



**GLUTEN
INTOLERANCE
GROUP**



Could Gluten Be Causing Your Health Problems?

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To find out, answer the following questions:

Do you have a family history of Celiac Disease or Dermatitis Herpetiformis?

Do you have recurring problems with:

- Abdominal pain
- Bloating
- Constipation
- Diarrhea
- Loss of appetite
- Vomiting
- Unintended weight loss
- Elevated liver function tests (AST, ALT)
- Joint pain
- Fatigue
- Tingling or numbness in hands or feet
- An itchy skin rash occurring on both sides of the body, such as both elbows or knees
- Unexplained infertility or fetal loss
- In childhood, poor weight gain or failure to thrive
- In childhood, short stature or delayed puberty

Have you been diagnosed with:

- Irritable Bowel Syndrome
- Migraines
- Anemia (iron, folate or B-12 deficiency)
- Autoimmune thyroid disease (Hashimoto's thyroiditis or Graves disease)
- Osteoporosis or Osteopenia (low bone density)
- Osteomalacia (softening of bones)
- Arthritis
- Colitis (microscopic, lymphocytic or collagenous)
- Type 1 diabetes
- Dental enamel defects in permanent teeth
- Peripheral neuropathy
- Liver disease
- Addison's disease
- IgA nephropathy
- Selective IgA deficiency
- Cerebellar ataxia
- Epilepsy
- Occipital calcifications
- Down Syndrome
- Turner Syndrome
- Williams Syndrome
- Sjogren's Syndrome (causes dry eyes and dry mouth)

What is Celiac Disease?

Celiac disease is an autoimmune reaction to the gluten protein found in wheat, rye and barley. Celiac disease causes damage to the small intestine and other parts of the body, resulting in a wide range of possible symptoms. Often, the connection with gluten is not recognized.

Questions to ask your doctor:

If I have stopped eating gluten, how long do I need to be back on gluten before I can have the celiac blood tests?

What else can trigger DH?

Should I take nutritional supplements?

Could I have associated food intolerances?

Where can I have a bone-density study?

How can I find out about the diet?

How often should I follow up with the doctor?

What does it mean if I have some of the symptoms or conditions?

This Educational Bulletin lists symptoms and conditions which put you at increased risk for having celiac disease. Many of these symptoms are also associated with a gluten-related disorder known as “non-celiac gluten sensitivity.”

If you have even one of these symptoms or conditions, it would be a good idea to bring that to your doctor’s attention and discuss having the screening blood tests for celiac disease.

If you have multiple conditions, consider having the screening tests as soon as possible.

The treatment for celiac disease or non-celiac gluten sensitivity is to remove gluten from the diet. However, celiac specialists recommend that you not exclude gluten before you are tested as this will significantly reduce the chances of getting accurate results. Therefore it is important NOT to remove gluten from the diet before testing is done.

Note that the first step to diagnosing non-celiac gluten sensitivity is also to undergo celiac blood screening tests.

If you have negative tests, but still feel that you have symptoms that might be related to gluten, you may have non-celiac gluten sensitivity.

References:

World Gastroenterology Organisation Global Guidelines, Celiac Disease.
http://www.worldgastroenterology.org/assets/export/userfiles/2012_Celiac%20Disease_long_FINAL.pdf

ACG clinical guidelines: diagnosis and management of celiac disease, 2013.
<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/23609613>

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Other helpful information is available at www.GLUTEN.org.

Advances in celiac disease are fast-paced. If this document is more than 2 years old, please visit our website for updated documents.

This information should not be used to diagnose or treat gluten-related disorders or other medical conditions. For questions about these conditions consult your healthcare team when considering this information.

Please consider your local GIG Branch as another resource.

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The Mission of the Gluten Intolerance Group is to empower the gluten-free community through consumer support, advocacy, and education.

To make a donation or become a volunteer to GIG, visit our website or call the office at 253-833-6655.