



PATIENT EDUCATION

Getting Started on a Gluten-Free Diet

AT HOME

Start your new diet by looking at the foods you already have at home. This way, you will better understand which are the gluten-containing foods for which you need to find an alternative brand. Many of your favorite brands may even already be gluten-free.

Next, start planning your meals around naturally gluten-free foods. Plan a week's menu and make a grocery list to help you stay on track.

SHOPPING TIPS

At the grocery store, the perimeter of the store is where it is more common to find gluten-free food options. No need to worry here, you are not limited to this section! There are many foods that are naturally gluten-free:

- Fresh eggs
- Fresh meats, fish and poultry (not breaded, batter-coated or marinated)
- Fresh and plain fruits and vegetables
- Frozen, canned or dried fruits and vegetables (no fillers added or dusted with flour)
- Most dairy products
- Potatoes & sweet potatoes
- Unprocessed beans, seeds and nuts

Moreover, look in the Asian section for rice noodles and crackers. Check out the "organic" or "health food" section for gluten-free pastas, flours, and baking products.

Some stores typically have GF foods in the frozen food section. Select gluten-free frozen meals, bagels, breads, or brown rice pizza crusts to defrost and warm at home.

Consider the following to avoid cross-contamination of gluten:

- Purchase separate condiments (e.g. jam, jelly, mayonnaise, peanut butter, etc.) for those following the gluten-free diet to prevent crumbs in jars
- The use of barley (malt), rye or oats is not mandated to be declared in the allergy statement
 - Read the list of ingredients to find gluten containing grains
- Carefully handle oats! Even though oats do not contain gluten, there is concern that oats may be contaminated with gluten during milling and processing
- "May-contain gluten" means possible cross-contamination during manufacturing process
- Remember, wheat-free does not mean gluten-free so read the ingredient label
 - Note that foods with ingredients that are gluten-containing grains may state the product as "gluten free," as long as the food contains less than less than 20 mg of gluten per kg (e.g. wheat starch)
 - Therefore, "gluten-free" does not guarantee the product to be 100% gluten-free

FOOD PREPARATION

Now that you have purchased your food, it is important to be mindful of how to safely handle the food preparation process. Following these suggestions will help you prevent contaminating your food with gluten:

- Clean common surfaces, counter tops and cutting boards to remove gluten-containing crumbs and to avoid cross-contamination
- Carefully clean utensils, pots/pans before, between and after each use of gluten-containing products
- Use a separate toaster for gluten-free breads or use toaster bags to avoid contamination

MEAL IDEAS

Breakfast

- Cream of Rice cereal with nuts, seeds or dried fruit
- Puffed Rice cereal, milk and fresh fruit
- Fruit and yogurt smoothies
- Cottage cheese with apples and cinnamon
- Egg, cheese and veggie omelet with fried potatoes and ½ grapefruit

Lunch and Dinner

- Loaded baked potatoes with cheese and veggies
- Salads with chopped veggies, toasted almonds or sunflower seeds and lean meats (chicken, tuna, ham) Tuna fish on mixed greens with fresh fruit
- Stir-fry with meat, poultry, seafood and chopped vegetables served over brown rice
- Meat or veggie fajitas or quesadillas made from corn tortillas
- Turkey or beef chili, corn chips and veggie sticks
- Beef or chicken kabobs on rice and ice cream

Snacks

- Rice cakes or rice crackers with cheese, hummus or peanut butter
- Nachos made from corn chips with melted cheese and salsa
- Celery sticks with cream cheese, peanut butter or cheese spread
- Pudding, ice cream or yogurt topped with berries and whipped topping
- Baked apple
- String cheese
- Popcorn

DINING OUT

Following a gluten-free diet does not prevent you from eating away from home. All you need is a little effort and planning.

- Before leaving home, call ahead or review the menu online. Look for gluten-free menus or a list of food allergens utilized in the food making process. Ask for specially prepared foods that are gluten-free
- Search for local or chain restaurants with gluten-free menus
- Go out during slow times so staff members have time to answer questions
- Ask how the food is prepared
- Do not be afraid to send item back if necessary! Politely ask to have them remade
- Remember that restaurants which do not have separate fryers for French fries and gluten-containing products (e.g. chicken nuggets) cause the contamination of the fries
- Additional areas of cross contamination in restaurants are salad bars, buffets and grills (hamburgers and buns may be grilled in the same area)

If you have any questions or concerns, please call your

Registered Dietitian

at

CentraCare: 320-251-2700, Ext. _____

Or Carris Health: _____