



# **5 Easy Steps To Getting Started on a Gluten-Free Diet**



# Introduction

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Going Gluten-free is the new fashion in foods. More and more people are trying it, but the truth is that it is not a necessity for everyone. Only if you are gluten intolerant or you were diagnosed with celiac (your body cannot digest the gluten protein) you have to go all gluten-free. Deciding to do it just for kicks could be helpful, but you need some education in the matter to make sure that your body will not suffer the future diet.

Gluten is a protein that our body needs but if the body is not digesting it properly, then we become intolerant and our health decreases. If you are interested in going on such a diet, you should know that it is not created for weight loss but it may come naturally because of the extremely healthy products that you will be adding (or continuing). But if going gluten-free is a must for you and your health is requiring it, then you need to step up and make some serious changes to your daily eating habits.

Here are 5 easy steps you can follow if you want to be gluten-free.

# Learn How to Read

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Probably the most important step is to learn how to read - in this case the labels. If the choice has been made, you are certain that "starting from tomorrow" everything that goes into your stomach will be gluten-free, then you need to replace what you have in the kitchen. Throwing away the gluten containing foods is the first step but what will you eat after that? You need to go shopping and this is a key component of your success. Knowing what to buy and eat begins by reading the labels on the foods on the back. Information is posted on the back of the labels and you can check if it is gluten-free or you need to look for another one.

Change might not be easy, especially in the beginning. Start small if you are not used to big and dramatic changes in your life. Label reading is not the most fun part, it might seem like a waste of time but if you learn to do it quickly and efficiently, it will save you a lot of time and your body will be thankful for your actions.

Learning how to read can be towards a whole gluten-free education. Information is everywhere - you can check on the internet and books, so you can become an expert quickly and make your own diet. But be careful and do not trust everyone - check on the sources where you get the information from.

# What Can You Eat?

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Most people are instantly connecting gluten-free foods to a big and painful change. In their minds gluten-free diet is the root of all evil and it will cost them way too much, but when it becomes a necessity, they are obligated to go after such a diet. This opinion comes from misinformation. Gluten-free foods are pretty awesome, as they are the same that are recommended by dietitians for our regular diet (this is the part which will help you with the weight loss, so do not confuse it with the lack of gluten). Natural foods coming from nature like fruits, vegetables, seeds, nuts, beans, fish - this is the way to go. They are all gluten free and they are no different than what you would be having in a regular, healthy diet.

When it comes down to drinking it is a bit different ball game. Beer lovers will suffer the most, as wheat is used to make beer and thus gluten is a big deal of the favorite beverage. There are few supermarkets where you can find gluten-free beer, so it is still not a big downside. It will be safer though to consider an alcohol change from beer to wine, sherry, liqueur - all gluten-free and all tasty for your benefit.

# Have a Replacement in Your Diet

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Good news is that most foods are replaceable, so you should not be discouraged. Check the information again, check and you will know how to have even pasta in your life. Regular pasta is definitely considered as something to be avoided, but you can have quinoa-based one - the taste is not very different (some even find it better), but your health will not be decreasing when eating the favorite Italian meal.

Wheat flour is one of the biggest threats for your gluten-free lifestyle but it can be changed for good. Flour is essential in the lives of many, so you can go all gluten-free with your flour as well - brown rice and almond flour are here to help you.

# Eating Habits During the Day

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Change is inevitable and it will be coming your way when you go gluten-free. Firstly, should mention that even going to restaurants is not excluded from this lifestyle - plenty of gluten-free restaurants are around you and waiting for you to sit and have a nice, gluten-free meal. Even if the restaurant is not especially a gluten-free one, most menus are written with explanation specifically for gluten and the meals are explained in details - check if your desired food contains that protein and if it does - you know the drill.

Here is some information gathered from different dieting information sources. At breakfast you should include a lot of vitamins and a cup of raspberries will do the trick. You can combine it with oats cooked in water and honey. Avocado is a great option for needed essential food substances. A gluten-free slice of bread with peanut butter and unsweetened almond milk is something you can try as well.

Salads should be an important part of your daily diet and a good one for lunch is helpful. You can create different mixes with spinach, chunk light tuna in water, rinsed white beans, cucumber (great option for almost every meal). You can be mixing greens, well cooked chicken, avocado and the mother of all gluten-free foods - quinoa.

Brown rice for dinner is a strong option - the good news is that it can be mixed with almost any other gluten-free food for a tastier meal. Cooked chicken breast, quinoa - obvious choices as well.

Gluten is mostly contained in snack foods that we are having during the day when we are "too busy" for a proper meal. This is the best time for you to prepare a healthy, gluten-free snack that you can substitute the snack that will harm you. Boiled eggs - sounds simple enough, contains lots of protein and will give you a boost of power when needed during the day. Make sure to have your kitchen stacked with lots of nuts and carry them during the day - this way they are just one step away from your healthier lifestyle.

## Myths Surrounding the Gluten-Free Lifestyle

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Misinformation is everywhere and we should be careful what we read and implement in our lives. There are plenty of myths about gluten that might be rattling our brain cages.

A popular myth was mentioned before about the weight loss - it is not connected directly to the lack of gluten in foods but with the proper, regular diet that includes veggies, fruits, fish.

The lower amount of gluten will not guarantee you better stomach - this has been advertised a lot in the media these days, but it is not necessarily true. It is very helpful if you are sensitive to gluten or if you are diagnosed with celiac - your stomach and digestive system will definitely improve in these situations. If you are not though, you do not need to go gluten-free and your stomach will be the

same - there is no evidence backing up the statement that you will have benefits if you are not gluten sensitive.

Gluten-free foods are better and healthier than the rest - another magazine statement blown way out of proportion. Many studies have been done about this but they are conclusive - it is definitely not true. Gluten-free foods do not contain grains like wheat and the manufacturers have to substitute them with something else - the obvious choices are fats and sugars and now they are more than before. The "gluten-free" label is not guaranteeing a healthier food for all of us - if you are sensitive to gluten it is a must, but if you are doing it as a fashion advice - think twice before changing your habits.

Gluten is a protein - that is true. Gluten-free diets are crucial to very few people - those who were diagnosed with celiac disease and those who are not tolerant to gluten. The first is a very serious condition that needs to be treated very carefully as gluten is causing an adverse reaction in their bodies and the cells are getting damaged. Intolerance toward gluten is not as serious and dangerous, but again - the solution is to have a healthier, gluten-free diet. If you are any of those, you should not feel discouraged and threatened - life is just as good with a healthy and steady gluten-free diet will keep you ready for action. Most natural foods are coming gluten-free. A good salad is a must in any case - focus on veggies, fruits, fish, beans and you will provide the needed nutrients for your body to evolve.

Beginning by reading the labels on the back of the foods, creating enjoyable eating habits during the day, carrying healthy snack and a good wine for dinner - key elements that will keep your diet gluten-free and your body happy.