whites, room temperature</b> <b>400 g caster sugar</b> <b>2 teaspoons vanilla</b> <b>45 g (½ cup) unsweetened cocoa powder</b> <b>315 g chopped toasted unsalted pistachio nuts</b>	<b>1</b> Preheat oven to 120°C. Line 3 large baking trays with baking paper.
	<b>2</b> In large bowl of electric mixer, at low speed, beat egg whites until frothy. At high speed gradually beat in sugar, 2 tablespoons at a time, until stiff peaks form when beaters are raised from bowl. Add vanilla.
	<b>3</b> Place cocoa powder in a fine sieve and sift over meringue mixture. Using a rubber spatula, gently fold in cocoa and all but ¼ cup pistachios until no white streaks remain.
	<b>4</b> Drop 1 heaped tablespoon of mixture onto baking trays, leaving 1 cm between each. Sprinkle with remaining pistachios.
	<b>5</b> Bake 20 to 25 minutes or until dry and slightly cracked on top. Cool on paper on wire racks then peel gently from paper.

**Per serving (macaroon):** Kilojoules 326; Fat 3.3 g (Saturated <1 g); Sodium 10 mg; Carbohydrate 9.7 g (Dietary Fibre <1 g); Protein 2 g.



## Chocolate Chip Biscuits

This very nice biscuit is crisp the day of baking and becomes softer the next day. You can use white or dark chocolate chips or a combination of the two.

**Prep time:** 25 minutes • **Cooking time:** 10 minutes • **Servings:** 24

Ingredients	Directions
<b>115 g (½ cup) butter or margarine</b>	<b>1</b> In a large mixing bowl cream butter (or margarine), sugar, brown sugar, egg and vanilla until fluffy.
<b>50 g (¼ cup) sugar</b>	
<b>75 g (⅓ cup) brown sugar</b>	<b>2</b> In a separate bowl combine rice flour, soy flour, bicarbonate soda, baking powder and salt. Add to butter mixture and mix well. Fold in nuts, chocolate chips and coconut.
<b>1 egg</b>	
<b>1 teaspoon vanilla</b>	<b>3</b> Drop by rounded teaspoonfuls onto baking trays lined with baking paper. Bake at 190°C for about 10 minutes or until lightly browned. Cool on wire racks. Store in an airtight container.
<b>150 g (¾ cup) rice flour</b>	
<b>75 g (½ cup) soy flour</b>	
<b>½ teaspoon bicarbonate soda</b>	
<b>½ teaspoon gluten-free baking powder</b>	
<b>Pinch of salt</b>	
<b>65 g (½ cup) walnuts, pecans or macadamia nuts</b>	
<b>200 g (¾ cup) white or dark chocolate chips</b>	
<b>40 g (½ cup) desiccated coconut</b>	

**Per serving (biscuit):** Kilojoules 672; Fat 9.5 g (Saturated 3.8 g); Sodium 79 mg; Carbohydrate 15.8 g (Dietary Fibre 1.1 g); Protein 3.2 g.

## Being Sensible: Sweets for the Health-Conscious

‘Healthy dessert’ — isn’t that an oxymoron? For the most part, desserts can be like landmines, sabotaging even your strongest attempts to eat well. And most of the recipes for healthy desserts are no-sugar, no-fat, no-carb, no-taste affairs, loaded with artificial sweeteners and more appealing to horses than humans. But you *can* satisfy without sabotage and still keep the dessert gluten-free. In this section, you find ideas and recipes that can form part of a gluten-free, guilt-free, well-balanced diet.



Try sautéing fruits like apples, pears, or bananas over medium-high heat in sugar and water until they’re a little bit caramelised. This adds a caramel flavour without the fat of a caramel sauce.



Are you trying to cut down on sugar, but desperately crave the sweetness and texture of cake? Try this healthy alternative. Peel a ripe banana, coat it with peanut butter, shut your eyes and enjoy!





## No Sugar Fruit Balls

This recipe is quick, easy and great for the lunch box or snacks.

**Prep time:** 20 minutes • **Servings:** 20–30 balls, depending on size

Ingredients	Directions
4 tablespoons each of sesame, sunflower and pumpkin seeds	1 Finely grind seeds in a food processor.
350 g mixed dried fruit, such as apricots, peaches, figs and dates	2 Add dried fruit and process finely, adding enough orange juice to make the processor run smoothly but without letting the mixture become runny.
Orange juice	3 Form mixture into small balls and roll in coconut. For variety add 1 teaspoon cinnamon and a pinch of nutmeg and cloves.
Desiccated coconut	

**Per serving (per ball):** Kilojoules 398; Fat 5 g (Saturated 1.3 g); Sodium 12 mg; Carbohydrate 10 g (Dietary Fibre 1.8 g); Protein 2.2 g.

## Blueberry Layers

No need to peel, pit, core, dice, slice or chop for these babies. They're easy, delicious and loaded with nutritional value. Blueberries are higher in antioxidants than many other fruits and vegetables, and they're fat-free, low in kilojoules and high in fibre. Just one cup provides about 15 per cent of your daily vitamin C requirement. Fresh, frozen, canned and dried blueberries are available all year long — but treat yourself to the sweet, fresh blueberries of summer for the best blueberries of all.

**Prep time:** 30 minutes • **Freezing time:** 2 hours • **Servings:** 4

Ingredients	Directions
2 cups blueberries	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 In a medium-sized saucepan, stir together the blueberries and sugar.</li> <li>2 In a small bowl, mix the maize cornflour and water together until it forms a smooth paste.</li> <li>3 Add the cornflour mixture to the blueberries and sugar and cook over medium heat until the mixture begins to boil. Let it boil for 1 minute. Stir in the lemon juice and let the blueberries cool.</li> <li>4 Gently fold the yoghurt into the cooled blueberry mixture so you don't crush the berries.</li> <li>5 In four parfait glasses, tall glasses or glass dessert bowls, layer some of the blueberry mixture, then some strawberries and then the blueberry mixture again. Keep alternating layers until the glasses are full and you've used all the ingredients.</li> <li>6 Freeze desserts for at least 2 hours. Take them out of the freezer 30 minutes before you plan to serve them.</li> </ol>
¼ cup sugar	
2 tablespoons maize cornflour	
¼ cup cool water	
1 tablespoon lemon juice	
250 g low-fat plain yoghurt	
2 cups sliced strawberries	

**Tip:** Just before serving, when the mixture has softened a little, you can pop a gluten-free biscuit or wafer on the top.

**Per serving:** Kilojoules 636; Fat 1 g (Saturated 0 g); Sodium 39 mg; Carbohydrate 37 g (Dietary Fibre 4 g); Protein 3 g.



## Satisfy your sweet tooth with fabulous fruit

Humans do love their sweets. If you give a toddler a spoonful of ice cream and one of sour cream, you don't need a team of researchers and a multimillion-dollar, placebo-controlled, double-blind study to work out which one will produce a smile. Sure, people need glucose — that's the sugar that powers the body. But you can produce enough of that from fruit, vegetables and other foods. You also have the added benefit of getting vitamins, minerals, fibre and antioxidants for far fewer kilojoules than the 'empty kilojoules' you find in sugary foods. So satisfy your sweet tooth, but try to do it most of the time with foods that also pack a nutritional punch. Here are some ideas:

- ✓ **Apricot dip:** Halve and stone ripe apricots and nectarines (about 6 of each). Place on a buttered grill plate, drizzle with orange juice or brandy, sprinkle with sugar and grill for about 10 minutes until the sugar begins to caramelise. Mix together 250 grams of light crème fraiche, 3 teaspoons of orange juice and some passionfruit pulp. Sprinkle gluten-free icing sugar over the fruit and serve warm with the crème fraiche mixture for dipping.
- ✓ **Chocolate hazelnut spread fruit dip:** Warm up chocolate hazelnut spread a little and dip fresh fruit in it.

- ✓ **Grapes and French cream:** To make your own French cream, combine about 1 cup low-fat sour cream, ½ cup caster sugar and a dash of vanilla. Mix the French cream with red, green and black grapes.
- ✓ **Peaches 'n' cream:** Put half a peach or pear in a dish and add a small scoop of vanilla frozen yoghurt. Put raspberries or strawberries on top.
- ✓ **Pudding:** Use skim or low-fat milk to make a pudding or dessert mix. Serve it with slivers of fresh fruit on top.
- ✓ **Strawberries and yoghurt:** Slice strawberries and blend them with low-fat flavoured yoghurt. Save some strawberry slices to pop on top.
- ✓ **Choc-fruit treats:** Melt cooking or dark chocolate and dip strawberries or dried apricots in the chocolate, coating them halfway. Place fruit on baking paper until the chocolate has set. Try other fruits or dried fruits as well.

**Remember:** Fresh fruit is best for you when you store it properly. Don't refrigerate bananas and other tropical fruits. Melons don't need refrigeration until you cut them; store them away from vegetables and meat.

## Part IV

# Living — and Loving — the Gluten-Free Lifestyle 24/7



### *Five Great Strategies for Living Gluten-Free*

- ✓ Keep your gluten-free diet in perspective — food and eating is only one aspect of your life.
- ✓ Stay positive and willing to explore new tastes and recipes.
- ✓ Don't be afraid to ask for gluten-free alternatives wherever you are.
- ✓ Carry back-up snacks whenever you're away from home so you always have something to eat.
- ✓ Allow yourself gluten-free treats now and then so you don't feel deprived or left out.



Learn more information about the ins and outs of a gluten-free lifestyle. Check out [www.dummies.com/extras/livingglutenfreeau](http://www.dummies.com/extras/livingglutenfreeau).

## ***In this part . . .***

- ✓ Continue to enjoy the benefits of going out with family and friends, and travelling — all while maintaining your gluten-free diet.
- ✓ Guide your child and family through the move to a gluten-free diet, work through your own feelings about your child's diagnosis, and handle your child's reactions as they arise over the following days, months and years.
- ✓ Recognise common struggles that may emerge over your gluten-free journey, deal with denial, sadness and depression, and practise optimism.

## Chapter 16

# Getting Out and About: Eating Away from Home

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### *In This Chapter*

- ▶ Setting yourself up for success when eating out
  - ▶ Preparing for restaurant adventures
  - ▶ Packing it up for travel time
  - ▶ Going gluten-free on planes, trains, cars (and ships)
- 

**F**or some people, the gluten-free diet itself doesn't present the biggest challenge — it's getting out of the house. Even people who've been gluten-free for years sometimes feel uncomfortable about venturing away from home.

Most of this book focuses on reading labels, shopping and cooking, modifying recipes, keeping the kitchen gluten-free and keeping crumbs out of the peanut butter jar. But what about when you eat out? You can't read labels, you're limited to what has been provided, and you have to rely on people who may have no idea what gluten is. And, for the most part, you have little control over how the cooks prepare the food.

Yet getting out is important. Life in a bubble is for oxygen molecules, not humans. Does venturing outside require extra effort on your part? Sure. Might you receive a meal contaminated with gluten? Maybe. Are you going to pay \$40 for a meal that would have cost \$6 to make at home? Yep. Is it worth it? Absolutely.

The reality is that you can't always be at home in a crumb-free zone with pantries stocked with your gluten-free favourites. Whether you're taking clients out for lunch, enjoying a romantic dinner for two at your favourite restaurant, travelling for business or seeing the world for pleasure, you *will* be eating out. And unless you want to sulk and starve, you need to know how to eat safely when you're away from home.

## ***Following the Golden Rules of Going Out Gluten-Free***

You just arrived at the social event of the year. You're energised, looking fabulous and eager to spend a great evening with friends. And you're famished. You zero in on the buffet table, loaded with the most amazing spread you've seen in decades, and slowly you begin to realise that you can't eat anything within a kilometre radius. Your mood plummets as fast as your panic rises, because you realise you're going to be there all night with nothing to eat.

What follows are some basic rules of going out gluten-free. These rules should prevent such a party dampener, because you shouldn't let a little food (or lack thereof) ruin a good time.

### ***Don't assume others will accommodate your diet***

The office party is coming up in two months. Realising this will obviously involve food, you have a word with the person planning the party and explain your dietary restrictions. She's ranking high on the does-she-get-it scale, nodding in the appropriate places, even tossing in an 'Oh, so you probably can't eat the rolls, right?' Wow! She gets it! You're set, right? Don't bet your promotion on it. And whatever you do, don't expect it.

If she does get it and you see gluten-free goodies there (in which case you'll be tempted to fiercely guard them, elbowing guests away, defending your territory and hissing, 'Those are for me! They're all I can eat!'), let her know how much you appreciate it (and don't hiss; it's really not becoming). She didn't have to make the effort to accommodate your diet, but she did.

Really, you shouldn't *expect* anyone to accommodate your gluten-free diet — it doesn't matter who it is. Even those closest to you — those you love the most — are going to forget or make mistakes. This doesn't happen because they don't care — they (usually) do. Often, the lack of gluten-free goodies is just an oversight, or sometimes people think they understand the diet, but they missed some of the intricacies and what they think is gluten-free is floating in gravy.

## *Ask what's for dinner*

Asking about the menu isn't rude. Well, sometimes it is. Like when you invite some people for dinner and they're trying to choose between that and another opportunity, so they respond, 'Yeah, maybe. What's for dinner?' But that's another book (check out *Responding to Rude Remarks For Dummies* — okay, sorry, we made that title up, so you're on your own for clever comebacks).

When you're gluten-free and attending a social function, asking what's for dinner won't earn you a spot on the social circuit blacklist. Of course, some ways of asking are ruder than others (see preceding paragraph), but we assume you have more tact than that and can simply say to the host or hostess, 'I'm on a gluten-free diet and will need to check with you about what you're serving. I'm very happy to bring an alternative if that would help.' Most of the time, people are happy to accommodate your diet as best they can.

## *Fill up before you go*

Because you can't expect any gluten-free goodies you can eat at the party, filling up before you go is a good idea. That way you're not starved and fixated on food, and you can enjoy the party for what it's really all about, which is fun and friends.

The biggest problem with this rule is that if you get to the party and find a lot of gluten-free goodies you *can* eat, you'll be so excited that you'll eat them all, even though you're not hungry. Beware of popping buttons.

## *BYOF: Bring your own food*

We're not suggesting that you walk into a formal soiree with bags of food under your arms, wafting the just-fried French fry smell among guests in dinner suits. No, that type of a grand entrance may not sit well with the host and hostess. The setting does, of course, determine the type of food you bring and how you bring it.

Don't worry that bringing your own food may offend the host or hostess. You can discuss this in advance, or just explain when you get there that you need special food and have brought along a few things to eat and share.



## Managing when everyone's bringing food

It's tough when everyone is bringing a contribution for the meal. You have no idea what's in the dishes and even those that look the safest could have seasonings or ingredients that turn a fun dinner into party demise.

Your best bet on these occasions is to offer to bring something you happen to love — and that can fill you up and keep you happy throughout the party. So what if you're eating only the

dish you brought? If anyone notices, you can explain. Chances are, though, people will be too busy loading up their own plates to check out what you have on yours. In a situation like this you have full permission to forget your manners. Don't stand back handing out the plates until everyone is served or you might just see your only chance at food gobbled up before you can get to it!

## *Bite your tongue when they make a mistake*

You sat down with the hostess, talked about her plans for the meal and decided where she could make a few changes for you. You get to the party only to find everything is wrapped in pastry or rolled in crumbs. You:

- (A) Look miserable and make other people feel guilty
- (B) Complain quietly to everyone else that the hostess forgot you were on a gluten-free diet
- (C) Try to pick the innards out of the pastry thingies
- (D) None of the above

The correct answer is D. Just relax and enjoy the party. You weren't hungry anyway, because you filled up before you came. (Refer to the section 'Fill up before you go', earlier in this chapter.) Or you bring out the bag of nuts or other snack food you brought along, put it in a bowl (and hover, so others can't eat it all before you). And, of course, you don't pick the innards out of the pastry thingies because they're contaminated!

## *Enjoy the company*

It doesn't matter whether you're at a nightclub, a festive party for 500, a restaurant enjoying an intimate dinner for two, a wedding or a wake — social gatherings aren't about the food. They're about the occasion, the

atmosphere, the ambience, the people you're with . . . oh, and did we mention that you don't have to clean up?

Now we're not saying that social functions don't revolve around food. They do. Most societies use food as a focal point to draw people close during times of socialising and celebration. But don't lose sight of the celebration itself and the reason that people are gathering in the first place, because that's what social functions are about. (If you're invited to a bread-tasting party, ignore this paragraph — in that case, it *is* about the food.)

## Dining Out: Restaurant Realities and Rewards

A great experience at a terrific restaurant is priceless. Good company, nice ambience, respectful service and delicious food synergise to create a multifaceted experience that's far more than just a meal.



Being on a gluten-free diet shouldn't hold you back from going out. Sure, eating at restaurants involves some risk. You don't know for sure what ingredients are in your food, no matter how much you try to educate your waiter and chef. Kitchen and waiting staff are busy and can (and do) make mistakes, and cross-contamination is always an issue. And by law, you'll at least once in your gluten-free dining days receive a salad with croutons that you have to send back.

But with just a little extra effort, you can help ensure that your meal is safely gluten-free and you can enjoy gluten-free dining as one of life's more pleasurable social experiences.

Margaret's worst 'dining out' disaster occurred early in her career as a coeliac. 'It was a birthday celebration for a friend and we had booked a Chinese banquet (experienced coeliacs, stop sniggering!). After a long day at work I was already famished when the first course arrived — pastries. Second course — spring rolls. Third course, more pastries. I sipped patiently on my chardonnay, knowing that eventually there would be something I could eat. Fourth course — more of the same. I chomped on bits of parsley — food, at least. By the time the sixth course arrived — soup swimming with dumplings — the wine was taking its toll and I was desperate. From a serving plate I seized a decorative orange flower, carved from carrot, popped it in my mouth and chomped hard. Glurk, rrrmmnnnnch. Oh joy! Not a dainty carrot flower after all, but a gluggy wax flower! I spent the rest of the evening picking bits of orange wax out of my mouth. Parsley, chardonnay and orange wax. Eat your heart out, Jamie Oliver.'



Here are some tips for eating out that can help make your gluten-free dining experiences the best they can be:

- ✓ **Be pleasant and grateful.** If you're demanding, you're going to put people on the defensive. When they accommodate your requests, be appreciative.
- ✓ **Give them just enough information.** Not too much, not too little. You may have to make a quick judgement about whether the wait staff are really 'getting' what you're saying.
- ✓ **Don't be afraid to ask for what you want.** You're paying for the meal and you should be able to enjoy it knowing it's safe for you to eat.
- ✓ **Make it clear to the wait staff and chef that this is a serious condition.** If you have to sound alarming, do so. One of the best ways to get their attention is to say, 'It's a bit like food poisoning'. You know it's not *really* like food poisoning, but it will get their attention.
- ✓ **Call ahead if you can.** Remember to avoid busy hours. Ask if you can speak to the chef, who can tell you which of the menu items are safe for you and whether adapting a dish to make it gluten-free is possible.
- ✓ **Know how foods are prepared.** The more you know about traditional preparation, the better decisions you can make when ordering.
- ✓ **Send it back if it's not right.** Of course, I'm not suggesting you be rude about this, but if they give you a salad with croutons on it, don't pick the croutons out and eat it. That's not safe! If you requested a gluten-free meal there's nothing wrong with saying, for example, 'This looks great, but I asked for salad without croutons', or 'Sorry. I can't eat this — I didn't realise it was served on toast and I need a gluten-free meal.'

## Choosing the restaurant

Try not to set yourself up for frustration and disappointment. If you choose restaurants that, by the very nature of their menu selections, aren't likely to have much (if anything) that's gluten-free you're obviously likely to be disappointed.

Instead, go to restaurants that have large and diverse menus, or choose an ethnic restaurant that's likely to have more gluten-free foods.

### *Good bets*

With any restaurant you go to, you have to check ingredients in specific dishes. And, of course, food preparation is an issue. You can either ask the workers to make your food in an uncontaminated manner or you can opt to

eat somewhere else. But as a general rule, the types of restaurants that are a good bet include

- ✓ **Indian:** Many of the ingredients in Indian cooking are inherently gluten-free and chefs remain true to their original recipes. Authentic curry powder straight from the shores of India may contain wheat starch as a thickener and stabiliser. These curry mixes may be bought by large establishments by the sack. Try to determine if a local or foreign curry powder has been used because this determines if the curries are gluten-free or not. Although many dishes and curries look as if they've been thickened, this effect comes from the delicious mix of spices. Avoid the breads — chapati and parathas — and instead enjoy the crunchy, spicy pappadams, made from besan (chickpea or lentil) flour. Most entrées are safe because they contain only besan flour, including the delicious pakhoras, but avoid the samosas (small vegetable-filled pastries) because they're made from wheat flour. Most main courses are gluten-free and chefs are only too happy to give you details of the ingredients used. Desserts are more likely to be wheat-flour based, but ice-cream is usually an option. Be careful of *ras gulas*, yummy-looking little balls floating in syrup — they're made from cream cheese and fruit juice, but may contain semolina.
- ✓ **Mexican:** Mexican cooking includes many inherently gluten-free foods. Most Mexican recipes call for spices such as cumin, garlic, oregano, salt and pepper. *Carnitas*, a traditional simmered pork dish served with corn tortillas, shredded lettuce, tomatoes, rice and beans, is an example of a Mexican dish that's usually a safe bet. But, as is the case with any meal, you need to make sure the kitchen staff don't add flour to the sauce and the corn tortillas don't contain other grains as well. Although the corn chips used in nachos, tortillas and tacos are traditionally made from maize flour, many of the commercially made ones also contain wheat.
- ✓ **Steak and seafood:** These restaurants are likely to have steaks or burgers, ribs, chicken, pork, corn on the cob, seafood, salads (no croutons), baked or mashed potatoes or rice, French fries and ice-cream for dessert. You'll need to check the sauces and ask about the chips and wedges because they're sometimes coated in flour or flavoured with a spicy mix that may include gluten.
- ✓ **Modern European, Australian:** Although the meals may be in the higher price range, chefs in these restaurants likely know all about gluten and how to prepare delicious meals. They may offer to adapt your preferred meal to make it gluten-free.
- ✓ **Clubs:** You may occasionally be disappointed, but most clubs have a couple of suitable dishes. You might have to settle for steak or chicken without the sauce or a roast without gravy.
- ✓ **Italian:** Although Italian restaurants serve a lot of pasta and pizza most chefs won't even bat an eyelid if you ask for your meal to be prepared without flour. The creamy sauce on your chicken, veal or seafood might be a bit runny, but

it will taste good. Some Italian restaurants serve polenta, an Italian cornmeal classic and, of course, you can eat the wonderful salads.

- ✔ **Thai/Vietnamese:** What a treat to be able to go to a Thai or Vietnamese restaurant and eat noodles! Be careful — not all their noodles are gluten-free, but most of them are rice-based and can be safe. The sauces they use, for the most part, are gluten-free, too. If not, the chef may be happy to use the gluten-free soy or tamari sauce that you provide. Others may have their meals already marinating in soy and other sauces and you might have to settle for a very bland meal. Check with staff in advance because some Thai and Vietnamese restaurants are now adding chicken or beef extender to their dishes, often unaware that it packs a whopping serving of gluten.
- ✔ **Coffee shops:** The trendy coffee shops you're familiar with offer foods and snacks, sometimes marketed as being wholesome or healthy. But of course 'wholesome' and 'healthy' don't necessarily mean gluten-free. However, over the years a horde of hungry coeliacs relentlessly asking for gluten-free muffins or cake have worn down cafe owners. Well, maybe not quite hordes, but we like the sound of a 'horde of hungry coeliacs'. As a result, things are starting to look up in the coffee and wicked treat department. More and more cafes now offer a delicious, if limited, range of gluten-free goodies. (Please, not the orange and almond cake *again!*) Some of them also have gluten-free bread on request for sandwiches or focaccias. You'll have to search out these helpful coffee shops, however, as you'll still come across some where the staff look blank when you ask for gluten-free food.
- ✔ **Other:** You may notice many ethnic options on the 'good bets' list. Many ethnic foods are naturally gluten-free. You need to work out which ones you like and, of those foods, which are inherently gluten-free. Then you can choose a restaurant of that ethnicity and know what to order.

### *A little more risky*

You can probably get something gluten-free at the type of restaurants or eateries in this section, but it may take a bit more effort and the risks are greater. You may have to 'make do' a bit, but at least you won't go hungry:

- ✔ **Chinese:** These restaurants use soy sauce in many, if not most of their dishes and their soy sauce usually has gluten in it. You can bring your own soy sauce, but warn the cooks to be careful about contamination issues while they're preparing your food. Check the other sauces too — sometimes oyster sauce is gluten-free. Beware of dishes thickened with cornflour (the wheaten kind, not maize cornflour).
- ✔ **Bakeries:** Bakeries are beginning to respond to the rapidly increasing demand for gluten-free alternatives, but they're probably not the best environment for those on a gluten-free diet. That smoky look behind the shopfront isn't fog; it's

airborne flour particles. Trillions of them. If gluten-free items are on offer, check whether they're baked on the premises. If they are, check what the staff do to avoid contamination. Safe bakeries:

- Have a separate gluten-free bay in the kitchen.
- Bake the gluten-free batch in the morning or on one particular day, when the flour dust has had a chance to settle overnight and then get cleaned up before the gluten-free batch is prepared.
- Cover or package the gluten-free items, or place them in a separate bin so that contamination can't occur

✓ **Pizza places:** More and more pizza chains and local pizzerias are providing gluten-free pizzas. It's good to see that some pizza places have very strict procedures to avoid contamination. Check this with your local provider, and if they're taking great care make sure you show your appreciation. If not, ask them to segregate your pizza as they prepare and bake it. Large franchises that offer gluten-free pizzas include Crust Gourmet Pizza Bar, Dominoes Pizzas, Eagle Boys, Pizza Capers and Pizza Hut. Just be aware that some franchises have a disclaimer on their menu stating that, although gluten-free ingredients are used, they cannot be responsible for contamination during assembly and cooking (or something like it). If this is the case, reiterate when ordering that the product needs to be strictly gluten-free.

✓ **Sushi:** This is usually a safe bet, but avoid fillings with mayonnaise, seafood extender or battered or marinated meat. The soy sauce likely contains gluten, although some shops offer gluten-free soy sauce if you ask. Sushi Sushi doesn't use mayonnaise in its brown rice sushi.



If you have a regular sushi shop that you like to frequent, introduce the staff to gluten-free soy sauce — they may just stock it or start using it for all their items.

### *Fast-food options*

One of the best things about fast-food places is that they generally follow standardised guidelines. Most now have their nutritional information and ingredients posted online or available at the counter. Spend some time online checking out websites in advance so you can be confident about joining in when your friends suggest a snack or meal on the run. Always check for yourself as policies may change and the information given here may become out of date.



With the current pace of life in many parts of Australia most people want the option of a meal they can get — and eat — quickly. Keep in mind, however, that most (although not all) fast foods are really high in fat, sugars and salt. Obesity is a huge problem (no pun intended) in modern society, with rates rapidly increasing in Australia. Associated with this are conditions such as

heart disease and diabetes. So enjoy a quick takeaway when time is limited or you're out with friends, but don't let it become a habit. You want to enjoy life to the full in the future, not have to struggle with chronic ill health.

As a general rule, when you're ordering chips, ask whether they're coated in anything and ask what other things are fried in the same oil. You don't want to eat chips that have collected little bits of breakaway batter from battered fish or potato cakes. Often chips are coated in dextrose from wheat, so they're listed as containing gluten. But remember that dextrose from wheat is gluten-free. So you can happily indulge. (Have another look at Chapter 4 if you're feeling confused.)

Here's how some popular fast-food options stack up on the gluten-free stakes:

- ✓ **Ali Baba:** The kebabs are gluten-free and you can also get gluten-free wraps to put them in. The salads are fine, but beware of tabouli — made from wheat! Other kebab shops can sell you a kebab plate with salad.
- ✓ **Grill'd Specialty Burgers:** Not only can you get gluten-free rolls for your burgers, but the chips are also gluten-free. Check the fillings and sauces because some aren't suitable.
- ✓ **Guzman y Gomez:** You have lots of things to choose from here, including the burrito bowls and the crispy shell tacos.
- ✓ **Hungry Jacks:** You can get a beef burger without the bun, and fries, hash browns, thick shakes and, in some outlets, a chicken patty. The patties made from 100 per cent chicken breast are gluten-free, but stay away from the crumbed chicken patty.
- ✓ **McDonalds:** A burger without the bun is gluten-free, as are the fries, hash browns, thick shakes, sundaes and, at McCafés, the gluten-free friands.  
  
Plan ahead by having gluten-free rolls with you when buying a fast-food burger, so that you can still have your burger and eat it the way it is intended. The best option is to find vacuum-packed gluten-free rolls so that you can be prepared at any time.
- ✓ **Mad Mex Fresh Mexican Grill:** Gluten-free items are marked as such in the menu and on the website. You can choose from a range of soft or crispy tacos, naked burritos, nachos and salsas.
- ✓ **Nando's Chicken:** You can find a good choice of chicken dishes, chips, side dishes and salads, with information about the gluten-free options readily available on the website.
- ✓ **Oporto:** If it's breakfast you're after, you can eat the big breakfast without the toast. Later in the day, you can enjoy quarter, half and whole chickens with chips or hash browns, but the chicken strips and fillets do contain gluten.



The chips and hash browns aren't listed as gluten-free because they contain dextrose, but remember dextrose from wheat is safe to eat (refer to Chapter 4).

- ✓ **Pizza Hut:** Refer to the preceding section, which includes information on pizza places.
- ✓ **Red Rooster:** It's 'no go' on the chicken here, but you can eat corn cobs, chips and hash browns. Avoid the baked vegetables because the seasoning contains gluten.
- ✓ **SumoSalad:** You can enjoy a wide range of salads here with most dressings also gluten-free. For a more substantial meal, you can choose from seven different soups, several risottos and four curries or hot dishes. Most are also low Gl.



Most franchises include disclaimers relating to their meals declaring that while they do everything they can to avoid contamination, this can't be guaranteed where food is prepared and served on the same premises. You need to make up your own mind about the level of risk you're happy with. The meal you're planning to eat may well be totally gluten-free, but the industry uses such disclaimers to protect itself from legal action from customers. You need to balance the occasional risk of contamination against participating fully in the life of your community.

## Calling ahead

When eating out, call the restaurant ahead of time, ask what's on the menu that is gluten-free and whether they could adapt a dish if you have a particular favourite. Sometimes restaurants are so accommodating that if you give them enough notice, they'll get special ingredients for your meal.



It's best to call when they aren't flat out serving meals. Mid-afternoon seems to be the best time, after the lunch rush and well before the evening meal.

## Making smart menu choices

Set yourself up for success. Choose menu items that are likely to be gluten-free or that the kitchen staff can easily modify to be gluten-free. Obviously, crumbed and fried items aren't going to be your best bets, although sometimes chefs can coat your food with spices and grill it instead.

Restaurants change staff fairly regularly. Even if you've eaten at a particular restaurant several times, checking what's in your favourite dish is worthwhile, because a new chef can easily change the ingredients or cooking methods.



## Gluten-free menus

Close your eyes and imagine being at a beautiful restaurant with great company. The waitress chirps, ‘Hi, I’m Sarah. Would you like to see the gluten-free menu?’ Okay, you can open your eyes now, because we know you’ll find it rather hard to read this book with them closed. Besides, this isn’t a dream. It’s a reality! Today, a few restaurants in capital cities and large towns actually do offer gluten-free menus — some of them are even online. You usually need to ask,

though, so speak up and ask whether they have a gluten-free menu. You never know when your waiter may hand you one.

Almost as good are those wonderful restaurants that identify the dishes on their menu that are gluten-free. Try not to kiss the waiting staff when you find one! Kiss the menu if you like, but do it discreetly to avoid long, open-mouthed stares from nearby diners.



Do a bit of research on food preparation. The more you know about how foods are usually prepared, the easier it is to order. For instance, you should know that restaurants, especially Cajun restaurants, often boil seafood in beer. Turkish restaurants often add pasta to their rice and you can’t really tell that it’s there. The ‘crab’ you find in sushi is sometimes a mixture of fish and wheat flour and those enticing ‘seafood sticks’ in salad bars are actually seafood extender — sawdust and brains and gluten and stuff. No crab in sight.

## *Talking with the staff: Ask and thou shalt receive*

Danna’s teenage kids hate being with her when she orders food at a restaurant. All she has to do is hold up the menu and say to the wait staff, ‘Could I ask you a question?’ and her kids start fidgeting, rolling their eyes, mumbling, ‘Here we go . . .’ But what’s wrong with getting what you want when you’re paying for your food? (Certainly, kids don’t hesitate to put in their requests at home!)

Don’t be afraid to ask for what you want (even if your teenage kids are a tad intimidating). People make requests at restaurants all the time, even when they don’t have dietary restrictions. If you feel that the wait staff aren’t getting it, ask to talk with the chef. Of course, be tactful about it. If you sense that the staff aren’t likely to be able to identify gluten on a bottle or packet,

ask if they would mind if you read the ingredients yourself. Asking for special considerations for your meal isn't rude — especially when your health depends on it.

Yes, you really do need to talk to the wait staff and maybe even the chef . . . and yes, you sometimes need to give them a lot of detail. But for the most part, you should keep explanations as simple as possible and work your way into detail if you need to. You may be surprised at how little you need to say.

Of course, you've already chosen a restaurant that's likely to have gluten-free items and you've picked some items on the menu that look like they may be gluten-free or could be modified to be gluten-free. So at this point, you're ready to order. You may say something like this:

**The opener:** 'I'm on a gluten-free diet and need to know what's suitable for me.'

You're likely to find that the staff are very receptive. Use the words 'gluten-free' because awareness is spreading and these days when you explain that you need a gluten-free meal, your waitress just might respond with, 'Oh, really? Do you have a gluten intolerance like coeliac disease?' At this point, you feel like that waitress is your new very best friend and you know your special order is in good hands. The kitchen crew will probably be on board, too. Assume, though, that the person serving you doesn't seem to know anything about the gluten-free diet and simply shrugs his or her shoulders.

## Letting restaurant cards speak for you

Restaurant cards are small cards that explain the basics of the gluten-free dietary guidelines that you can give to wait staff or a chef. Members of Coeliac Australia can purchase ready-made cards from their state branch (see Figure 16-1). Or you can use the cheat sheet available online.

Similar cards can be downloaded from the internet but they may not be ideal for use in Australia.

If you make your own card, laminating it is a good idea, because it's likely to get covered in food when the chef handles it. Make up a number of cards so you can leave one behind with the chef for other patrons the restaurant may have in the future.

At this point, the situation requires some explanation — but not too much. You don't want to overwhelm your waitress or relate your entire nine-year medical history. You do, however, need to get her attention. Try this:

**The alarm:** 'I have a very severe reaction to gluten. Gluten is in wheat, rye, barley and oats.'

Notice the words 'severe reaction'. These are alarm words that in the restaurant owner's mind are a euphemism for 'lawsuit waiting to happen'. Not that you would sue — we hope you wouldn't. It usually backfires, with the company or restaurant deciding they won't take the risk of providing information or gluten-free options in the future. But ears perk up when you use the words and that's a good thing. Restaurant workers and management then pay closer attention.

At this point, you can hand over your restaurant card and explain how important it is for them to avoid contaminating your food with gluten from other sources.



Remember to talk about how the staff prepares the food. If the food is grilled, you may want to say, 'Could you please make sure that the part of the grill where you cook my food is clean and doesn't have crumbs from another meal? Also, could you please use a separate spatula?' Check that the item to be grilled isn't dredged in flour before grilling.

If the waiter just doesn't seem to be getting it or seems unwilling to work with you, ask to talk with the chef. This isn't a big deal. People are so afraid to ask to talk to the chef, but chefs often love to mingle with the guests and are really interested in the gluten-free diet.

Pasta places often allow you to bring gluten-free pastas and cook them for you. Ask the staff as nicely as you can to use a clean pot, clean water, clean utensils and a clean colander before they make your gluten-free pasta. Explain that contaminated pasta can make you ill.



You may want to think about getting toaster bags for toasting your bread when you're away from home. These amazing bags allow your bread or sandwich to be toasted without any contamination. The bags are washable and reusable. They're available at some Spotlight stores and health food shops, and can be purchased through Coeliac Australia state societies.

	<p><b>I have coeliac disease, a medical condition that causes me to become ill if I eat any food containing gluten</b></p> <p>Would you please advise which menu options are gluten free</p> <p><b>I can eat</b> a variety of foods including unprocessed meats, fish, eggs, fruit, vegetables, legumes, dairy products, rice, corn (maize), polenta, lentils, nuts, soy, potato, fats and oils. Also, packaged food that is gluten free.</p> <p><b>I cannot eat</b> foods that contain <b>wheat, rye, barley or oats.</b> For example, malt, spelt, flour, bread, breadcrumbs, cakes, biscuits, couscous, batter, and pastry - except when made from gluten free ingredients.</p> <p><b>Please check</b> the ingredients in processed meats, stocks, boosters, sauces, gravies, dressings, soy sauce, icing mixture, coffee dusting powder and garnishes.</p> <p><b>Thank you for your help</b></p>	
	<div> <div> <p><b>Important:</b></p> <p>Please be aware of cross contamination during preparation of gluten free food. Always use clean preparation areas, utensils and hands. Similarly, if cooking oil or water has been used to cook food containing gluten, it should not be reused in gluten free food preparation. A small amount of gluten will cause a reaction in a person with coeliac disease. Please avoid ingredients that are labelled 'May Contain Gluten'.</p> </div> <div> <p><b>For more information:</b></p> <p><b>T:</b> 1 300 458 836</p> <p><b>E:</b> <a href="mailto:info@coeliac.org.au">info@coeliac.org.au</a></p> <p><b>W:</b> <a href="http://www.coeliac.org.au">www.coeliac.org.au</a></p> <p><b>Coeliac<sup>TM</sup> Australia</b></p> </div> </div> <p><b>Thank you for taking care to ensure my meal is gluten free.</b></p>	

**Figure 16-1:**  
Restaurant  
card from  
Coeliac  
Australia.

## The do-they-get-it point system

When you talk to the restaurant staff, you can work out how to read their responses and assign them do-they-get-it points. Your interactions with them throughout the ordering process and ensuing meal may depend on how many points they earn.

Listening attentively while you explain your dietary restrictions. 1 point

Saying, 'I think I'd better bring the chef out to talk to you to make sure we get this right.' 1 point

Adding comments like, 'Oh, you're gluten-free! Is that because you have coeliac disease?' 2 points

Commenting, 'Sounds like a healthy way to eat!' 1 point

Stopping you mid-sentence and saying, 'Sounds like you'd like to see our gluten-free menu.' 2 points

Stopping you mid-sentence and saying, 'Sounds like you'd like to try our freshly made gluten-free pizza, washed down with our home-brewed gluten-free beer and topped off with our freshly baked gluten-free pastry selection for dessert.' 0 points  
(you're dreaming)

Staring at you as though you just ordered worms on your burger. -1 point

Giving you a quick, 'Yeah, uh-huh, okay, next?' and turning to the person next to you. -1 point

Listening to your entire explanation and asking, 'Okay, so then you want white bread instead of wholemeal?' -1 point

Adding up the points:

-3 to -1: You should probably leave.

0: We hope you're not too hungry. You should either leave or realise you're going to have to work hard to make sure your meal is a safe one.

1 to 2: Probably a good bet. Bon appétit!

3 to 7: Hugs and kisses to the entire staff — and don't forget a big tip.

## *The Incredible, Edible Journey: It's Travel Time!*

Whether you're getting away for business or pleasure, nearly all people find themselves leaving home from time to time. You don't have to limit or, worse still, give up travelling because you're on a gluten-free diet. In fact, you may actually find some countries to be more accommodating than you ever would've dreamed. So keep your mind open for the occasional, wonderful surprise! Gluten-free food is becoming more and more widely available in many other countries, as well as Australia.

If you live by what we outline in the 'Following the Golden Rules of Going Out Gluten-Free' section, earlier in this chapter, you'll be well prepared wherever your travels take you. And because travelling nearly always involves eating at restaurants, you should also pay particular attention to the advice in the preceding section on dining out. But to ensure a great gluten-free adventure, here are a few more things that you should know before you hit the road.

### *Researching your destination*

Do yourself a favour and spend some time researching the area before you go on your trip. You can always find supermarkets or markets, restaurants and fast-food places, all of which will have at least some things you can eat. But you may do even better than that.



Each Coeliac Australia state office (refer to Chapter 5 for websites) provides members with lists of coeliac-friendly restaurants and cafes within Australia. Their national magazine, *The Australian Coeliac*, has regular features on travel both at home and overseas that give you an idea of the relative difficulty in

### **Remembering the art of healthy tipping**

We don't take tipping lightly, because when people go to extra trouble to make sure you get a nice meal, it's good to show your appreciation in a practical way as well as saying thanks.

The number of people going gluten-free is skyrocketing. Every waiter or waitress you talk to, every chef you inform and every tip you leave improves things for others in the future.

travelling gluten-free in different countries. For more overseas information, try internet chat sites and international coeliac society websites for the countries you plan to visit. Remember that information you obtain through the internet (and chat sites in particular) may not be accurate or current.



If, in doing your homework, you find health food shops or natural foods shops in the area of your destination, call ahead and ask what they carry in the way of gluten-free specialty items. You may be surprised to find they have a huge array.

## ***Choosing gluten-free-friendly accommodation***

Choosing the right place to stay can make your holiday a much more enjoyable experience. If possible, choose motels, hotels or cabins with cooking facilities, or book into a holiday apartment. Even a small fridge and microwave can make your trip a lot easier. That way, you can go to a local corner shop or supermarket and stock up on some essentials, like fruit, milk, rice cakes, deli meats and snack items. If you have a full kitchen at your disposal, you can prepare your own meals if you want to, sparing yourself the worry of eating at restaurants — not to mention the expense.

If you can't find accommodation with a kitchen, try to find somewhere that has a restaurant attached or with several restaurants nearby. Menus are generally available on restaurant websites.

If you're lucky enough to be able to afford luxury hotels, or you're having a really special holiday, you'll find chefs are fully informed about gluten-free food, will already have suitable dishes on the menu and will delight in adapting dishes if you have special wishes.

## ***Packing your own provisions***

For a long holiday you may want to bring your pantry in your suitcase or car boot (everything but the kitchen sink!). Unless you're going to a remote area, you should be able to stock up on foods at your destination, but it's wise to pack some gluten-free basics like bread, biscuits, MightyMite, soy sauce and your favourite cereal.

With any luck, the foods will survive the trip and you'll arrive fully prepared to enjoy your gluten-free stay.

## Knowing the boundaries when crossing the border

If you're travelling internationally, be aware of local regulations. For instance, some countries won't allow you to bring food across their borders, although restrictions usually apply only to uncooked meats or poultry, delicatessen items and dairy products.

Countries around the world have different definitions of 'gluten-free'. Sometimes a product may be labelled 'gluten-free' but contain tiny amounts of gluten. You'll need to read the ingredient list on the product to be sure (assuming there's a list in English). Fortunately, many countries are now developing stricter labelling standards.

Realise that your own foods may be suspect in some countries. Danna and her family went to Mexico and brought some of their favourite gluten-free pancake mix. She didn't want to take the entire bag (they buy it in bulk), so she put some in a food storage zipper bag in her hand luggage. Unfortunately for her, she didn't use much of it on the trip. Coming home through customs, their bags were searched and the mysterious white powder was subject to — ahem — intense scrutiny.



Sturdy plastic containers are better than plastic bags or cardboard packs for carting gluten-free supplies around. If you try to squish a loaf of gluten-free bread into your pack or suitcase you'll end up eating it out of the wrapper with a spoon. Enough to reduce even a seasoned traveller to tears.

## *Sprechen zie gluten? Speaking gluten-free in other countries*



Knowing some key words in the language of the country you're visiting is important. An unsuspecting group of Aussie travellers was forcibly removed from a restaurant in China when one of them said she had coeliac disease and asked for a gluten-free meal! Well, it could be contagious if you've never heard of it before! Another traveller was delighted when the head waiter, hearing that she had asked for a meal without flour, marched up to her table, swooped on the vase of flowers and removed it with a great flourish. 'Voilà! No flower, Madame,' he declared proudly. Learn the words for *gluten*, *gluten-free*, *with*, *without*, *no* and *allergy*. Check out Table 16-1 for some key words in Italian, French and German.



**Table 16-1** Terms for Explaining the Diet in Foreign Languages

<i>English Term</i>	<i>Italian</i>	<i>French</i>	<i>German</i>
I can	posso	je peux	ich kann
I can't	non posso	je ne peux pas	ich kann nicht
(to) eat	mangiare	manger	essen
gluten	glutine	gluten	gluten
wheat	grano	blé	weizen
flour	farina	farine	mehl
corn	gran turco	maïs	mais
with	con	avec	mit
without	senza	sans	ohne
yes	si	oui	ja
no	no	non	nein
allergy	allergia	allergie	allergie
gluten-free	senza glutine	sans gluten	gluten-free



## Taking a letter from your doctor

While you're organising your travel vaccinations and insurance, ask your doctor for a letter explaining that you need special dietary food for medical reasons and may have to carry gluten-free food with you. Ask your doctor to list the medications you plan to take with you, if any. You probably won't need this, but in the unlikely event that your precious pink pills are

questioned by customs, this could save a lot of unpleasantness or unwelcome delays. If you need to carry medication in powder form, a letter will be essential. Carry the powder sealed in its original container until you're through customs. If you need malaria tablets for your trip, be aware that some contain gluten. Your doctor will need to check this for you.



If you're a member of your state society of Coeliac Australia you can obtain professionally prepared translations of the restaurant (or ID) card in the language of the countries you're planning to visit, as well as travel sheets with useful information about food labelling standards, the sorts of shops or stores that carry gluten-free foods, which local or traditional dishes are gluten-free and some useful phrases to help overcome language barriers. Most important is the information about the definition of 'gluten-free' in each country because this helps you to know whether gluten-free on a product really does mean gluten-free, or what we would call 'low gluten'.

Restaurant cards that explain the gluten-free diet are also available in different languages on the internet. Or you can try translation software, like the Babel Fish translation at [www.altavista.com](http://www.altavista.com) and others you find on the internet.

## *Getting There*

Whether you're doing it by plane, train, car or cruise ship, you need to consider the journey itself in your gluten-free plans. Getting there can be half the fun, but for a coeliac traveller it's sometimes double the trouble.

### *Flying the friendly skies*

First rule for flying: Bring food for yourself. Gluten-free choices are very limited both at the airport and on the plane.

Airports do usually have fast-food restaurants, so if you know which fast-food chains have gluten-free options you can always go there if you want or need to (refer to the section 'Fast-food options', earlier in this chapter, for some tips). Some of the cafes sell yoghurt, fruit and salads. In the main restaurants you may be lucky, but don't depend on it. If you're a frequent flyer and belong to one of the airline clubs like the Qantas Club, staff will usually turn somersaults to meet your needs.

When booking your flight, you can request a gluten-free meal. If you do this, take food just in case. Sometimes you'll be served a meal that isn't remotely close to being gluten-free, and you want to be prepared for that. And many airlines are replacing their packets of peanuts with pretzels because so many people have peanut allergies. Sitting for hours on a plane when you're starved, smelling everyone else's fresh, hot bread is pretty miserable. Sometimes, though, you'll be thrilled to find that they do accommodate the

gluten-free diet. We were once served gluten-free rolls, individually packaged with the ingredients clearly labelled! To hear us cheer, you would've thought we'd won the lottery.



When flying within Australia, only Qantas supplies gluten-free meals, which they call 'gluten-intolerant' meals. Jetstar no longer provides special meals. Gluten-intolerant meals aren't available on minor flights and gluten-free snacks are no longer provided on any flights. Meals must be ordered ahead of time, but you'll have to make a phone call if you're doing the booking yourself because it can't be done on the internet. Otherwise, ask your travel agent to make the request. Virgin Airlines usually have gluten-free biscuit packs available.

## ***Cruising the high seas***

Most cruise lines are extremely accommodating when it comes to dietary restrictions of any type. The cruise lines we've looked into are very familiar with the gluten-free diet and even stock specialty items like gluten-free breads, pastas, biscuits and baked goods.

If you're planning a cruise, call the cruise company in advance and ask to speak to the executive chef. Discuss the gluten-free diet with him or her and follow up with another phone call to discuss the specifics of what you want while you're on board. It's often hard to find the right person to talk to so you may have to work through your travel agent, but be persistent. Travel agents have been known to forget this sort of thing! Meals are a high point of any cruise and it's downright miserable if you're not feasting like everyone else. Most cruise lines offer healthy fare like fresh seafood, chicken, steaks, fruit and vegetables. Have a talk with the chef when you're on board about contamination issues and special seasonings so he or she can make sure every meal's exceptional and gluten-free.

## ***Gluten-free on track***

If you're taking the train somewhere within your own state, your best bet is to bring your own food. Rail services don't usually have any restrictions about bringing your own food, so load up. You don't want to derail your trip by starving the whole way.

Some rail services do provide very basic gluten-free meals on order (NSW Trainlink in New South Wales and Victoria, Queensland Rail, and the Overland in South Australia).

It's a different story if you're travelling across Australia on those long-distance trains with wildly romantic names. The *Ghan*, the *Indian Pacific*, the *Overland*, the *Sunlander*, the *Tilt Train* and *Spirit of the Outback* all provide excellent gluten-free meals. Booking ahead is essential.

Meals on trains in other countries are a very mixed bag. You'll need to do some careful advance research and keep your emergency rations handy.

### *Travelling near or far by car*

Driving offers you the most flexibility, so it's often the easiest way to travel, at least in terms of accommodating your gluten-free diet. (The kids fighting and asking, 'Are we there yet?' the entire way is another matter.) A very large esky is your best friend on a car trip. Load up with bread, rolls and other basic supplies so you're never left hungry. And when you find great surprises along the way you can stock up with new treats.



## Chapter 17

# Raising Happy, Healthy, Gluten-Free Kids

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### *In This Chapter*

- ▶ Dealing with your emotions
  - ▶ Chatting with children and teens about their gluten-free lifestyle
  - ▶ Deciding whether the entire family should give up gluten
  - ▶ Letting your kids have some control
  - ▶ Getting out and about with gluten-free kids
  - ▶ Letting go a little bit: Babysitters, school and other scary situations
  - ▶ Helping teens live gluten-free
- 

**A** dults needing or choosing to adopt a gluten-free lifestyle is one thing. Your kids *needing* to be gluten-free is an entirely different ballgame. Parents find it intensely worrying when something is wrong with their child and even though most doctors are now very aware of coeliac disease, the process of getting a clear diagnosis isn't always straightforward.

Maybe doctors see a lot of overanxious parents and have to constantly reassure them that bub is doing fine. But when you're the parent and believe you have plenty of evidence, over weeks or months, that your child isn't thriving — and you still get the same placatory treatment — you experience absolute anguish.

It took almost 12 months and numerous visits to doctors (including two paediatricians) for Sydney mother Rebecca to get a diagnosis for her little girl. By then toddler Charlotte's weight had dropped from the 75th percentile to below the 10th; she was listless, quiet and withdrawn, and had stopped crawling or walking. For Charlotte's mum, the relief at finally learning what was wrong and knowing something could be done about it was enormous, and overrode her feelings of concern for the future. (If you want to read the entire story, you can find it in Chapter 1.)

For most parents, however, a diagnosis is much more straightforward and the news that their child has a serious illness requiring a new diet for life is overwhelming.

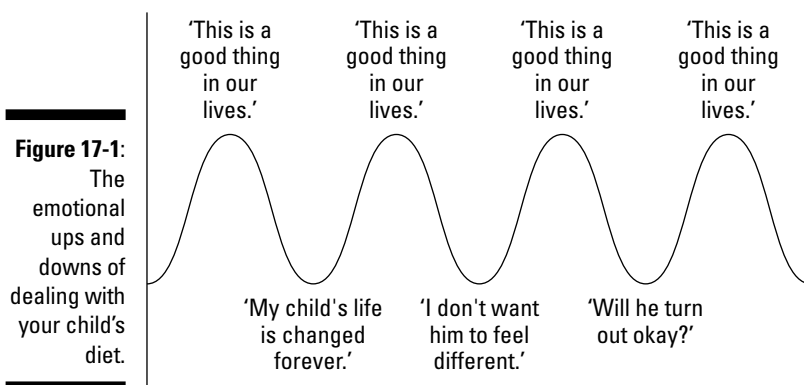
We've loaded this chapter with information to help you deal with your roller-coaster of emotions, the practicalities of having kids on the gluten-free diet and the psychological impact this may have on your family.

## *Forging through the Feelings*

Everything's different when your child's the one on the gluten-free diet: The way you feel, the way you communicate about the diet, the resentment you feel towards parents who don't have to make special arrangements just to feed their child, the preparations you make to go anywhere, the way you shop, the foods you buy, the school lunches.

If you're a parent — or someone who loves a child as a parent would — and your child has to adopt a strict, gluten-free diet, your emotions probably resemble a roller-coaster. You know: up one minute, crashing the next, as in Figure 17-1. It seems like just when you're feeling great about the diet, you find out the kids had a birthday party at school and your child was the only one without a cupcake. Your emotions go from flying high into free fall.

In addition, you have other nagging concerns about your child's future. See whether some of these strike a familiar chord.



## ***'My child's life is changed forever'***

Well, that's true. And forever seems like a really long time, doesn't it? What happened to those visions you had for your children — the perfect life, where things are easy and magical? Well, for one thing, that's not reality.

People forget to dream about the hardships their kids may face and how they'll handle the difficulties in their lives. Yet handling adversity is one of the most important skills they will ever learn. Furthermore, what you may initially see as difficulty may actually be a good thing in your child's life (and yours). See the 'Focusing on the good stuff' section for more information.

## ***'I don't want my child to feel different'***

You imagine your kids' lives as being smooth and painless, and part of that means fitting in. But kids are different in many ways and although we're not downplaying the importance of food and the part it plays in everything people do, your kid's differences are okay.

Kids are all different — some kids have blonde hair, others have red; some prefer skateboarding to soccer; some are in wheelchairs and others wear glasses. To pine away for her conformity is to send a signal that something about being different in this (gluten-free) way is *bad*. The last thing you want to do is send that message.

Parents worry that their kids won't fit in or won't be accepted because of their 'different' diet, but kids can fit in regardless of what they're eating. Fitting in has much more to do with their attitude than anything else.

## ***'Will he turn out okay?'***

No, he'll be better than okay, because he's healthy! But Danna agonised over this same thing when her son Tyler was first diagnosed. Oh, sure, friends and family told her, 'It'll be okay' the way friends and family do in tough situations. But she felt they were just placating her — after all, what did they know? They hadn't even heard of coeliac disease before she explained the diagnosis. And at the time she didn't care much what adults thought of the situation — she wanted desperately to hear it from a kid: 'I turned out just fine.'



## A kid's perspective

Thirteen-year-old Daniel is a Canberra coeliac kid. The coeliac aspect of his life is a far greater issue for Daniel's mum than it is for Daniel — not surprisingly, because she is the one who does the worrying about his health, chases around to different shops and supermarkets for supplies, cooks double meals when necessary, goes into bat for him when he needs to eat away from home and does a multitude of things a coeliac parent does to make life as normal as possible. But Daniel takes it all in his stride. After all, a teenager has far too many other really important things to be thinking about than diet. When he's out, Daniel sometimes feels angry because he misses out — like the time he went to a friend's party and his party bag didn't contain a single thing that he could eat. Or the time another boy called him 'gluten-boy' and 'coeliac boy' — that made him angry too. But he dealt with it. 'I told him not to say that and now he doesn't do it. I gave a talk to

my class about coeliac disease and things have been better since then,' he said. Sometimes he feels sad when he sees yummy food that he can't eat, but mostly he enjoys his mum's cooking and the gluten-free foods that are available now. Daniel's face shows his disgust as he relates how his mum once gave him carob-coated rice cakes to eat. 'I gave them away,' he says, grinning at his mum.

Daniel's friends — and their parents — are just great at providing gluten-free treats for him but things got tough on a music trip to New Zealand and on one particular day he ended up with only lemonade for lunch.

Daniel is good at explaining his needs to others and is learning all the tricks in reading labels. The biggest beef he has is the way people cook and serve a meal before they check with him whether it's okay. 'I just wish they'd ask first,' he says with a wry smile.

The truth is, being coeliac isn't a big deal for children, although it seems so for their parents. This may be because they live in the present and are not looking ahead, predicting what difficulties might arise in the future. They might look as far ahead as a school party and predict that they won't have much to eat because they've had that experience before, but they won't go much further than that. Or it may be that most children are naturally optimistic, at least into their mid-teens, and don't spend time thinking up worst-possible scenarios. If children are diagnosed young, they will have limited experience with food containing gluten so they're not aware of what they're missing. So rest easy, parents. Your kids will, in fact, be just fine. And so will you.

## *'This is harder for me than it is for her'*

If you love a child the way a parent does (even if you're not the actual parent, but are, nonetheless, as emotionally entwined as a parent is), you can comprehend the this-hurts-me-more-than-it-hurts-you Pain Amplification

Phenomenon (PAP). Seeing a bloody knee or a broken heart truly causes pain — palpable pain — for the grown-ups who love that child.

Those of you who are agonising over the fact that your child has been diagnosed with a condition that requires a strict, lifelong, gluten-free diet may have trouble accepting this idea at first, but it's true. Dealing with the diagnosis is harder for you than it is for your child. In most cases, kids are resilient. They accept what life dishes out and they make the best of it. Maybe grown-ups should take note.



If you don't believe that this diagnosis is harder on you than it is on your child, go up to a kid and ask what she thinks about in her life and take notes. She'll mention things like 'riding my bike', 'my best friend, Sarah', 'my birthday party', or any other number of answers. Diet is really not a priority — nor should it be.

## *Focusing on the good stuff*

Being gluten-free may be a good thing in your child's (and your) life for a lot of reasons. Make your own personal list to pull out when you find yourself feeling frustrated or depressed. Here are a few to get you started:

- ✓ **Your child has the key to better health.** Most people who have undiagnosed coeliac disease or gluten sensitivity never know what's wrong with them. They don't know that a dietary modification would fully restore their health, so they continue to eat the very foods that make them sick.
- ✓ **Your child will be less likely to develop associated conditions.** Your child has the advantage of having been diagnosed early and going gluten-free at an early age. That means your child's chances of developing associated conditions like osteoporosis or diabetes type 1 are lower than for someone diagnosed after years of being sick with coeliac disease (refer to Chapter 2).
- ✓ **Chances are, your child will be tolerant of others' sensitivities.** In fact, she may be more tolerant in general.
- ✓ **Your child may have the opportunity to help someone else who has gluten intolerance or coeliac disease.** Remember, if 500 kids attend your child's school, about eight of them may have coeliac disease (although they may not all be diagnosed yet) — and even more may have a form of gluten sensitivity. Your child's diagnosis may lead to greater awareness and other children finding the way to good health.
- ✓ **If your child has other dietary issues, like diabetes, controlling them will be easier on the gluten-free diet.** This is because your child is more aware of her diet and more in control of what she's eating. A low-GI (refer to Chapter 6) gluten-free diet improves both diabetes control and growth in coeliac children.

## I'm glad to be gluten-free because ...

Sometimes Danna talks to kids about their feelings about the gluten-free lifestyle. She usually asks them to finish this sentence: 'I'm glad to be gluten-free because ...'. They come up with the most inspirational stuff! Although most of the young ones talk about the yummy gluten-free brownies and biscuits they get to

eat, others are blatantly honest with responses like 'Because I don't have to eat Mum's gross casseroles anymore'. For fun, ask your gluten-free child to finish the sentence. You may be delighted with the response you get (unless you make really gross casseroles).

✓ **If your child has behavioural issues in addition to gluten intolerance or coeliac disease, chances are, they'll improve.** A child who's malnourished may find it harder to concentrate or persevere with school work and this can lead to poor behaviour in class. Some parents of children with ADD or ADHD say that behaviour improves on a gluten-free diet.

## Talking to Your Kids about Being Gluten-Free

Whether your child is 18 months or 18 years old, now's the time to talk, and the entire family needs to be included. How you do this depends on your style, your intra-family relationships and your child's ability to understand the intricacies of the subject matter. Talking to your children is step one in making sure they develop healthy attitudes and habits.

## Including the whole family

Even if your entire family doesn't choose to go gluten-free, having a gluten-free child in the house affects everyone. All the family members need to know about your child's condition, the diet and how to handle a variety of situations that may arise.

We're not suggesting that you organise an extended family reunion and include fifth cousins thrice removed. But you do need to include your immediate family in some type of discussion and continue to keep them informed over the years.

## Mixed feelings

So you're sitting down to talk about Tara's new gluten-free lifestyle and before your very eyes, her sister, Mild-Mannered-Missy, turns into Bordering-on-Ballistic-Barbie. What's going on? You did your best to frame everything in a positive way. Why is she freaking out?

Don't be surprised if you see this type of reaction from the siblings in the family. Their being scared, confused and even a tinge panicked is perfectly normal.

Siblings can be wondering all sorts of things: Is my sister sick? Is she going to die? Am I going to catch it? If she has to eat gross stuff, do I have to eat it too? (Correct answer is that *neither*

of you has to eat gross stuff!) How come she gets special attention and I don't? What if she gets better stuff than I do? Why did this happen to our family? And, most importantly, will my friends think I'm weird because my sister eats different food?

Being aware that these reactions are typical can help you respond in a sympathetic, understanding way. Address the feelings you think they may have, even if they're not able to articulate their anxieties, and encourage them to tell you why the situation scares them. Before you know it, everyone can relax and you'll have a more productive discussion.



Kids will be kids, and learning about the diet doesn't mean that brothers and sisters will always be kind and understanding about it. You may hear the typical taunting — you know, the 'I can eat this and you can't' type of stuff. Treat that teasing the same way you'd treat any other act that you don't approve of between siblings. Don't let your feelings of sadness that your child has this condition make you overreact to unkind gestures. Mean is mean and you should respond to meanness consistently.

## *Keeping the discussion upbeat*

Everyone you talk to about the gluten-free diet — and the conditions that require it — finds out how to feel about the gluten-free lifestyle from you. Is being gluten-free a bad thing in your life? A scary thing? Good thing? How you talk about it has a far greater impact than you may realise.

If you talk to family members in a dead serious, sombre way, you're going to scare your kid right out of her PJs and cast an impression of doom and gloom. This conversation should be upbeat, lighthearted and interactive — after all, becoming gluten-free is an okay thing in everyone's life. If you can't remember why, check the earlier sections in this chapter or look at some of the thoughts in Chapter 19.

## Little ears are listening

When you're talking to other grown-ups about your child's diet and condition, keep in mind that your child may be tuning in to every word you're saying. Sure, he may seem distracted with toys or friends, and he may in fact be too busy to hear what you're saying. But kids have ears, and they know how to use them (unless, of course, you're asking them to clean their room).

Are you apologising for the complexity of the diet? That can make your child feel like a victim.

Are you complaining about the restrictions? That may make him feel like a burden. Are you feeling sorry for yourself? He'll feel guilty for encumbering you with extra worries.

We're not asking for sainthood — if you're frustrated, exhausted or totally overwhelmed a big whinge to a trusted friend or a good long cry is therapeutic. Just make sure little ears aren't listening.

The most important person to stay upbeat around is your child. For the rest of her life, how she feels about being gluten-free depends on you and your attitudes. She doesn't know how to feel — this is all new to her (granted, it's new to you, too). Give her the advantage of starting off upbeat and optimistic. If she's like most kids, she'll take it from there and will provide amazing strength and inspiration.



Don't make a huge deal out of needing to be gluten-free. As huge as it may seem to you, chances are this isn't going to be a huge deal in your child's life . . . unless you make it one.

## *Explaining the new diet*

The level of detail you get into depends on your child's age, maturity and ability to understand this type of thing. In a nutshell, you want to give her the 'why' she's gluten-free (to feel better), the 'what' (what gluten-free means), and the 'what now' (what she can eat now that she's gluten-free), which is really most important, because that's what matters most to her.



Be patient and don't try to rush explaining everything. Understanding and accepting may not happen all at once, but will more likely be an ongoing process for all of you.

## *Focusing on the benefits*

When you start the discussion with your child, remember to focus on the benefits of the diet. Say something positive like, 'You're going to feel so much better now that you're going to be eating gluten-free foods!'

Kids think in specifics. Drive the point home to them with something they can personally relate to, like, ‘You know how much your tummy’s been hurting lately?’, or ‘You know how tired you get sometimes? You’ll feel much better now that you’re gluten-free.’ Specifics can help children understand exactly *what’s* going to be better on the gluten-free diet.



A few weeks into the lifestyle, point out to your kids how much better they feel, thanks to the yummy gluten-free foods they’re eating.

### ***Using big words and good explanations***

Don’t underestimate what your kids can grasp. When explaining the diet to your child, use the real words like gluten (spare them the carboxymethyl-cellulose, though, okay?). Even if your child has developmental delay or learning difficulties, use the proper terminology so that he can better communicate what he can and can’t eat to others.

Of course, he’s not going to understand everything at first (did *you?*). Give him examples he can understand — explain that gluten is in many of the foods he used to eat, like bread, biscuits and cakes and then quickly let him know that he can eat special biscuits, cakes, bread and other things instead.

### ***Offering gluten-free alternatives***

Always focusing on what your child *can* have is important. Any time you or your child asks about or points out a food that’s off-limits, try to point out something equally as scrumptious that’s gluten-free.

Of course, you’re not going to say, ‘You can’t have those biscuits anymore, Jordan, but look here! You can eat all the broccoli your little heart desires!’ That won’t win you any brownie points, nor will little Jordie be likely to buy into this new diet with much zest. Instead, you can accomplish three things at once here:

- ✓ Reward your child for grasping the diet
- ✓ Offer an alternative
- ✓ Reinforce that he can eat the alternative *because* it’s gluten-free

A couple of simple sentences do the trick: ‘You’re right, Jordan, you can’t eat those biscuits. But you *can* have these because they’re gluten-free.’



With young children, always be ready with a Food Swap. When your child has a treat she wants to eat but can’t because it has gluten, be ready to swap it for something equally as appealing — but of the gluten-free variety. Kids are relatively easily distracted, and if you have some delectable goodies waiting in the wings as a good swap, you’re sure to turn that frown upside down.

## *Reinforcing the idea that gluten makes your child feel yucky*

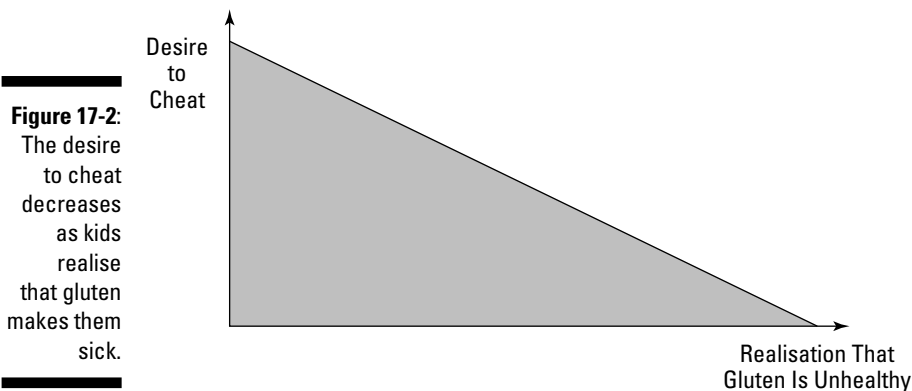
Help your child make the connection that gluten makes him feel bad. You should use this in a couple of situations — first, whenever you talk about gluten: ‘You’re right, you can’t eat that. It has gluten and gluten makes you feel yucky.’ This way, he knows to associate gluten with feeling bad — and that’s a very good thing. To state all this scientifically, the desire to cheat is inversely proportional to the realisation that gluten makes you sick, as shown in Figure 17-2. When you can chart something, it must be true, right?

The chances that your child will sneak gluten (or even want it, for that matter) are inversely proportional to the clarity of this association between gluten and not feeling well.

Chances are your child is trying really hard to stick to the diet. Make sure she doesn’t feel like she’s done something wrong by eating the wrong food. Point out that everyone makes mistakes and that gluten can be hidden in all sorts of things. It just means you have to be super careful in the future.



When kids who have coeliac disease get tummy aches, you may jump to the conclusion that they feel sick because they ate gluten and you find yourself agonising over what the culprit may have been. But remember, kids get tummy aches! They can be caused by all kinds of different things, but for the most part, they’re a normal part of growing up. Being diligent about the diet and, when you see a gluten reaction, figuring out what caused it, is important. But sometimes tummy aches and other types of gastrointestinal distress are just normal parts of being a kid. Your child needs to understand this too. He may learn to discriminate between the after-effects of eating gluten and other kinds of tummy pains or disturbances. The way people react to gluten varies widely between individuals so it’s really useful if a child — and the parents — can learn to tell the difference.



## *Handling your child's reaction*

You can't predict how your child will respond when you first start talking to her about her new gluten-free lifestyle. Her reaction depends on how you present the diet, her age, maturity, level of understanding, ability to express her feelings and, of course, her personality.

You probably realise that if she shows anger, hostility or other 'negative' emotions, you should be soothing, understanding and supportive — those parental responses are natural.

Don't think, though, that the initial 'upset' reaction is going to stick. It's most likely a fleeting response that evolves into a more positive outlook over time. Continue to remind her of the benefits she can look forward to now that her body is getting healthier because she's eating gluten-free foods.

Be prepared for little or no response. Appearing to be indifferent or apathetic isn't unusual for kids. Don't read too deeply and assume this reaction is a 'cover' for deep, disturbing thoughts — chances are, it's an honest response to a somewhat confusing issue or a reaction to something that truly doesn't seem to matter much at the time.

## *Helping your child talk to others about the diet*

Your child needs to talk to other people — both adults and other kids — about his gluten-free lifestyle. He'll be doing it for the rest of his life and there's no time to start like the present. Of course, the way he communicates the message depends on his age, personality, who he's talking to and how comfortable he is talking about this type of thing.

### *Explaining what they can and can't have*

Teach your child a phrase to use, even if she's too young to know what it means. Use something comprehensive that she can repeat to adults. For instance, 'I can't eat gluten. So I can't eat anything that comes from wheat, rye, barley, malt and oats.' This tells adults the essence of what they need to know.

Maybe that one's too cumbersome; but if your child can handle it, go with it. If not, find one that's more age-appropriate or one that suits your child's personality. The idea behind the memorised 'sound bite' is that it covers a lot of bases with a relatively easy couple of sentences.



Of course, the more children can add, the better. If your child can explain to people exactly what she can and can't eat, that's terrific — and if she can add the fact that gluten makes her feel bad, that's better yet. Before long, you and your child will work out what works best for her.

Teach your child to be open and conversant about being gluten-free. You want him to be confident to speak up about his needs, but understand that he can't expect everyone to accommodate his diet at all times. Informing people (especially those who may be involved in feeding him) is important and you can do this in a friendly, informative manner.



Some kids feel more comfortable simplifying their explanation to something people can understand more easily, like, 'I'm allergic to gluten', or even 'I'm allergic to wheat.' Even though that explanation may not be technically correct, sometimes it's easier. Just make sure your child knows the *real* facts so she doesn't get confused later on.

### ***Teaching kids to say 'No thanks'***

No matter how well your child communicates the fact that he can't eat gluten, some people will, usually with the best of intentions, offer him something with gluten. This can be really confusing to your child, especially if the sweet-slipping-someone happens to be a loved one who folds a biscuit into your child's hand and says with a conspiratorial just-between-you-and-me wink, 'Don't tell Mummy and Daddy'. Help! What's a gluten-free kid to do?

Explain to your child how and why this type of a situation may come up and, most importantly, how to handle it. Sometimes saying 'No thanks' or 'Thank you, but I can't eat that' is easy for a child. Other times, it's easier and more conciliatory just to accept the treat and not eat it.



Even if your friends and family won't be offering him gluten, someone out there will. You can spare your child disappointment and confusion if you help her deal with this type of situation before it comes up.

## How do gluten-free kids feel when others eat gluten around them?

Danna has asked dozens of kids this question: ‘Does it make you feel bad when other people eat gluten around you?’ Kids have occasionally paused or hesitated — maybe even offered a thoughtful consideration and a ‘sometimes’ here and there. But nearly all the kids she’s asked — including her own — have said *no*. It doesn’t bother them. They like their food and, if you do the diet right, they should! The food tastes good! But it broke her heart when her son was about four years old and he asked to *smell* the ‘real’ pizza. She asked him why

he wanted to do that — assuming, of course, that he was pining away for some, wishing he could eat it, and getting as close to consumption as he could without actually chewing. But he matter-of-factly answered, ‘I’m just curious’. When your child lets you know that he’s upset, acknowledge this, and don’t try to diminish his feelings. He’ll adjust better if he knows that people understand how he feels about missing out some of the time. But don’t let him grow into a martyr either. You understand and care, but it’s a fact of life.

## Deciding Whether the Whole Family Should Be Gluten-Free

Many people assume that because one child is gluten-free, the entire family should adopt the lifestyle. After all, wouldn’t it be cruel to be feasting on doughnuts while your gluten-free child is choking down rice cakes? Yes, it would.

But having the entire family go gluten-free isn’t always the right answer, either. You really have to weigh both sides of the issue and consider the practical and psychological issues. This section helps you weigh the pros and cons.

### *The pros*

Here are some advantages if everyone goes gluten-free:

- ✓ **You make only one version of each meal.** Rather than making a gluten-free version and a ‘regular’ version of some dishes at mealtime, you can make just one gluten-free version and be done with it.

- ✔ **You have no risk of contamination in the kitchen.** And no need to read labels every time you get something out of the cupboard.
- ✔ **Your child doesn't feel different.** It's okay to be different, but it's also nice to feel the same, to be part of the family.
- ✔ **The pantry is filled with 'safe' foods.** You don't have to worry that you or your child accidentally grabs a gluten-laden snack, because you don't have any.
- ✔ **Your child isn't tempted to cheat.** At least not at home.

All that sounds good, doesn't it? At first glance, that would be the simplest way to go. But you have many 'cons' to consider, and may decide the disadvantages of having the entire family go gluten-free outweigh the advantages.

## *The cons*

Here are a few of the disadvantages of everyone going gluten-free:

- ✔ **A gluten-free world isn't reality.** Your child needs to understand that the rest of the world eats gluten. They're not doing it to make her feel bad or to ostracise her; no malicious or evil intentions are involved. What better environment to learn that important lesson than in a loving, supportive home?
- ✔ **Your child doesn't find out how to make food choices.** Knowing how to choose the right foods is important for your child. If the pantry's free of 'no-nos' she doesn't need to decide. She may become complacent about mindlessly grabbing food without giving a thought to whether it's gluten-free.
- ✔ **Other family members may become resentful.** Brothers and sisters — even parents — can be a little bitter about having to give up ordinary bread and biscuits if they don't have a health condition that requires it. Mumbles and grumbles at the dinner table can make a coeliac child feel guilty about depriving the others.
- ✔ **Your child won't learn to resist the temptation to cheat.** Teaching your child to resist temptation (especially because gluten is practically everywhere) is better than never tempting him.
- ✔ **You'll spend a bundle.** Some families have to manage this cost because a parent and three or four children are gluten-free, but it adds considerably to the family budget. Best to save the \$6 loaf of bread for your coeliac child. (Families — in fact all coeliacs — don't get financial assistance in Australia as they do in New Zealand and some other countries, despite frequent lobbying by Coeliac Australia.)

## *Middle ground*

Sometimes a compromise is the best solution. See whether these ideas work for your family:

- ✓ **Make most meals gluten-free.** It's pretty simple to make the majority of your meals gluten-free and still please everyone without using up your worth-their-weight-in-gold gluten-free items. This can make cooking and preparation easier and everyone will be able to enjoy the same meals.
- ✓ **Buy gluten-free condiments and staples.** Using gluten-free salad dressings, soy sauce and other staple or condiment-type items makes life a lot easier on you — and you don't have to make separate stir-fries just because one of them has the gluten-containing kind of soy sauce on it. Remind your child from time to time that not all mayonnaise or soy sauce is gluten-free so your child doesn't assume this when eating elsewhere.
- ✓ **Enjoy the delicious gluten-free baked goods.** Many of the mixes these days for biscuits, cakes, pancakes and other baked goods are almost as good as the real deal. They're a little more expensive, maybe, but cost aside, you really have no reason to make separate batches. Make one batch of the gluten-free kind and let the entire family enjoy.

## *Giving Your Child Control of the Diet*

From an early age your child needs to make decisions about what she can and can't eat and how important it is not to cheat, no matter how tempted she is.

From a psychological standpoint, it's important that the gluten-free diet doesn't take front and centre stage in your child's life — and that means she should be thinking of other things most of the time. But when it comes time to eat, she needs to realise how important it is that she makes good choices. Food is something she needs to pay close attention to.



A wise proverb says, 'Give a man a fish and you feed him for a day. Teach him to fish and you feed him for a lifetime.' Teach your kids to choose foods they can eat for a lifetime. Giving your child control of the diet also creates bonuses for everyone:

- ✓ **Your child has confidence.** He knows that even if you're not there, he's able to eat safely because he can make healthy food choices.

- ✔ **You can relax.** You know that even if you're not there, your child is prepared to make good food choices. And if you are there, you don't have to be doing all the decision-making.
- ✔ **Your child is learning the importance of healthy eating.** How many kids read food labels or give even a first thought (much less a second) to what they're putting in their mouths? Your child becomes conscious of nutrition at an early age.

## *Working together to make good choices*

When we suggest giving your child control, we're not suggesting you let her make all the decisions by herself — like everything else in life, children need a little guidance, especially at first. You can do many things together to help kids make good food choices:

- ✔ **Read labels together.** Even if your child is too young to read, pretend. Hold the ingredients label where you can both see it and go through the ingredients out loud, one by one (just like when you're tired and reading them bedtime stories, you can skip the superfluous stuff). Point to the words and when you come to pertinent ones like *wheat*, remind them, 'No. This one has gluten in it.' And then, because you're well conditioned to quickly point to the alternative, follow up with, 'Let's try *this* one' and grab something you know is gluten-free.
- ✔ **Make a game out of it.** When you're reading labels or talking about foods, see who can decide which one is gluten-free (or not) first. (Note to all those competitive types: let them win more than you.)
- ✔ **Let your child plan the menu from time to time.** Not only does this give him a chance to work out what's gluten-free and what isn't, but you also know he'll actually eat everything he's served. So what if his menu consists of rice, chips, chocolate and gluten-free macaroni and cheese? Go with it. Remember, for that meal at least, he's in control.
- ✔ **Let your child pack her lunch.** Put some basic rules in place so she won't go off to school with six packets of chips.
- ✔ **Let your child cook.** Kids *love* to cook, even though it usually ends up being far more work than if they don't help. Figuring out how to cook at an early age is important for all kids, especially for those who will be requiring some specially prepared foods for the rest of their lives.

## *Trusting kids when you're not there*

Letting g-g-g-g-g is one of the hardest things parents ever do; yet it's your job as a parent. Every day you prepare your children for life so you can eventually set them free. If you do your job well, you can rest easy knowing they have all the tools they need to make decisions that lead to safe, happy, healthy lives. You don't have much of a problem giving them control of certain things — going to the toilet by themselves, washing their hands and using the DVD player. But when it comes to choosing foods — and those foods could make them really sick — trusting that they'll make safe choices is hard!

You'll know when the time is right and when you can actually relax knowing they're making safe food choices. It'll most likely be way before you expect it and maybe way before *you're* ready.



Your children are going to make mistakes. Occasional mistakes won't kill or permanently harm them and, with any luck, it'll cause some discomfort so they realise the importance of being more attentive.

## *Hitting the Road with the Gluten-Free Gang*

Living life in a bubble is for helium molecules. Your child's life shouldn't be restricted just because he's on a restricted diet! Really, getting out and about with gluten-free kids isn't much different from the way adults do it: You still follow the 'Golden Rules of Going Out' (refer to Chapter 16); tips for travel are the same and ordering at restaurants isn't much different, except you may be ordering from a kids' menu instead of an adult one. We do have a few suggestions that are specific to getting out with gluten-free kids:

- ✓ **Let your child order for herself.** At first this may be cumbersome, because she's likely to order chicken nuggets or spaghetti, assuming it's the gluten-free kind she eats at home. Don't worry about taking a long time or bothering the waitress. Learning to order at a restaurant is really important for your child and actually doing it is an important part of the process.

- ✓ **Don't be shy.** Some kids are mortified when adults 'make a scene'. All an innocent parent has to do is say, 'Could I ask you about this dish' and the eyes start rolling and the 'Oh boy, here she goes' comments start spewing forth. We have, our children tell us, scarred them for life. Ignore your kids and ask anyway. If they won't, you need to.
- ✓ **Consider bringing dessert for your child.** You can't assume the desserts at a restaurant are gluten-free, so just in case they don't have any, either bring your own or go somewhere else for dessert.

## *Leaving Your Gluten-Free Kid in the Care of Others*

Leaving your kids with other people is scary enough, even when they don't have dietary limitations that can make them sick. But trusting someone else to safely feed your gluten-free child? Help!

### *Trusting your kids with friends, family and babysitters*

The most important thing you can do to ensure your children will be in good hands from a gluten-free standpoint is to educate the people caring for them.

You may want to look at Chapter 16 to find out how to talk with others and how to assess whether they really 'get it'. If you suspect they don't fully understand the diet or its importance, work harder to make sure they do or find a new carer. Make a clear distinction between coeliac disease and the allergic conditions that cause a severe, sometimes life-threatening reaction (anaphylactic shock). While you want others to take the situation seriously, you also want to avoid them becoming paranoid about ever having your child in their house.



When you leave your child in someone else's care, try to bring or leave prepared food as often as you can and clearly mark on containers that the food is gluten-free. That prevents any mix-up between your child's food and someone else's.

## ***Sending your child to school***

Because they're away at school for several hours at a time, day after day, sending gluten-free children to school is one of the biggest challenges you face. Here are some tips:

- ✓ **Educate the teachers, first-aid staff, canteen manager and principal.** Not only will the staff be better prepared to deal with your child's diet but, chances are, they also have other kids at the school on a gluten-free diet, and those kids will benefit too.
  - ✓ **Give the teacher a stash of treats for your child.** Nothing's worse than finding out at the end of the day that it was Addie's birthday and your son ate nothing while the other kids smeared cupcakes all over their faces. Bring a container of biscuits or lollies that the teacher can store in a special place — even gluten free cupcakes that can be stored in the staff room freezer — for your child in case of a surprise party or an event that involves treats.
  - ✓ **Be aware of craft time.** Play-Doh and homemade playdough made using standard flour has gluten in it and although kids aren't *supposed* to be eating it, most can't resist having a nibble or two. Other crafts involve gluten-containing cereals and those activities often become a matter of 'one for the necklace, one for me ... one for the necklace, one for me'. Remind the teacher about this from time to time. Also let the teacher know gluten-free alternatives are available — for example, making your own gluten-free playdough isn't hard and, if your child is a nibbler when doing craft, gluten-free pasta shapes can also be used. Offer to donate these items if the teacher seems reluctant.
  - ✓ **Work with the canteen staff.** Buying lunch even once a week may be a big deal to your child. Something about standing in that queue is cool. Most canteen staff or parents are willing to work with you to find ways your child can eat at least one meal each week. You can take in a loaf of carefully labelled frozen gluten-free bread or mini-pizzas and ask staff to use these for your child's lunch. Include a cardboard reminder note about avoiding contamination in with the bread.
- Volunteering at the school canteen regularly lets you see how the system works and where possible changes or alternatives can be proposed. This can help alleviate the stress about your child buying food at the canteen and also gives an indication that you support the work done.
- ✓ **Beware of the eating exchange.** Swapping food in school lunches is very serious business. Kids get right down to it, swapping egg salad for cheese sandwiches or bananas for biscuits. Tell your child it's not safe to swap — even if a bigger child tells you it's okay for you to eat. Swapping food isn't allowed in most schools — ask your child's teacher to talk about it with the class from time to time, explaining in general that some of their food isn't safe for other children. Kids are far more likely to cooperate if given a reason for the rule.





## Party time!

Parties are supposed to be all about fun! But to parents, parties sometimes seem like they're all about food. These days children's parties are often held out of the home at fast-food outlets or sporting venues. For a mere \$15 per child, parents can host a party that lasts all of about an hour and stuffs the kids with soft drinks, junk food and cake. So do you let party time turn into pouty time? No way. Try some of these ideas:

- ✓ **Make sure your child eats before she goes.** If she's full, she won't be thinking about food and it won't be as big a deal.
- ✓ **If you know the only food served will have gluten, bring your own.** If possible, bring something close to what they're serving — gluten-free pizza, for instance (be careful — the ovens at pizza places blow flour all around, so cover it carefully if you're going to ask them to warm it). Refer to Chapter 16 for information about

fast-food places that provide gluten-free options.

- ✓ **If the party is at a restaurant that may have gluten-free food available, talk to the host about ordering something different.** This isn't the least bit rude and your host will probably be happy to help you with the details.
- ✓ **If it's your child's party, serve gluten-free foods.** This may sound like a no-brainer, but it's not. *Don't*, however, try to serve your very first attempt at gluten-free pizza or something else that may cause that one kid (you know which one I'm talking about) to spit it two metres and yell, 'This is gross!' Use your tried and true recipes that family members have given the nod to. Or do some practice runs with feedback from the family and friends to get your technique up to the mark.



Coeliac Australia provides new members with the *Kids' Handbook*, which is full of great suggestions. They also organise Christmas parties and other functions for children.

## Gearing up for school camps

Feeding time at the zoo has nothing on mealtimes at school camp: Put 40 or 60 or 120 over-excited kids in a large dining hall, ask them to queue up with their plates as kitchen staff dollop out meat and veggies, or get monitors to serve the food. Staff have little time or scope to cater for individual choice, and shy or uncertain coeliac kids find it really hard to speak up to get what they need. Many teenagers would sooner have a tooth pulled than draw attention to themselves, or stand out in any way. A frazzled teacher who isn't aware of the need for gluten-free meals may order a child back in line, or dismiss them with a dogmatic, 'Not now, Maya. I'll talk to you later'.

You're getting the idea? School camps are tricky and careful preparation is essential. Finding out as much as possible about the camp prior to your child attending can give you and your child peace of mind. Make an appointment before the camp with your child's teacher, to explain the seriousness of the situation. Ask the teacher who will be responsible for overseeing your child's special diet and who she should talk to at mealtimes to find out what has been prepared for her — will it be a member of the kitchen staff, a teacher or a parent assistant? Go through the procedure with your child so she knows what has been arranged. Make one of the teachers or a parent assistant your ally in this, so someone is looking out for your child during the feeding frenzy.

Ask the teacher or camp organiser to find out from the camping venue what's on the menu, or make your own enquiries. When you know what's available in the way of gluten-free bread, pasta, pizza bases, biscuits and so on, you can then let the school know what extras you will provide. Pack a few gluten-free items for the teacher to hold onto — for example, a pack of gluten-free biscuits, loaf of bread and a box of cereal — and make sure your child has plenty of her favourite snacks, so she won't feel deprived if she has to miss out on other things.



Fact sheets for school camps are available for camp organisers from your state branch of Coeliac Australia. These sheets include information about gluten and where it's found, catering for those on a gluten-free diet, a few kid-and-camp-friendly menu suggestions and recipes, and details of a few gluten-free suppliers in each state.

## *Guiding Your Gluten-Free Teens*

You can't push a teen any more than you can push a rope. By the time your kids are teenagers, the best you can do is hope that you've laid a good foundation and are still able to guide them in the direction you think they should go.

If your teen is newly diagnosed, the teen years can be a scary time for him. He's already going through many changes, and adopting a gluten-free lifestyle is one change that he may think will cast him way beyond being different and into the realm of being downright freaky.

If your teen has been diagnosed, even if that diagnosis happened years ago, you may see her evolve from one who was very accepting and easygoing about the diet into one who fights it a little and may even cheat from time to time.

All these responses are normal, if *any* definition of the word ‘normal’ applies to teenagers. You should handle these reactions with patience, understanding and communication on both sides.

## *Noticing changing symptoms*

Now you see ‘em, now you don’t; sometimes kids’ symptoms seem to do a disappearing act during their teenage years. For some, the symptoms do go away — at least temporarily. At this point, they may be tempted to devour a pizza. They think that because they don’t feel symptoms, they’ll be okay.

Not true! In fact, the whole thing is just an illusion. Although your kids may not *feel* the effects, the gluten can still cause damage.

For others, the symptoms evolve into those features more characteristic in adults — headaches, fatigue and depression, for example. These teens, too, sometimes think their symptoms have disappeared, because what they used to associate with eating gluten — diarrhoea, for instance — is no longer their typical reaction. They may not realise the headaches they get, or other symptoms, are also signs of their gluten intolerance.

## *Understanding why teens may cheat on the diet*

We cover the topic of cheating and being tempted to cheat on the gluten-free diet in Chapter 18. But teens are a different animal and they sometimes cheat or want to cheat for different reasons. By the time kids become teens, parents really can’t stop them from putting something in their mouths.

Teens may want to eat gluten because of:

- ✓ **Peer pressure:** This is the time when peer pressure is at its peak. Even if their friends aren’t pushing them to eat gluten (they don’t usually do that), your teen may just *want* to be like everyone else and be tempted to cheat on the diet.

Kids love to proclaim how they want to be unique, but they really don’t want to be different, and this diet may make them feel different. Don’t be surprised if your teen orders a burger with a bun just to be like his friends.



- ✓ **Rebellion:** Your teen may be tempted to eat gluten as a way of being rebellious. Even if she doesn't tell you about the incident, she may subconsciously be exerting her control.
- ✓ **Curiosity:** A child who's curious about what gluten tastes like may actually have more restraint than a curious teen. Even if your teen's been diligent about following the diet for years, he's most likely to succumb in the teenage years.
- ✓ **Weight control:** Some teens figure out that if they eat gluten, they may not be absorbing all the available kilojoules and cheat on the diet to lose weight.



Watch for signs of eating disorders in your kids. Sometimes they become obsessed with their restrictions and take them too far — or they use gluten as a means of losing weight. Address this issue immediately, because eating disorders are extremely serious issues.

So what do you do about your tempted teen? The best you can do is talk calmly. Remind her that even if she doesn't *feel* the effects of gluten, it's still doing tremendous harm to her body.

## *Helping teens after they move out*

One of the hardest things for teens to handle, especially if they're new to the gluten-free lifestyle, is moving out. Many young people move into share-houses or flats where life is so exciting that food becomes something that is only thought about when hunger pangs start to bite. The fridge in your average share-house is usually inhabited by little more than dangerously out-dated milk, pizza crusts and unidentifiable blobs of furry goo in various stages of decomposition. Even if parents have prepared their teen with basic cooking skills and the need to keep a regular stock of healthy supplies, things can go awry as ravenous flatmates raid the stash or devour leftovers before you can say, 'Nooooooooooooooooo!'

Talk to your teenager about ways of educating flatmates about gluten and why it's important not to eat someone else's gluten-free supplies. If flatmates are supportive, many of the shared meals could be made gluten-free. Often students struggle financially and the added cost of gluten-free products puts extra strain on an already stretched budget. We've included some easy-to-prepare recipes in Part III that will help young cooks with small budgets and little time for the kitchen.

If your child lives on campus and has to eat in dining halls, encourage him to contact the dining services office or the food service manager to discuss his dietary needs. He may need to provide his own gluten-free soy sauce, for instance, or otherwise modify what's served. In colleges where students do their own catering, lock-up cupboards and fridges are provided.



An electric rice-cooker is a great idea for a student as almost anything can be chopped up and tossed into a bowl of rice as it's cooking. Suggestions for meals in the microwave will appeal too — they're quick and easy to prepare.

Food packs are sometimes the next-best thing to being there. Think about sending some gluten-free goodies in time for exams, or just to say, 'I love you'.

## Chapter 18

# Beating the Blues: Overcoming Emotional Obstacles

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### *In This Chapter*

- ▶ Identifying negative feelings
  - ▶ Confronting denial
  - ▶ Dealing with mistakes
  - ▶ Looking at the big picture
  - ▶ Staying on track
- 

**L**ook as hard as you like, but you won't find too many best-sellers at the bookshop with titles like *How to Cope with Extreme Good Fortune*. No, you really need help only when you're facing challenges. And some people feel that a gluten-free diet is one big doozy of a challenge. Some of that has to do with why they're going gluten-free in the first place.

You may have decided yourself to go on a gluten-free diet — you think it looks like a really healthy diet, a lot of people are trying it, you think it might be fun, or it may improve a problem with your health — and because you've made that choice yourself, you're really keen to try it all out. If you find it too hard or you can't always get gluten-free food, it doesn't matter too much if you break the diet from time to time, or even give it up after a few weeks. If, on the other hand, you've been diagnosed with wheat or gluten intolerance and advised to avoid or cut down on wheat or gluten, the choice isn't yours entirely and you may feel a bit pressured. But the sky won't fall in if you eat a bit when you have nothing gluten-free around, because occasional small amounts of a problem food may not cause symptoms for people with food intolerance.

It's an entirely different kettle of fish when you're diagnosed with coeliac disease or dermatitis herpetiformis. You're told to remove gluten entirely from your diet, for the rest of your life. No two ways about it. No cheating. In this case, you don't get a choice at all.

No prizes for guessing who's going to have the hardest time dealing with this new diet. Everyone likes the freedom to choose how to live their lives.



If your doctor has said you must totally remove gluten from your diet, the key thing to remember is this: Deal with it; don't dwell on it. Your initial reactions to this new diet and the jumble of emotions you're feeling are perfectly normal. The fact is, it's a real bummer! Even though you know that your health will be vastly improved on a strict gluten-free diet, you can't honestly say that you rejoice in the fact that you'll never, ever sink your teeth into a hunk of crusty, flour-dusted Italian bread, a crisp croissant, or whatever gluten-loaded treat you're dying for. But accepting that something is a bummer doesn't mean making yourself miserable by dwelling on the fact. Feeling miserable and letting it ruin your life may get you a bit of sympathy for a little while, but it won't change the reality that you need to avoid gluten to stay healthy. Allow yourself to experience the tough emotions, and then move on.

In this chapter, we discuss many different ways you can break out of the negativity and see things in a more positive light. Yes, for some people this is a difficult transition in life ... but, ultimately, you'll be better for it.

## *Recognising Common Emotional Struggles*

Some people just take the whole change to gluten-free in their stride with only a slight change of pace while they make adjustments to their diets and routines. Others really struggle to cope.

The reasons living gluten-free can be difficult from an emotional standpoint are vast:

- ✓ **Social activities revolve around food.** Now, because you don't eat gluten, you may feel isolated, or you may be afraid to participate in these social functions because you think you won't be able to eat anything. (If you're struggling with eating away from home, check out Chapter 16.)
- ✓ **People you love don't get it.** In Chapter 16, we talk about how to discuss the gluten-free diet with others. But sometimes, no matter how much you say or don't say, some people, even good mates, just don't get it.
- ✓ **People may think you're weird.** When you try to explain this to some people, or when they watch you stumble through one of your first experiences ordering at a restaurant, they may think you're outlandishly high-maintenance, that you're picky, that you have an eating disorder, or that you're just plain weird.

- ✓ **They call it ‘comfort food’ for a reason.** Weight-management lectures aside, for better or for worse, many people find eating to be a stress-reliever. When your food options are limited, that can add to your stress.
- ✓ **Some people find it hard to cope with change of any type.** For those people, something that involves changing a significant part of their life can be really distressing.
- ✓ **You’re losing control in your life.** You’re hereby ‘sentenced’ to a life of dietary restrictions. Wow. How’s that for taking control away? You’ve been choosing your own favourite foods ever since you were a child, and now someone’s going to tell you what you can and can’t eat? It’s tough.
- ✓ **It seems so permanent.** That’s because it is. And that doesn’t help someone who’s feeling burdened by these new restrictions.
- ✓ **You feel like you’re on an island.** If you do, you’d better hope it’s a big island, because millions of people are going gluten-free. The gluten-free lifestyle seems isolating to some people; they even feel ostracised. If you’re feeling like that, read on, because this part of the book should help you realise that you have control over those feelings and that you don’t have to be isolated or feel like you’re alone in this.

In this section, we talk about some of the common emotions people experience when they hear they have to go gluten-free. You won’t experience them all, because everyone is different.

## *Sheer shock and panic*

If you’ve ever seen a teenage girl who can’t find her mobile, you’ve seen panic. For some people, changing to a gluten-free diet also causes shock and panic.

On one hand, it all seems so sudden. You’re in the doctor’s surgery talking about your bowel movements or lack thereof, and the next thing you know, you’re branded with a condition you’ve probably never heard of that will change the way you eat for the rest of your life. Yet in some ways, it’s not sudden at all. You’ve probably been having health issues for years. And now it has a name. And a treatment. Both of which can stun you.

You’re numb — you’re in shock. Have you ever had fingers that were so cold they were nearly frozen? But when they began to thaw, they throbbed and felt like you’d just run them through a shredder. That’s when the reality of the words ‘diet for life’ begins to sink in and you start to panic. What will you eat? How will you do it? Where will you find special foods? Can you do it?



Rest assured that these feelings are normal and they do pass. Over time you'll work out what you can eat and your panic will subside as you become more comfortable with the diet. The learning curve is steeper for some than others, but you *will* discover the process and the panic will wear off.

## *Anger and frustration*

The shock and panic have subsided (refer to preceding section), and you're beginning to feel more comfortable with what you can and can't eat. But something's getting at you. You realise you're miffed. Peeved. Furious and agonisingly frustrated!

It doesn't matter who or what you're mad at — some people in this situation are mad at their parents for giving them a 'defective' gene; others are mad at themselves for passing the gene on to their kids; some are mad at their partner for not being more understanding; most are mad at the major cereal manufacturers who feel it's a Universal Cereal Manufacturer's Law that they must put malt flavouring in every cereal they make; a few take it out on God for 'thinking up' this crazy condition in the first place.

The why-me-I-haven't-done-anything-to-deserve-this syndrome kicks in and you look around at the rest of the human race and feel victimised.

Anger is a healthy emotion and learning to deal with it is one of the most valuable lessons you can learn in life. Taking your anger out on those closest to you is tempting, especially if they're adding to the frustration by being less than understanding about your new diet. But don't lash out, especially at the people closest to you, because they're not to blame and they can be immensely supportive when you need it most. Feelings of anger are natural, but you won't change a thing by staying angry. In fact, life just isn't fair no matter how much we think it ought to be. It's not fair when tiny babies get leukaemia. It's not fair when tsunamis wipe out your home, your town and your entire family. You'll feel a whole lot better when you accept the situation and recognise that it could be far worse.

## *Grief and despair*

Are you grieving? Do you feel like you've lost your best friend? In a way, you may have. Food, your control over what you eat, and even the simple act of putting food into your mouth can soothe you and bring you comfort. When you're forced to give up your favourite foods (if they weren't your favourites

before, they will be after you give them up), the change can make you feel sad, depressed and quite isolated.

If your child is going gluten-free, those feelings of grief can magnify. You dream that your children's lives are carefree and ideal; having to deal with dietary restrictions that prevent them from eating what other kids eat isn't usually part of your plan.

Some people reach a point of desperation or despair. They find the diet to be cumbersome and confusing and they keep making mistakes. Then they start to think if they can't do this right, they may as well not do it at all and they give up. Grief and despair are normal emotions, but don't give in to them. You'll get over your feelings of sadness and loneliness, and this lifestyle doesn't have to be in the least bit isolating or depriving. As for doing it right, give it your very best effort — truly 100 per cent — and you'll get it. Dealing with a mistake from time to time is better than giving up and not trying at all.

## *Loss and deprivation*

You may feel loss in several different ways when your doctor tells you that you have to go gluten-free. You may lose your favourite foods — and what about the social situations that seem to go hand-in-hand with them? You miss pizza and beer during Friday night football, or Grandma's famous chocolate chip biscuits that everyone dives for before they remember to hug Grandma. Not to mention that great staple of the Aussie diet, the humble meat pie. (Okay, we'll stop with the reminders now.)

Many of your favourite foods, at least in the form you know them, are a thing of the past. At first the social situations may not seem the same without them — and they aren't just the same. They're the same but different and that's okay. Remember when you attend these events that they're not really about the food — they're about the socialising. Also remember to take along foods that you love — and follow the golden rules of going out gluten-free that we cover in Chapter 16.

Another kind of loss people feel is a loss of convenience. These days, many foods are prewashed, precut, precooked, prepackaged, pre-resealed, and practically pre-eaten and pre-metabolised into tummy fat before you even get them home from the shops. Convenience foods come as a complete snack or meal, in various combinations to please any palate. Yes, these foods are convenient — and sometimes, when you pluck them from the aisles of the produce section, they're even good for you and gluten-free. But many of them, for you, are a thing of the past. So for most people, it's true. You

do lose that convenience. You've also lost a bit of spontaneity. You can't suddenly decide to go off somewhere for the day or weekend, or change your plans without thinking, What will I eat? or What food will I take? Okay, so giving up gluten isn't as convenient — and you miss your old faves. We'll give you that — you can feel a sense of loss. But look what you've gained. Your health! The gluten-free diet is your key to better health, and that's priceless.

## *Sadness and depression*

Occasionally, people get so overwhelmed with the whole concept of their medical condition and the gluten-free diet that they feel an impending doom and they experience depression to one degree or another.

After you're on a gluten-free diet, accidentally — or intentionally — eating gluten can sometimes make you feel depressed. Some people before they're diagnosed (and some even afterwards) are accused of 'making up' their problems, or they're told the symptoms are all in their head. The accusations can be so hurtful and frustrating that they cause the person to go into a state of depression.

And you also feel, of course, the restrictions, grief, sense of loss, anger and other emotions we discuss in this chapter. All of those can lead to depression.

Unfortunately, depression caused by illness can create a vicious cycle. The physical symptoms lead to suffering and depression, and then the depression makes the physical symptoms worse. If you're feeling depressed, make sure your diet is 100 per cent gluten-free so you know that what you're feeling isn't a symptom of gluten ingestion.



Depression is now recognised as a serious illness and the stigma previously attached to it is rapidly disappearing. It is something that can affect anyone. Don't be ashamed or embarrassed about seeking help from a good counsellor. Counselling and cognitive behaviour therapy are much easier to get these days. Local community health centres often have counsellors and in some cases you can claim for a series of counselling sessions through Medicare. Your GP can help with a list of good practitioners.



If you feel your case of the blues isn't serious and you want to try to work it out on your own, see whether these activities help:

- ✓ **Exercising:** When you exercise, your brain produces endorphins and those chemicals create a natural high. Exercise also helps you get rid of stress hormones that build up in the body and wreak all sorts of physical and emotional havoc.

- ✓ **Eating well:** And that means, besides eating a healthy diet, staying strict about your gluten-free diet. Eating gluten exacerbates the physical and mental symptoms you may experience and robs you of the important nutrients that are supposed to energise you and make you feel good. Cut down on the high-glycaemic-index foods we talk about in Chapter 6, because those mess with your blood-sugar levels and can affect your moods.
- ✓ **Avoiding alcohol:** Alcohol is bad news for people suffering from depression. Alcohol is a depressant so, by definition, it brings you down — it also interrupts your sleep patterns, which are important for feeling your best.
- ✓ **Getting a balance in life:** With all the pressures on people these days, it's hard to make time to relax. But relaxation is important to maintaining your mental health. Sometimes you may forget to take care of yourself, but doing so is crucial — otherwise, you'll be no help to anyone.
- ✓ **Doing something nice for others:** You can find this next suggestion under our Second Law of Happiness: The amount of happiness you feel is directly proportional to the happiness you bring to others. Seriously, have you ever been down and done something nice for someone? Not feeling better when you make someone's day is practically impossible.
- ✓ **Doing something nice for yourself:** Be nice to yourself — keep favourite treats in the cupboard, just for you. You don't have to avoid gluten because you've been a bad person. It's not your fault, so don't punish yourself further by feeling you have to endure a life of deprivation at all times. Give yourself other treats, too, not just the edible ones. If you feel you have lost out on some of the cream buns of life, find something else you can use or do that gives you particular pleasure. Be nice to yourself. You're special.

## *Dealing with Denial*

It walks like a duck. It quacks like a duck. It even lays duck eggs. But you'd like to believe it's a golden retriever. Your mind spins into triple somersaults to explain away the reality that you don't want to accept. Denial comes in all sizes and shapes — some types affect you, other types affect those around you.

### *When you're the one in denial*

When you hear you have to give up gluten because you have coeliac disease, deciding to run, not walk, to the nearest sandpit to start digging a hole for

your head is quite common. Denial is a big problem for some people. This section covers a few phases of denial, starting with the most immediate.

### ***Right off the bat***

For some people the denials start as soon as the idea of gluten is mentioned.

**Your doctor:** You have coeliac disease, and you need to eliminate all gluten from your diet beginning immediately.

**You:** Gluten? You mean like honey or sugar or something?

**Your doctor:** No, I mean bread, cakes, beer.

**You:** Oh, I don't think so. Surely bread can't hurt me?

Your initial reaction is a common one: I can't have that condition; I've never even heard of it; I'm too fat to have that; I'm too old to have it; I'm too (insert adjective that will support your denial) to have that. After all, bread is the staff of life, and humans have been eating it for centuries.

You can deny until the cows come home (where *were* they, anyway?), but that doesn't help your health at all. What does help is getting on track as fast as you can, because you have improved health to look forward to.

### ***Denial down the road***

Another type of denial settles in after you've been gluten-free for a while and you're feeling great. In fact, you feel so good that you start to think maybe nothing was really wrong with you, and you can't really remember ever feeling all that bad.

Of course, this is about the time the reality of doing this for the rest of your life starts to set in and you're tempted to cheat — but it's not cheating if you don't really need to be gluten-free now, is it? So begins the battle in your brain, where good and evil don't see eye to eye.

The good half of your brain is telling you, 'Mmmmm, this is the yummiest gluten-free cracker I've ever had!' But the demon-in-denial side is saying, 'Look, I feel fine. I must have been going through a bad patch. Probably had nothing to do with gluten. One little slice of pizza won't hurt.' Step away from the pizza box. This is a period of ambivalence, in which you're hoping beyond hope that you don't really have to give up gluten and are 'proving' it to yourself by ignoring red flags (and your conscience).

### ***Acceptance***

The biggest problem with denial is that it justifies eating gluten. If you have this epiphany, 'realising' that you don't need to be gluten-free, it's tempting to run, not walk, to the nearest bakery.

Resist the temptation. If you've been gluten-free for a while, then yes, you feel great, but that's because of the diet, not in spite of it. The danger in testing your little theory is that you may not have any immediate reaction when you do and then you're likely to jump to the obvious (by which we mean 'desired') conclusion that you never needed to eliminate gluten in the first place.

If you're still not sure that you really should be gluten-free, here are some steps you can take that may clarify things for you:

- ✓ **Get properly tested if this hasn't been done already.** It's really hard to stay on a restricted diet if you seriously doubt that you need to. Sort out the issue once and for all, have a biopsy and be certain. It's nowhere near as unpleasant as you think. These days you have a light anaesthetic and it's all over before you've stopped counting to ten. Once you have clear evidence that your gut is being damaged on a daily basis, dealing with that little voice whispering 'just this time' or 'a little bit won't hurt' is much easier.

If you've been avoiding gluten, you'll need to put it back into your diet for a period of time before your test, so the biopsy can show whether damage is occurring or not. (Read Chapter 2 for more information about testing.)



- ✓ **Get another opinion.** If you're particularly stubborn, you may even want to get a third. Kind of like if Dad says no, ask Mum — but if they both say no, you may want to admit defeat.
- ✓ **Talk to others who've been there, done that.** Most people have gone through denial in one form or another. Talk to people who've been diagnosed with a condition that requires them to be gluten-free. They'll probably give you that smug smile with the yep-you've-got-a-classic-case-of-denial look on their faces, because they've been there before. You won't really need to hear much more.

## *When others are in denial*

The most common type of denial that others exhibit occurs when they have all the symptoms themselves and refuse to admit it. Why is it so hard for relatives to believe they may have this? Problems with coeliac disease, after all, run in the family and many times family members have classic symptoms. Gluten intolerance of one type or another is a common condition — yet often they say, 'I don't have that'. The bottom line is that they don't want to have it.

The other sort of denial develops out of ignorance. People don't always 'buy' what you're telling them about your condition or the fact that a gluten-free diet is essential for your good health. They also don't always understand

how strict you really need to be in sticking to the diet. Danna's been accused on more than one occasion by more than one person of being neurotic about trying to avoid gluten. Doctors have told her she's going 'overboard' because she checks the ingredients in a 'tiny' pill. Loved ones have accused her of being obsessed about gluten and making sure food is gluten-free. Margaret has endured the rolling eyes and dismissive headshake of waitresses and had a stranger lean over from the next table at a restaurant to announce, very loudly, 'A slice of bread never hurt anyone!' And we're guessing more than one waiter has muttered something about being high-maintenance as he walked away.

It would be great if we had advice on how to handle the 'others' in your life who don't believe you about your condition or won't accept that they, too, could have an intolerance to gluten. You have no way to force them into testing or trying the diet, which is sad — because those steps may dramatically improve their health. Being positive about the gluten-free diet and enthusiastic about all the delicious products and clever recipes now available may help your relatives to lose their fear of being a coeliac. If they realise it's not really such a big deal, perhaps they will be more likely to see a doctor and have the tests.

## *Getting Back on Track When You're Feeling Derailed*

We agree that some difficult emotional challenges arise when you go gluten-free. You'll need to make quite a few changes to your eating patterns. But overcoming those challenges and getting back on track to enjoying life and all it has to offer — far beyond food — are important.

### *Regaining control*

If you don't take control of this diet, the diet will control you. Part of the reason you sometimes feel out of control when you're told to go gluten-free is because you're afraid. Afraid of messing up. Afraid of believing inaccurate information. Afraid of letting go of your habits and favourite foods. Afraid you'll feel deprived. Afraid of being different. Afraid of trying new foods. Not to mention the confusion you experience when you realise how much gluten is hidden away in unexpected places. How will you ever remember all this labelling stuff? (We unpick the labelling mysteries in Chapter 4.)

The only way to get beyond the fear is to try new things. Be creative — explore new foods — tantalise your tastebuds with all the gluten-free goodies you can think of. Arm yourself with accurate information. Be prepared when you're out and about. Taking control of the diet — and giving your kids control of theirs — is the key to living and loving the gluten-free lifestyle.



If you're finding that all your favourite comfort foods are now off-limits, realise that those old comfort foods were probably *discomfort* foods that actually made you feel bad because they have gluten in them. Choose new favourites, but try to avoid the pitfall of undermining weight management efforts by turning to food for solace.

## *Getting beyond big words with heavy implications*

Many people embarking on a gluten-free diet hear some pretty scary words being bandied around. Words like *disease*, *chronic*, *restrictions*, *lifelong*, *malabsorption*, *intestinal damage* and *intolerance* are all part of the gluten-free lingo.

Although it's easy to be somewhat stunned by the heavy implications these words have, looking beyond them is important. You may have a chronic disease, but of all the chronic diseases up for grabs, one that can be so successfully managed by diet alone has got to be the best. Thinking more about the fact that your health will improve, you'll feel better, you'll reduce the likelihood of having long-term complications and you'll have more energy can help shift your perspective in a more optimistic direction.

## *Focusing on what you can eat*

When the only food you can eat is gluten-free, every menu item begins to look like a croissant. Wanting what you can't have is the essence of human nature. Tell someone he can't juggle machetes and he's likely to have a sudden urge to juggle machetes.

Biting into an explosive rice cake topped with tomato, gluten-free ham and shredded lettuce (and beetroot if you like to live extra dangerously), compared with munching the equivalent fillings in a fresh focaccia or sandwich? It's a tight contest.



It's perfectly normal to feel your choices are limited (they're limited but not *limiting*) and to pine for freshly baked garlic bread. It's also normal to peruse a menu and feel like the only thing you can order is a salad without the dressing — or to stare at your pantry and see only rice cakes.

Vegetarians make pretty good role models for improving your perspective. They don't whine about the fact that they're missing out on greasy pork chops and T-bone steak. Quite the contrary: They revel in their diets, usually celebrating their meat-free lifestyle.



Focus on what you can eat, rather than what you can't. The list of things you can eat is stacks longer than the list of things you can't and if you don't believe us, start writing. Make a list of all the things you can eat — you need a lot of paper. And with a bit of effort, you can either discover how to make great gluten-free versions of most things, or find commercially made alternatives. Over time, your tastebuds change and you may be surprised at how much enjoyment you get from a slice of freshly toasted gluten-free bread.

## Are you a tad grumpy? You may have dieter's depression

People who are on a diet of any kind usually feel a 'high' in the beginning, while they're still ultra-motivated and passionate about their commitment. But then, usually around the second or third week, something commonly called *dieter's depression* sets in, and making hard food choices becomes tougher. Sometimes this depression kicks in months or even years later, when you're just sick to death of eating the same gluten-free options over and over again. Dieters in this stage aren't much fun to be around. Usually, they're feeling resentful and emotionally deprived, especially if food was a source of comfort for them.

Also, low levels of the hormone serotonin can lead to depression and the brain needs carbs to produce serotonin. Sometimes when people

go gluten-free, they cut their carb level significantly and may become depressed as a result.

If you think you may be falling into a dieter's depression, first make sure you're getting good carbs from veggies. You may want to opt for grab'n'go fruits and vegetables like apples, carrots and snow peas, but make sure you have some good carb vegetables that contain starch, like potato, sweet potato or pumpkin. Next, find some new recipes, or experiment with gluten-free foods you don't normally eat. Try a new bread — a much nicer one may have become available since you last looked around.

It's easy to get into a rut and stick to a few main gluten-free meals, especially if you lead a busy life. Try to avoid this — you'll feel far less deprived if meals are interesting and varied.



One of the fastest ways to make a particular food take centre stage in your life is to ban it, because it's human nature to want what you can't have. For many people, putting gluten on the no-can-do list makes them want it even more. So if you're feeling deprived, indulge yourself! Not with gluten, of course, but with your favourite gluten-free treat. A splurge from time to time can remind you of delicious things you can eat and can help take your mind off the things you can't.

## *Deflecting the temptation to be annoyed or offended*

When it comes to your dietary restrictions, you will, most likely, encounter people who appear unconcerned, uninterested, thoughtless and sometimes even downright rude. From time to time you may have hurt feelings and may even feel ostracised. Other times you'll find that people do care but forget about your needs, or just don't 'get it' and serve foods you can't eat.

Keep in mind that you're probably gaining an entirely new respect for food and a heightened awareness of what having dietary restrictions feels like. And you're probably much more aware of other people's restrictions and sensitivities.

Meanwhile, the rest of the world is unenlightened about the intricacies of the gluten-free lifestyle and may actually be 'thoughtless' enough to suggest you join them for dinner — at your (former) favourite pizza place.

Don't be annoyed or offended. People are busy and sometimes so focused on their own fast-paced lives that they can't possibly remember to accommodate yours. Most of the time they're not being rude or thoughtless (okay, sometimes they are); they're just unaware. Be glad they asked you to dinner and either bring something you can eat, order the salad, or suggest a different restaurant. Save the negative energy for something that really matters — like the kid next door who feels compelled to practise the drums at midnight.

## *Practising optimism*

At those times when you're really low, you can actually change the way you feel by making yourself think positive. It's hard, but it works. Creating optimism is easier for some people than others, because everyone falls

## Avoiding the ‘martyr syndrome’

Some people make heavy weather of their diet when out with family or friends. Sure, it’s tough when the menu only has one thing you can eat and you don’t particularly like it. Have a quick whinge, then accept the reality of the situation and don’t go on about it. Going on and on about

having to eat another steak without the pepper sauce won’t change a thing and you may put a dampener on the whole evening. Enjoy the company and remember to suggest another venue for next time — usually people will be happy to go to a place that suits your needs.

on different parts of the Optimism Spectrum to start with. You have the ohmygosh-those-are-the-most-incredibly-beautiful-mosquitoes-on-the-planet types, and then the I-find-her-chirpy-perky-optimism-downright-depressing types. Where you fall doesn’t really matter; you, too, can do some positive thinking and see how it lifts your mood.



Start by thinking of all the reasons a gluten-free diet is a good thing in your life (check out Chapter 19 if you need some help). Think of all the people who are a hundred times worse off than you. Think back to how tired and sick you used to feel. Maybe now you’re eating more actual food and a lot fewer chemical additives. Maybe you’re spending more time with the family eating home-cooked meals; maybe you’ve helped someone else in the family discover the key to better health, too. Make your list and convince (or remind) yourself that adopting this lifestyle is a good thing in your life. Get excited about it — tell your friends and family how great you feel and why. Before you know it, you convince yourself and you feel much more cheerful.

## *Spreading attitudes — they’re contagious*

Attitudes spread like germs through a nursing home — and, like germs, you can’t see them, but if you catch the bad kind, they can make you feel pretty nasty.

Sometimes humans are like germs, silently spreading crummy attitudes to unwitting victims. If you’re unhappy about having to adopt a gluten-free diet and haven’t found some of the tips in this chapter to help shake your anxiety, at least don’t spread your misery around. Some people still aren’t all that familiar with gluten, the gluten-free diet and the medical conditions that benefit from it. You may be the first person who’s teaching them about it.

If you feel compelled to whine about the foods you miss or express excessive feelings of deprivation and despair, people will feel sad and sorry for your ‘misfortune’. Do you really want to be an object of pity? Try instead to

portray being gluten-free to others as a great lifestyle, a positive event in your life and a healthy way to live so they can feel that way, too.



Positive attitudes are just as contagious as negative ones. If you're struggling with the gluten-free lifestyle, seek out people who have been on the diet for a while, and see it as a positive aspect of their lives. Before you know it, some of their good vibes will rub off on you. Having a good laugh about it all with someone who shares your gluten-free experience can also cheer you up if you're feeling down.

## *Redefining Who You Are*

If your doctor has diagnosed you with coeliac disease or intolerance to wheat, you may feel different about yourself. Your diet is different — but in the big picture, your restrictions are no different from those of people, such as vegans or people with peanut allergies, who have other diet restrictions.

Sometimes people let their condition define who they are. Try not to do this. Is having this condition a disappointment? Maybe — maybe not (we hope after you finish this book, you don't think so!). You will at times feel cheesed off about it and that's okay.

What you're not is a victim, a martyr, or a sick person. In fact, you're on the road to recovery and amazing health. Many people have some kind of adversity in their lives and they deal with it — you can, too. You can use the suggestions later in the chapter to help you find your own way of coming to terms with this change in your life.

Force yourself to remember that the gluten-free diet is the key to your better health, and focus on the great thing you're doing for your body by being gluten-free. Here are a few more tips that may help you beat the blues:

- ✓ **Psych yourself up.** Change your perspective on why you eat, what you eat and how you eat. Remember, you're supposed to eat to live, not the other way around.
- ✓ **Think outside the box.** Getting stuck in food ruts, eating the same basic meals day after day, week after week, is easy. Explore new foods, find new favourites and be creative in finding new ways to tantalise your tastebuds.
- ✓ **Remember the diet gets easier with time.** If a gluten-free diet seems difficult to you from an emotional or practical standpoint, realise that it gets easier over time. More and more gluten-free products are coming on the market all the time and more and more restaurants and cafes are providing interesting gluten-free choices.

- ✓ **Seek out help.** Whether help comes from family members, support groups, friends, or counsellors, sometimes others can help make the transition easier.
- ✓ **Avoid negative people and influences.** Basically, purge your life of the negative. If the gluten-free way of life is a struggle for you, the last thing you need is a malicious relative sabotaging your efforts.
- ✓ **Your tastebuds adapt to new flavours over time.** Yes, it's true! A time will come when food that you initially thought tasted foul turns into a favourite dish. (To be honest, though, that doesn't apply to all gluten-free food. Margaret swears that she will never, ever salivate at the sight of a rice cracker. Well, maybe if the alternative is a bowl of boiled sheep's brains.)

## *Resisting the Temptation to Cheat*

You have approximately 4.2 gazillion diets to choose between — low-fat, high-protein, low-carb, low-kilojoule, low-glycaemic and everything in between. The thing they all have in common is that people cheat on them. It's a fact. People cheat on diets.

But you can't cheat on this one if you have coeliac disease or dermatitis herpetiformis. No, not even a little. 'Everything in moderation' and 'a little won't hurt you' don't apply here.

Resisting the temptation to cheat starts with understanding why you want to cheat.

## *Realising why you want to cheat*

You may want to eat forbidden foods for lots of reasons and, if you hope to resist the temptation, it's important to work out what's driving your desire. Here are some of the more common triggers for temptation to cheat on the gluten-free diet:

- ✓ **It's just too good to resist.** Most people who indulge in a food not on their diet do so because it seems just too yummy to say no.
- ✓ **You want to fit in.** If everyone else were jumping off a cliff, would you? (Bungee jumpers aren't allowed to answer that.) Truthfully, other people probably aren't paying much attention to what you're eating, anyway. Social situations are about the company, the conversation and the ambience. Okay, they're about the food, too, but people are too busy scoffing down their own meal to notice what's on your plate.

- ✓ **It's a comfort food for you.** In difficult times, people sometimes have certain foods they turn to. If a gluten-containing goodie is your comfort food, a weak moment may send you straight to the food that you think will make you feel better — even though you know it won't.
- ✓ **It's a special occasion.** Try again. This excuse may work for other diets, but not this one.
- ✓ **You're bored by the diet.** If all you're eating is rice cakes and celery, we don't blame you. Live it up, get creative and try new things. Use this book as a guide to what you can eat and then challenge yourself to try something new. If you need a little inspiration, check out Chapter 9, which offers ideas for getting creative in the kitchen and learning to make anything gluten-free. Find a new bread — new and improved breads are coming on the market all the time. So too are biscuits and ready-prepared meals.
- ✓ **A little won't hurt.** A little does hurt! It mightn't make you feel sick, but it will affect your health. Check the details in Chapters 2 and 3.
- ✓ **The diet's too hard.** Hey, this is a *For Dummies* book, remember? This book is supposed to make it really easy to work out what you can and can't eat, and how to live (and love!) the lifestyle. Sometimes it's not easy to change your perspective, we'll give you that. But you can do it, and between your friends, family, books like this and the helpful resources listed in Chapter 5, you have plenty of support.
- ✓ **Someone's sabotaging your diet.** People do this! In fact, it's common. Usually they're not aware that they're doing it and they do it for all different reasons. Sometimes they do it because they're jealous that you're getting healthier than they are. Sometimes they do it because they don't 'believe' you need to be on the diet. Other times, people do it because they don't want to have to follow the clean-kitchen rules or don't want to have to put the effort into preparing gluten-free foods. Don't succumb to the sabotage efforts. Instead, try to find someone who seems particularly supportive, and ask for help. People love to help and they get tremendous satisfaction out of lending a shoulder, an ear or a hand.
- ✓ **I've already blown it so much, it doesn't matter anymore.** Not true. Today can be the first day of the rest of your gluten-free life.

Although the factors in the preceding list are powerful in enticing you to go for the gluten, overcoming the temptation is important. The key to saying no is taking another look at the consequences.



You choose to cheat — or not — because you have full control over what you put in your mouth. When you cheat on the gluten-free diet, you're cheating yourself out of better health.

## *Assessing the consequences*

One of the tough parts about looking at the consequences of your actions is that if they're not immediate and drastic, you sometimes feel that they don't matter.

If you have coeliac disease, though, the consequences can have serious adverse effects on your health and, if you cheat regularly, those effects are cumulative. For some friendly reminders about how much damage you could be doing when you cheat, refer to Chapters 2 and 3. If you have an intolerance to wheat or other gluten-containing grains, you will not be damaging your gut, but you will probably suffer the usual reactions and you could be compromising your good health.

## *Overcoming the temptation*

After you realise why you want to cheat and you remind yourself of the consequences, you have to finalise the deal by just saying no. Here are a few things you can do to make this a little easier:

- ✓ **Indulge in your favourite gluten-free goodie.** Try to always have something gluten-free in your house that you love to eat — but keep the portions tiny. When seriously tempted to cheat, you can distract yourself straightaway with a little gluten-free treat. This could be a hazardous approach if you can't stop at one, however!
- ✓ **Reward yourself when you resist.** If you've been challenged by temptation and successfully overcome it, give yourself a treat. It doesn't have to be food — maybe you buy yourself something special or do something nice for yourself. Doing so can reinforce your strength and commitment to the diet.
- ✓ **Simplify what you need to.** If the diet seems too cumbersome, maybe you're trying to do too much and need to go back to the basics. If your menu plans are overwhelming, cut something out so you don't have so much to think about. If you don't understand the diet, read parts of this book again, particularly Chapters 4 and 6. You may also want to seek out some of the resources in Chapter 5.
- ✓ **Make your diet a priority.** This is about you — your health — and your future. If you find it too hard to cope with a gluten-free diet because of your work commitments, think about changing your schedule. If you have negative people in your life who seem to sabotage your efforts, avoid them if you can. If something's not working in your life, change it. Being gluten-free successfully will affect every aspect of your life. It should be a high priority.

## Part V

# The Part of Tens



Enjoy an additional online Part of Tens chapter about living gluten-free at [www.dummies.com/extras/livingglutenfreeau](http://www.dummies.com/extras/livingglutenfreeau).



## ***In this part . . .***

- ✓ Understand the many benefits of being gluten-free, including improving your health and quality of life, and adding years to your (or your child's) life.
- ✓ Focus in on the ways you (or your child) can embrace and enjoy a gluten-free lifestyle, such as surrounding yourself with positive people and turning away from temptation — and towards all the delicious food you can eat.
- ✓ Identify some of the common traps and mistakes when starting out on your gluten-free adventure and work out how to avoid them — to save you the bruised knees and troubled tummies!

## Chapter 19

# Ten Benefits of Being Gluten-Free

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### *In This Chapter*

- ▶ Healing for people with coeliac disease
  - ▶ Improving fertility
  - ▶ Knowing what you're eating
- 

**H**ow about these for benefits: No more diarrhoea, no more headaches, no more fatigue, no more bloating? (You can read more about how these conditions may benefit from a gluten-free diet in Chapter 2.) If you have some form of gluten (or wheat) intolerance, we don't need to tell you how horrible it is to feel yucky most of the time — and the key to not feeling yucky is being gluten-free. For you, the benefits are obvious.

## *You Know How to Improve Your Health*

How many people do you know who suffer from a chronic disease for which no satisfactory cure or even treatment exists? Or struggle with ill-health but never really find out what's wrong or how to remedy it? You, unlike those people, have the key to better health — a gluten-free diet.

Most people who shouldn't eat gluten aren't so lucky. They don't know they have an intolerance to gluten, so they have no clue what's making them feel so bad. They try cutting out dairy or other potential allergens and their surgeons try cutting out their gallbladders or various other innards, but nothing helps. If you've been diagnosed with coeliac disease or a wheat/gluten intolerance, you know exactly what's making you sick — gluten, wheat or other grains — and you can eliminate them from your diet, enjoying fully restored health.

## ***Your Health Improves Straightaway***

If you have coeliac disease, gluten damages your intestinal tract. The minute you stop eating gluten, your body starts healing, you begin to absorb nutrients again and, before you know it, you're feeling so great that you can't even remember how bad you used to feel. Whether you've been sick for years, days, or never even seemed to feel any effects from gluten, your body can begin healing immediately and that means your symptoms should start to disappear. If you aren't a coeliac, but gluten is causing other health problems, you may find these improve quite rapidly. You may also find that some other associated health problems disappear after a few weeks or months without gluten.

## ***You Don't Need Medication or Surgery to Get Better***

Unlike most people with a chronic disease, you don't have to take long-term medications with nasty side effects, regularly endure unpleasant medical procedures or undergo surgery to get better.

## ***The Diet Can Be Extra Healthy***

On a gluten-free diet you may be eating fewer commercially prepared products and more fresh food. That means fewer food additives and more of the real stuff your body loves and needs. You may even be preparing more of your own food and able to make good choices about fat, sugar or fibre content, rather than eating what manufacturers want you to eat.

## ***You Learn to Appreciate Life a Little More***

People who coast through life without any serious problems can easily take the good things in life for granted, get really upset over trivial issues and become a little 'precious'. But when you are diagnosed with an illness like coeliac disease, and you adjust to your new lifestyle, you realise that

many others in the world are far worse off than you. You become a bit more understanding and supportive of people with problems because you know what it's like to miss out on something, or be treated as 'different'. More than that, you learn to truly appreciate all the good things in your life. You're a stronger and better person for that!

## *Your Diabetic Child Will Do Better*

Controlling blood-glucose levels in children with diabetes is essential. If a child with diabetes also has coeliac disease she won't be absorbing food properly because of damage to the small bowel. As a result, her blood-glucose levels will fluctuate wildly. Once diagnosed and on a gluten-free diet, food will be absorbed normally and blood-glucose levels will stabilise. This will lead to improved general health and assist with growth.

## *You May Add Years to Your Life*

People with undiagnosed coeliac disease often struggle for many years with medical problems and over time their health steadily deteriorates, leaving them more vulnerable to life-threatening illnesses. Your gluten-free diet keeps you far healthier and may add years to your life.

When Margaret was diagnosed, she was in such bad shape that the gastroenterologist told her she wouldn't have lasted another ten years. That was more than 30 years ago and she's planning on lasting many more.

## *Fertility Problems May Diminish*

Undiagnosed coeliac disease increases the likelihood of infertility in men and women, as well as difficult pregnancies. Recent studies show that men with undiagnosed or untreated coeliac disease have reduced sex hormones and a lower sperm count. Women with undiagnosed coeliac disease also tend to have fertility problems and complicated pregnancies, with one study reporting smaller babies and less favourable outcomes to pregnancies.

Thousands of Australians of child-bearing age are unaware they have coeliac disease. Once diagnosed and following a gluten-free diet, their fertility improves significantly.

And if all that's not a big enough benefit for you, how about the Italian research showing that sexual satisfaction increased once an individual went on a gluten-free diet?!

## *Your Weight Can Be Easier to Manage*

If you go gluten-free the nutritious way (refer to Chapter 6), you'll be eating high-protein, low-glycaemic-index foods. Eating these types of foods stabilises the 'I'm hungry' and 'I'm full' hormones, so you don't always feel hungry; it also causes your body to use the stored fat (read 'love handles' or 'muffin tops') as energy. By following a naturally gluten-free diet, you'll help your body function the way it's supposed to and decrease your hunger pangs, which may make it easier to manage your weight. Sometimes when people go gluten-free, they seek out manufactured products like biscuits, cakes, pizza bases, breads, rolls and pastas. These foods are fine in moderation, but they're not going to do you any favours when you're trying to squeeze into your skinny jeans.

It's a matter of balance, really. Missing out at happy hour or special morning and afternoon teas can make you feel sad and deprived and if that happens a lot, that's not good either. Look after your mental health as well as your weight.

## *You're More Aware of Nutrition*

Now that you're gluten-free, you can become far more knowledgeable about nutrition than most people. For one thing, you read labels. You know that processed foods usually have multisyllabic ingredients (with lots of *xs* and *ys* in them) that seem better suited to a pesticide than your plate. You, unlike the common Joe, know that malt usually comes from barley, maltodextrin doesn't contain malt and glucose isn't the same as gluten (if you're thinking, 'It isn't?' please read Chapter 4). Hopefully, you've even experienced the joys of quinoa, millet and other alternative grains that many people have never heard of, and you know that some of them are nutritional powerhouses compared to the better-known cereal grains.

## Chapter 20

# Ten Tips to Help You Love the Gluten-Free Lifestyle

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### *In This Chapter*

- ▶ Delighting in the foods you can eat
  - ▶ Wrestling for control of the diet
  - ▶ Taking a bite out of boredom with an occasional splurge
  - ▶ Living life like you did before
- 

**T**he transition from gluten-gorger to ‘gluten-free is good for me’ is harder for some people than others. Learning to live the lifestyle is one thing; learning to *love* it is sometimes quite another. Sometimes you’re going along just fine with your gluten-free lifestyle and suddenly changes in your pattern of life or the way you’re feeling make it much harder to resist your gluten-gorging friends who seem to be taunting you with gluten galore. But this chapter helps you with ideas to love your new lifestyle.

### *Focusing on What You Can Eat*

Staring into a pantry and seeing nothing but gluten is really easy. Sometimes you may seem to find more gluten around you than oxygen molecules. It’s true — gluten is everywhere — yet the reality is that the list of things you can eat is a lot longer than the list of things you can’t. You just have to shift your thinking a tad. Instead of thinking about the foods you can’t have anymore, focus on the foods you can eat and put a special emphasis on those that you especially enjoy. If you’re feeling a little restricted or deprived, treat yourself to your favourite gluten-free indulgences. Try to think outside the box and explore foods you may not otherwise have tried, or work out how to make your favourite dish into a gluten-freebie (Chapter 9 helps you get creative in the kitchen). Before you know it, you’ll realise that the gluten-free diet may have its restrictions, but it’s definitely not restrictive.

## *Expanding Your Culinary Horizons with Alternative Grains*

A bold, gluten-free world is out there filled with foods some people have never heard of: Quinoa, amaranth, millet, buckwheat, teff and sorghum top the list for us. Don't underestimate your kids' willingness to try new foods, either. Even if they're reluctant to experiment at first, they usually make the leap and learn to broaden their horizons. Whether your palate is conditioned to enjoy subtle flavours or foods exploding with flavour, you may find a whole new world of unique and sometimes exceptionally nutritious foods.

## *Thinking Globally*

Many cultures use naturally gluten-free ingredients in their cooking. Some Asian cuisines, including Thai, Vietnamese and Korean, are often gluten-free, as are many Mexican and Indian dishes. Do some research on the internet to find out which ingredients a particular culture uses, or explore cookbooks featuring recipes from around the world. You can work out how to cook foods from those cultures or venture out to restaurants to enjoy a new taste experience gluten-free — globally!

## *Controlling the Diet*

Whether you're 2 or 102, if you're going gluten-free, you need to take control of the diet. The diet can suddenly control things like what you eat, when and where you eat, with whom you eat and even how you eat. But remember that you're in control. You decide what you're going to eat, when you're going to eat and with whom.



Planning ahead helps, and we talk about menu planning and shopping in Chapter 8. Making sure something's always available for you when you're hungry is also important. If your child's on the diet, start giving him or her some control from an early age. People usually underestimate kids' ability to understand the diet and why being strict about following it is so important. Check out Chapter 17 for more about raising happy, healthy, gluten-free kids.

## *Eating to Live, Not Living to Eat*

Your body is designed to use food as fuel, not as a comforter, pacifier or partner-replacer. Sure, food has become a huge part of society and interpersonal relationships and, by definition, social functions all revolve around food. But that doesn't mean food *is* the social function, nor does that mean you have to eat the food that's there. Food tastes good and having a full belly often feels good. But food serves a greater purpose and you should treat it as fueler, not filler.

## *Remembering You're Different — So What?*

People talk about wanting to be unique and yet they cringe when they're afraid they appear out of step. The bottom line is that everyone is different, even when people try to look the same. If you're on the gluten-free diet, your bread may look a little different and you may sometimes appear to be a tad high-maintenance at a restaurant. So what? Many people 'customise' a menu. Vegetarians skip a huge portion of the buffet section. Some people don't like chicken, others avoid dairy foods and some can die if they eat the wrong foods. People have 'different' diets and lifestyles. Yours happens to be healthy, delicious and the key to your better health.

## *Enjoying a (Gluten-Free) Splurge*

If you put too many restrictions on yourself in trying to maintain a healthy, gluten-free lifestyle, you may just find yourself getting bored and frustrated and feeling deprived. Give yourself a break. Indulge from time to time in your favourite gluten-free extravagance, whether it happens to be a sweet treat or a baked potato loaded with sour cream and butter. Finding and maintaining a good balance is an important part of any lifestyle.



## *Helping People to Help You*

Let your friends know when you've discovered a new line of delicious gluten-free biscuits or which bread is best for you. Most good friends will get the hint and have something suitable for when you call in — if they don't eat it themselves before your next visit. When you find a local cafe or restaurant that caters well for coeliacs, tell them how thrilled you are to get a great meal/snack and try to go there again. It's good for business and it's good for you. The more people are educated about gluten-free food, the better it is for everyone.

## *Turning Away from Temptation*

Avoid putting yourself in tempting situations when you can, saving your strength for when you have no choice in the matter. You're not doing yourself any favours if you surround yourself with titbits of temptation, whether in the workplace, at home, or in social situations. You probably shouldn't take that job at the bakery. This world has enough gluten to go around without setting yourself up for temptation and frustration.

## *Dealing with It, Not Dwelling on It*

If you're mad, sad, grief-stricken, confused, frustrated, agitated and downright fed-up about having to live without gluten, that's okay. Many people experience those feelings, especially if they're forced to embark upon an entirely new — and sometimes very different — lifestyle. But deal with those feelings and move on. Call on your friends, family and support groups; share with them how you're feeling, and let them try to help you work through the feelings. If you need professional help, get it. You can make the choice to feel miserable and deprived, or accept what has happened and get on with enjoying life to the full.

## Chapter 21

# Ten Tips and Traps for New Players

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### *In This Chapter*

- ▶ Avoiding dietary disasters
  - ▶ Remembering the finer points of food labelling
  - ▶ Taking precautions
- 

**S**tarting out on a gluten-free diet isn't exactly a piece of cake (ouch — that's a very bad joke and we're sorry). But little traps *are* lying in wait, and it's almost inevitable that you will get caught by one or two. Take comfort — you're not the first. This chapter hands you a few of the beliefs you may have when starting out and why they may trip you up.

### *I Can Easily Work Out This Diet by Myself*

Well, that's possible, but food labelling isn't completely straightforward, and someone 'in the know' can quickly show you some of the finer points and prevent you from avoiding foods that are actually gluten-free. You may also need to avoid lactose (in dairy food) for a while, or need other dietary advice, particularly if you have been unwell for a long time.



Seeking out a dietitian is a great idea because she can advise you about these things. Coeliac Australia also provides all the information you need to avoid the traps and tuck into your new diet with confidence.

## ***I'm Too Embarrassed to Ask for a Gluten-Free Meal***

It *can* be embarrassing at first. You think everyone is looking at you. You're afraid they'll think you're weird. You don't want to cause trouble for anyone. But all over the country people are asking for gluten-free meals, or vegetarian, or low fat, or dairy-free, or halal — and no-one turns a hair. Are you embarrassed about asking for your steak to be medium rare? Not a bit. Requests for gluten-free are now more common than requests for any other special diets. Give it a go and it will soon become a normal part of eating out.

## ***The Package States 'Gluten-Free', but Wheat Is Listed in the Ingredients***

Even experienced coeliacs sometimes do a bit of a double-take when this happens. Remember that if a manufactured product is labelled *gluten-free* it contains no detectable gluten. This means that even if an ingredient derived from gluten is present, such as maltodextrin from wheat, the ingredient must be so highly processed that when tested, gluten can't be detected in the product. But if the words *gluten-free* are *not* present, this doesn't apply. Tricky things like this are covered in Chapter 4.

## ***The Waitress Is Pretty Sure This Dish Has No Gluten***

A little red light should start flashing right now. Being pretty sure isn't good enough; you need to be certain that your food is gluten-free. If no-one can assure you that a meal or dish is gluten-free, you have to choose something else, or go elsewhere. Remember the golden rule: When in doubt, leave it out.

## *Can I or Can't I? It's Made from Buckwheat*

Talk about a misleading name. Buckwheat isn't even a distant relative of wheat. It *is* gluten-free and good to use in cooking because it contains all eight essential amino acids and many vitamins. Chapter 4 has more about buckwheat.

But don't get too excited when you see buckwheat pancakes on a menu. While buckwheat *is* gluten-free, wheat or other grains are often mixed with it in restaurants and manufactured products. Check with the waiting staff or read the list of ingredients before you take a bite! Buckwheat is usually only a tiny part of the mix. This also applies to rice crackers. Some contain other flours besides rice.

## *I'm Sure My Friend Will Remember I'm Gluten-Free*

A good friend (or relative) has invited you home for a meal, and you're sure she remembers about your dietary needs. But even the best of friends can forget or be unaware of some of the trickier aspects of avoiding gluten. Always mention your need for gluten-free in advance and offer to bring a contribution or your own bread.

## *I Don't Want to Offend My Mother-in-Law*

When people forget or make a mistake, and you're offered a meal containing gluten, with no alternative available, the situation can be awkward. But you don't want to make yourself sick or put your own health at risk, either. So don't worry about offending your daughter-in-law, or Great Aunt Florrie, or a terribly important hostess. Which comes first? Your health or the slight chance that you might offend someone? You'll mostly avoid this awkward situation if you always explain your dietary needs when invited somewhere. It's rare for people to be offended — more often they feel really embarrassed about forgetting.

## ***I'm Sure I'll Pick Up Something Gluten-Free on the Way There***

This scenario is becoming more and more likely, but you can never bank on it unless you know exactly where you're going and the sorts of shops you pass. Even in a big city, gluten-free goods can be frustratingly elusive. Deciding on the spur of the moment to head off for a few days always involves grabbing a bag of gluten-free supplies. If you come home without needing to dip into the bag, you score bonus points!

## ***I've Requested a Gluten-Free Meal for Each of My Flights***

You've done the right thing so you'll be okay on your trip, right? Wrong! You *may* be okay, but the system may let you down. The airline may have no record of your request, or your meal may not appear on the plane. Always pack emergency supplies so you don't go hungry if your meal gets lost in transit. You have no back-up service at 30,000 feet.

## ***I Feel Really Left Out Watching Everyone Tuck In, So I'll Just Have a Nibble***

Tempting, but just not on! One little nibble can lead to another and another. Fix in your mind the simple fact that you just don't ever eat gluten. If you completely rule it out in your mind, you find those tempting thoughts won't even enter your head. Get into the habit of eating something before you go out, if you aren't sure you'll be able to enjoy anything there. (Chapter 16 has a lot of suggestions for when you're out and about.)

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# About the Authors

**Margaret Clough** has lived gluten-free for over 30 years and was a co-founder of the ACT Contact Group of Coeliac Australia in 1981. She was very active in Coeliac Australia for over 20 years, serving at various times as National President, Public Officer and Travel Editor for *The Australian Coeliac* magazine. Margaret has never let her gluten-free diet stand in the way of adventure and claims to hold the high altitude record for consuming gluten-free bread (with yak cheese) at 5,545 metres, just above Mount Everest base camp.

Margaret has had an extensive career in education, as teacher, early literacy specialist and school principal. She has published several children's stories and a school history, and co-authored a resource book for schools called *Easter Bilby: an Australian Easter*. She has three children and five exquisite grandchildren. One of her passions in life, along with frogs, bilbies and bushland regeneration, is improving the availability of gluten-free food and educating the wider community about coeliac disease.

**Danna Korn** is also the author of *Wheat-Free, Worry-Free: The Art of Happy, Healthy, Gluten-Free Living* and *Kids with Celiac Disease: A Family Guide to Raising Happy, Healthy Gluten-Free Children*. Respected as one of the leading authorities on the gluten-free diet and the medical conditions that benefit from it, she speaks frequently to health-care professionals, coeliacs, parents of coeliacs, parents of autistic kids involved in a gluten-free/casein-free dietary intervention program, and others on or considering a gluten-free diet. She has been invited twice to be a presenter at the International Symposium on Celiac Disease.

Danna has been researching coeliac disease since her son, Tyler, was diagnosed with the condition in 1991. That same year, she founded R.O.C.K. (Raising Our Celiac Kids), a support group for families of children on a gluten-free diet. Today, Danna leads more than 100 chapters of R.O.C.K. worldwide. She is a consultant to retailers, manufacturers, testing companies, dietitians, nutritionists, and people newly diagnosed with gluten intolerance and coeliac disease. She also coordinates the International Walk/Run for Celiac Disease each May in San Diego.



# Dedication

## ***Margaret says ...***

This book is dedicated to the wonderful staff and enthusiastic volunteers within Coeliac Australia who work so hard in so many ways to support people with coeliac disease. Royalties from *Living Gluten-Free For Dummies*, 2nd Australian Edition, will be shared equally between Coeliac Australia and the author.

## ***Danna says ...***

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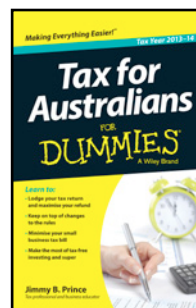
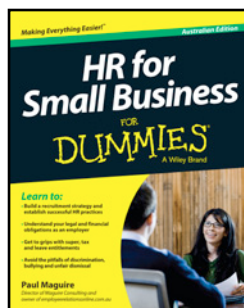
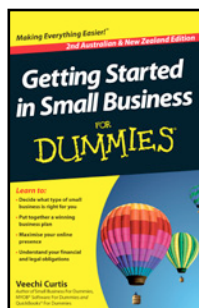
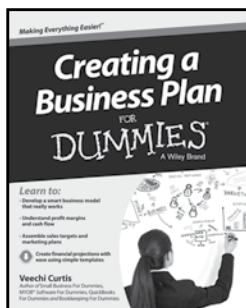
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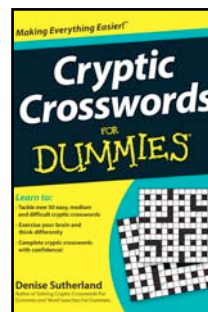
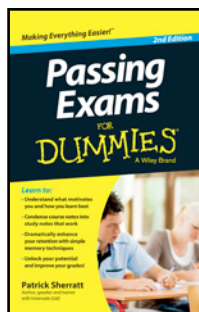
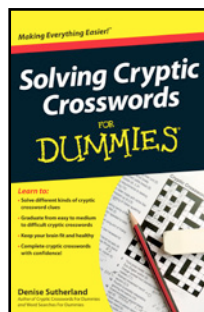
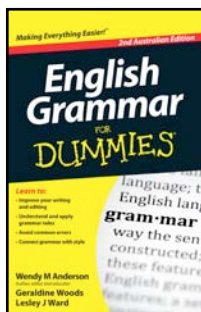
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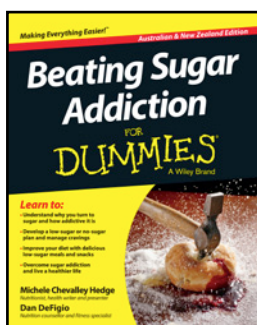
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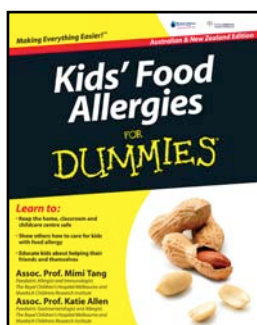
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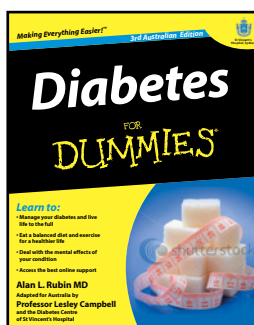
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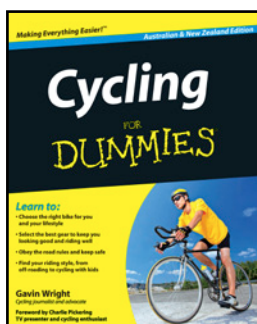
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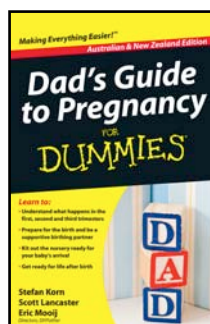
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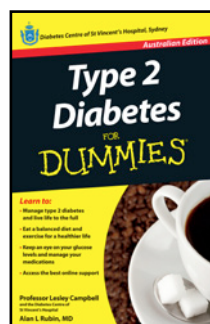
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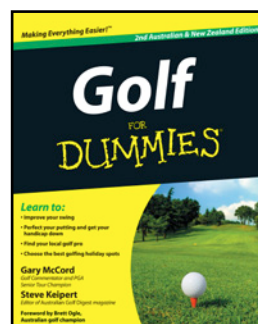
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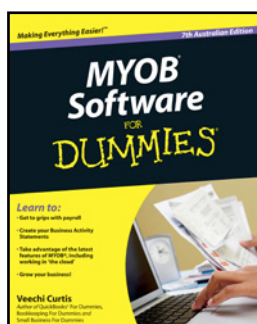


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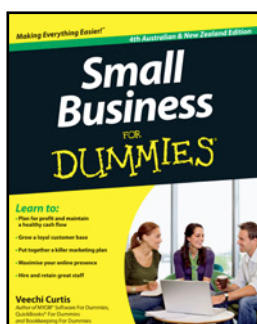


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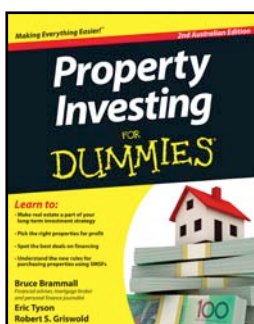
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