

Celiac News

Winter 2024
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"When so many are lonely as seem to be lonely, it would be inexcusably selfish to be lonely alone" - Tennessee Williams, American playwright and screenwriter.

Join us to connect with others who understand the challenges, share resources, and gain the support needed to make a GF lifestyle manageable and fulfilling.

Let's face it together.

- ✓ Keep **learning** to keep **thriving**
- ✓ Access to **science-based**, quality info
- ✓ Local support groups keep you **social!**
- ✓ **Glutened?** We *actually* know how it can feel!
- ✓ Gluten free life is hard. **No judgement**
- ✓ Manage and cope, there's hope! **It gets easier**



PROVINCE WIDE (ON ZOOM)
3RD THURSDAY OF EACH MONTH 7:00PM
CONTACT:
ONLINE.BCCELIAC@GMAIL.COM
OR CALL (877) 736-2240 TOLL-FREE



RICHMOND, OR ANYONE NEWLY DIAGNOSED...
2ND MONDAY OF EACH MONTH 6:30PM
CONTACT VAL:
VAL_VAARTNOU@TELUS.NET
OR CALL 604-271-8828



SURREY, LANGLEY & WHITE ROCK
3RD TUESDAY OF EACH MONTH 6:30PM
CONTACT PUSHPA:
BCCELIAC.HELPGROUP@GMAIL.COM
OR CALL 604-721-0098



THE FOOD GROUP
CELIACS & FRIENDS GO OUT TO EAT
CONTACT ARICA:
ARICASHARMA@LIVE.CA

ABBOTSFORD
CONTACT UTE:
UTET@SHAW.CA

CHILLIWACK
1ST SATURDAY OF EACH MONTH
CONTACT GERALDINE:
GDAVID@UNISERVE.COM
OR CALL 604-792-2119

POWELL RIVER
CONTACT LIZ OR VAL:
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VALHAR@SHAW.CA

OKANAGAN
CONTACT NIKKI:
OKANAGAN.BCCELIAC@GMAIL.COM

IS SUPPORT LACKING IN YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD?

Building a celiac community in your area is easy! It starts small with a coffee date here, a dinner there. Contact us at info@bcceliac.ca to learn more about volunteering.





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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

The new year is a wonderful time to reflect on what we have accomplished, while looking ahead to what's to come.

We have had a year full of activities. Our restaurant events continue to be great opportunities to check out new places, while getting some good tips and meeting great people. As one of the Charity Partners in the Vancouver Half Marathon, our organization had runners and walkers who raised funds and awareness. Highlights of Celiac Month included outstanding media coverage with Global BC News and an interview in Vita Magazine, and the White Rock Support Group's May 16th celebration. In addition, two corporate partners, Grey Fox Brewing and Delish Gluten Free Bakery, supported our charity by donating proceeds from promotions.

Our social media and helpline teams have been very busy! People with celiac disease and others in their lives such as family, friends, teachers, and healthcare providers are urgently looking for information and help. There seems to be an increase in the challenges people are facing from a lack of information and the spread of disinformation. And they are turning to us.

Because of your support, over 800 people in the month of October received direct support and accurate, reliable information at two in-person community events. These public education opportunities, along with our outreach to healthcare providers and other organizations, have led to an explosion in requests for presentations, articles, and other educational materials.

In order to meet this demand, we will be recruiting more volunteers to join the Board or to get involved with specific projects. And now that our charity is a provincial organization and has "the power of Zoom," volunteers can make a difference no matter where they live in BC. And we need your help so we can engage with more people outside of the Lower Mainland.

Plan to kick off the holiday season at our Annual Holiday Cookie Exchange. Look for announcements about upcoming restaurant events and other activities.

Mark your calendar for our Annual General Meeting scheduled for Sunday, February 9th, 2025. An agenda and details about our speaker will be forthcoming. The event is open to all, but only Members can vote. So please renew your annual membership or become a member today!

And membership matters. Having a strong membership gives us a voice when we reach out to various businesses and organizations to build a better understanding of celiac disease and the importance of a gluten free diet.

Through your membership, donations and involvement, you are making a difference every day in the lives of those of us with celiac disease.

Best wishes for a healthy and happy 2025, and thank you for your deep commitment and support!



EQUITY

DIVERSITY

INCLUSION

What is EDI in the context of health care?

Incorporating the principles of equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) is crucial for creating systems that are fair and accessible to all individuals, regardless of their background. Equity ensures that everyone has access to the care they need, tailored to their specific circumstances. Diversity brings a range of perspectives and experiences into the health care environment, which can lead to more innovative solutions and better health outcomes. Inclusion ensures that individuals feel respected and valued, which can improve their overall experience and willingness to seek care. (*Fraser Health Authority, EDI Strategy and Action Plan, 2023*). By embracing EDI principles, those who provide health care can address disparities, reduce biases, and improve the quality of care for all

by Karen Pickford individuals, no matter what they are facing.

EDI and Celiac Disease

For individuals suffering from celiac disease, the principles of EDI are particularly relevant. Celiac disease requires health care strategies such as a life-long adherence to a gluten free diet, which can be challenging to manage. Individuals from diverse backgrounds may face additional barriers, such as language differences, cultural dietary practices, and varying levels of access to gluten free foods. The implications of inequity have significant impacts on those with celiac disease, which may include a lack of culturally appropriate resources or dietary advice and unsafe food-related practices in settings such as hospitals, schools and long-term care facilities.

Non-Profit Organizations and EDI

Non-profit organizations play a vital role in promoting EDI principles within the community. Here at Celiac BC we are excited to share that we are working hard to incorporate EDI practices within our team. In the upcoming months, we are reviewing our policies and conducting a gap analysis to see where we can do better. This can be achieved through diverse hiring practices, inclusive programming and equitable resource distribution.



This might also look like offering resources in multiple languages, partnering with culturally diverse community groups, and advocating for better access to gluten free foods in under-served areas. We believe in leading by example and hope that keeping a thoughtful lens will not only support members with celiac disease but also foster a more inclusive and equitable community. This trickle-down effect can lead to greater awareness, reduced health disparities, and a stronger, more cohesive community overall.



Gluten Alert: The Hidden Risks of Biodegradable Food Packaging for Celiacs

By Dr. Harpreet Kaur



Researchers from the Technical University of Munich, Germany, have confirmed that gluten can leach out of Biodegradable Food Contact Materials (FCMs) into gluten-free food, posing a significant risk to those with celiac disease and gluten sensitivities. Key findings and recommendations from the study have been listed below.

GLUTEN LEVELS EXCEED SAFE LIMITS BY UP TO TEN TIMES

Amongst the Biodegradable FCMs tested, those made of wheat bran had the highest level of migration. The study detected up to 230mg/l (230 ppm) of gluten in deionized water after 30 minutes of contact. Other materials, such as straws made from durum wheat semolina and plates made from wheat bran, were also shown to release significant amounts of gluten, posing risks to those with celiac disease or wheat allergies. In contrast, cutlery composed of 90% polylactic acid and wheat bran, as well as straws made from rye stalks, demonstrated negligible or no detectable gluten migration.

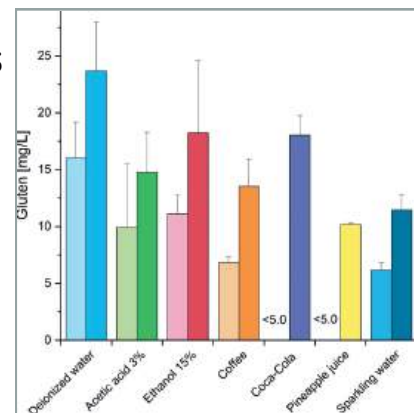


Fig1. Gluten migration into 100 mL of different liquids from the water cup after a contact time of 40 min, tested using two different ELISA methods (represented by the two bars)

LACK OF ALLERGEN LABELLING - REGULATORY GAP

To the best of Celiac BC's knowledge, current legislation does not require allergen labelling on FCMs, which could lead to consumers' unintentional exposure to gluten. This gap in regulation is concerning, given the rising popularity of biodegradable materials in food service.

FURTHER RESEARCH REQUIRED

This study used materials available in their region. More research is required to confirm these findings across a broader range of foods and FCMs and to understand how various conditions such as pH and temperature influence gluten migration.

CELIACS ADVISED TO AVOID CEREAL-BASED FCMs

Until further research clarifies which FCMs pose a risk in Canada, celiac patients and those with gluten sensitivities are advised to avoid cereal-based FCMs and exercise caution, particularly when dining out or travelling.

The full article can be accessed here : Mossburger, J, Scherf, K A Gluten migration from biodegradable food contact materials poses a risk to celiac disease patients. Eur Food Res Technol 250, 2711-2718 (2024).

<https://doi.org/10.1007/s00217-024-04570-4>

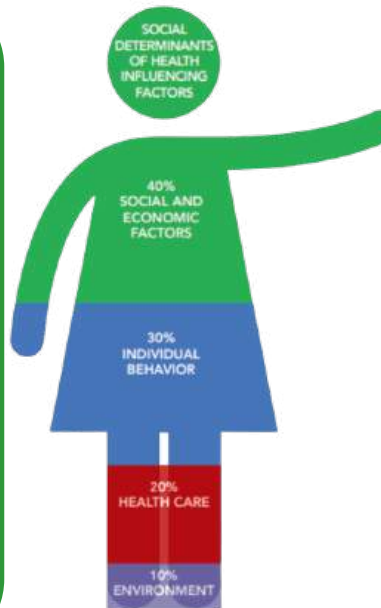
Social Determinants of Health Factors

By: Ravneet Mundi, BSc, MPH (c)

Health isn't just about personal choices or genetics - it's shaped by the environments we live in and the opportunities we have. Social Determinants of Health (SDoH) refer to the social and economic conditions that impact our overall well-being. For people living with Celiac Disease (CD), these factors can make managing their condition much harder or easier, depending on an individual's circumstances. This can further affect the quality of life for individuals living with Celiac Disease.

Income and Access to Food

Employment status is a significant determinant of health, particularly for people with chronic conditions like CD. Job insecurity, the stress of balancing work with managing a strict diet, or lack of accommodations in the workplace can impact both physical and mental health. People with CD may face additional barriers at work due to the challenges of maintaining a gluten free diet, which can affect their productivity, job satisfaction and overall well-being.



Social Inclusion and Stigma

Living with CD can feel isolating. Avoiding social events or eating out due to concerns about gluten exposure can lead to feelings of exclusion and even mental health challenges like anxiety and depression. The study revealed that having strong social support and a sense of belonging improves the quality of life for people with CD. Building inclusive communities and support networks is key to improving their well-being.

Access to Healthcare

Access to specialized healthcare services, including regular follow-ups, consultations with dietitians, and mental health services, is essential for effective CD management. Inadequate access to these services can lead to unmet medical needs, worsening physical health, and a reduced sense of well-being.

Housing

Safe, stable housing is another crucial determinant for individuals with Celiac Disease. Living in environments where food safety is compromised or where cross-contact risks are high can make it more difficult to stick to a strict diet. The stress associated with unstable housing situations can negatively impact both mental and physical health.

For individuals with CD, their health experiences are not solely determined by their diagnosis but are deeply influenced by how these factors intersect, compounding the challenges they face in managing their condition. The SDoH are integral to understanding the lived experiences of individuals with Celiac Disease. Factors such as income, access to food, employment status, social inclusion, housing, and healthcare access play critical roles in managing the condition and impact the overall quality of life. A holistic approach to healthcare that addresses these broader determinants, in addition to medical treatment, is essential for improving health outcomes for individuals with CD.

Resources: [1] Nikniaz, Z, Asghari Jafarabadi, M, Abbasalizad Farhangi, M et al. Determinants of health-related quality of life in patients with celiac disease: a structural equation modeling. *Health Qual Life Outcomes* 19, 204 (2021). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12955-021-01842-5>.

[2] <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/health-promotion/population-health/what-determines-health.html> [3] **Graphic:** <https://allianceok.com/2022/04/06/infographic-social-determinants-of-health-influencing-factors/>

Myths

VS

Facts

By Julie Clement

CCA-BC hosts a vibrant community of almost 5,000 celiacs and allies in our [Facebook group](#) and Instagram feed. These groups are supportive places where you can ask questions and know you will receive accurate, science-based responses. Thank you to Sasha, Ailish, and Dhvani, who volunteered their time alongside me to maintain these safe spaces. Here are a few of the myths that we “bust” on a regular basis.

I can only eat certified gluten-free products

Canada has some of the most robust allergen labelling laws in the world - thanks in large part to advocacy on our behalf by Celiac Canada. While certified products are definitely safe, the words “gluten-free” also mean that the product is celiac-safe. But, also remember that gluten (and other allergens) cannot be hidden in confusing chemical names or generic terms like “spices,” “flavouring,” and so on - high-risk items like flours, baked goods, and cereals must always be bought with a GF claim, but for everything else, we can just trust our label reading skills.



Yeast extract is not gluten free

Yeast and yeast extract are safe if that is all that it says on the ingredients listing. If the yeast extract contains an allergen, it **MUST** say it in brackets, eg “yeast extract (barley)”.

Oats are safe for me to eat

While they are naturally gluten-free, oats are at incredibly high risk of cross-contact, and as such, we must always buy oats, or products made with oats, that specify “gluten-free oats”. Oats can be hard on a newly-diagnosed tummy. Generally, when newly diagnosed, the recommendation would be to avoid all oats for up to 12 months and then to reintroduce them in small quantities - perhaps ½ cup at a time - and monitor for any reaction. There are different cultivars, or varieties, of oats. Ultimately, some celiacs say they cannot tolerate any GF oats; some can tolerate some but not others; and some can tolerate all. Once your health has stabilized on the GF diet, and with the recommendation of your dietitian, you can start eating them again and potentially experimenting with different brands to see what works for you.



Myths

VS

Facts



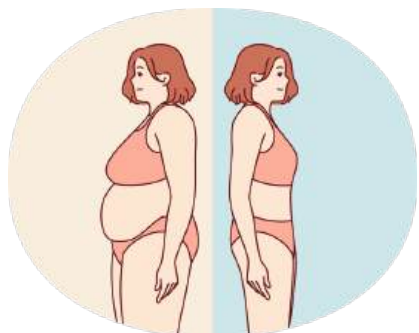
My dietitian tells me I need all new pots, pans and utensils

If you have very worn and grooved plastic or wooden utensils and boards you may be best to replace them as gluten can get stuck in those grooves. Toasters are impossible to clean properly, so it's recommended to have your own new, dedicated GF toaster - but no need to buy anything fancy with a gluten-free setting - any toaster will do - mine was \$4! We are not aware of any large-scale studies on air fryers yet, so this is likely to come down to personal preference. If you can keep it dedicated GF, then great, but in reality, most of us are not putting loose flour into our air fryers, so regular washing of the drawer itself is probably safe, as the risk of cross-contact from the fan itself is negligible. For pots, pans, crockery and cutlery then a good wash in hot, soapy water or the dishwasher is all that's needed - gluten is not an invisible virus that we need to "kill" - it's a physical crumb that we can see stuck between the tines of a fork or in the corners of a baking sheet.

A friend told me I need to query my prescription medications

According to Celiac Canada, it is unlikely that prescription medications will contain gluten. If in doubt, your pharmacist can check on your behalf, but it is believed that most medications available in Canada are celiac-safe. Even when a pharmaceutical company does manufacture one or more products containing gluten, the risk of cross-contact with other production lines is low - by definition, they have to have the best possible cleaning protocols to avoid medications being contaminated with active ingredients from another medication. Our advice would be to take whatever medications are prescribed to you but to have your celiac disease noted on your file at the pharmacy.

GLUTEN IN MEDICINES?



My doctor says I can't have celiac disease, I'm not underweight.

Anybody can be affected by celiac disease. Celiac Canada's recent State of Celiac survey showed that most patients were healthy or overweight when diagnosed.

If you have anything you'd like us to address then send them to info@bcceliac.ca and we might create an Instagram post, or join us on Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/groups/bcceliac> for a speedy turnaround to your burning questions.



ASK JESS: NUTRITION CORNER



Jess Pirnak is a Registered Dietitian and kindly volunteers her time to answer your questions at: nutrition@bcceliac.ca. She is a member of the Registered Dietitians of Canada, and you can read her blog at: foodyourself.com.

Jess is also available for private consultation.

Healthy New Year

From Halloween to New Year's Eve and every holiday gathering in between, some gluten-free, sugary treats will be there. So, by the time January 1st rolls around, we're ready to try some healthier options. Here are 3 New Year's resolutions to keep:



Embrace the mocktails (including kombucha!)

Kombucha is a great alternative to bubbly cocktails as it is naturally carbonated. Plus this sugar-free and caffeine-free beverage can be turned into anyone's favorite cocktail. Mojito? Try adding mint and lime to your original kombucha for a refreshing beverage that will give you a boost of energy as it is packed with B vitamins and probiotics.



Have a fruit or vegetable with every meal and snack!

Ideally, half your plate would be vegetables, but I get how overwhelming that is, so start small with just making sure every meal and snack has at least a fruit or a vegetable! Looking for inspiration on how to do this? At the beginning of the week, grab a party tray of vegetables and aim to add those prepared veggies to every meal and snack.

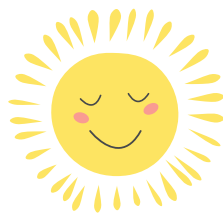


Eat real whole food!

Clear your diet of processed and refined foods, which tend to be high in sugar and fat and low in fibre. But keep in mind that one meal will not sink your digestive ship; instead, it is chronic consumption of hyper-processed junk and convenience foods that leads to trouble. As a rule, eat plenty of whole plant foods and don't worry about the occasional margarita and nachos.

Happy New Year!





SPOT

5

D I F F E R E N C E S



Winter Word Search



Find the hidden winter words.

S	N	O	W	M	A	N	N	B	R	D	S
N	X	E	M	N	C	L	O	L	K	A	N
O	M	W	I	G	R	V	F	A	T	R	O
W	J	Y	T	F	A	P	O	N	U	P	W
B	A	E	T	I	N	S	T	K	R	A	F
A	N	A	E	N	I	N	H	E	K	R	L
L	U	R	N	K	H	O	C	T	E	T	A
L	A	E	S	G	A	W	D	A	Y	Y	K
R	R	R	F	I	R	E	P	L	A	C	E
K	Y	R	A	E	I	O	O	E	H	I	S
S	F	I	C	I	C	L	E	S	A	A	N
E	A	R	M	U	F	F	S	E	N	E	T

MITTENS

HAT

SKIS

SNOW

BLANKET

ICICLES

SNOWBALL

JANUARY

SNOWMAN

EARMUFFS

SNOWFLAKE

FIREPLACE

Winter Message

Fill in the blanks with the letter that matches each picture and solve the winter message.



A	E	N	P	R	S	W





GRAB THE GRIMM'S for the Holidays

View Grimm's extensive selection of
gluten free products & inspiring meal
ideas online, at GrimmsFineFoods.com





Gluten-Free Air Fryer Kitchen Sink Cookies

Introducing Gluten-Free Air Fryer Kitchen Sink Cookies – a delightful mix of all your favourite flavours and textures in one irresistible treat!

These cookies are packed with everything but the kitchen sink. Baked to golden perfection in the air fryer, they're quick, easy, and perfect for anyone craving a wholesome, delicious snack. Submitted by our friends at Conagra (distributors of Glutino and Angie's Boom Chicka Pop), these are perfect for any gathering, big or small

INGREDIENTS

1 cup (128 g) unsalted butter, softened
1 1/2 cups (192 g) coconut sugar
2 eggs
1 tablespoon (15 mL) vanilla extract
3 cups (384 g) gluten-free oat flour
2 teaspoons (10 g) baking powder
1/2 teaspoon (3 g) salt
1/2 cup (64 g) unsweetened desiccated coconut
1 cup (128 g) Glutino® Pretzel Twists, broken
2 cups (256 g) semi-sweet chocolate chunks
2 cups (256 g) Angie's BOOMCHICKAPOP® Sweet and Salty Kettle Corn
flaky sea salt, optional

DIRECTIONS

- Preheat air fryer to 325°F (160°C) and line air fryer racks with parchment paper.
- Beat butter and coconut sugar in a large bowl with an electric mixer on medium speed until light and fluffy, about 2 minutes. Beat in eggs and vanilla until smooth, about 1 minute.
- Reduce speed to low and add oat flour, baking powder, salt and coconut. Beat until smooth. Stir in broken Glutino® pretzel twist pieces, chocolate chunks and Angie's BOOMCHICKAPOP® until well mixed.
- Divide and shape cookie dough into 2-tablespoon (16 g) balls and place on lined air fryer racks, 1-inch (2 cm) apart, pressing down to flatten slightly. Sprinkle with flaky sea salt, if using.
- Air fry cookies in batches until lightly browned, about 5 to 10 minutes. Let cookies cool 2 minutes before removing to wire rack to cool completely. Cookies can also be baked in a conventional oven at 350°F for 9 to 12 minutes.



MAKE LIFE BOOM CHICKA POP!



#sharethepoptimism

PEPPERMINT CREAMS

By Julie Clement

When I was a kid, my brother and I made these treats to give our grandparents as holiday gifts every year. Easy to make for all ages, with just a little bit of supervision to melt the butter



Ingredients:

450g icing sugar, sifted
1 tsp peppermint essence
Green food colouring (optional)
50g butter, melted
2 tbsp lukewarm milk
Extra sifted icing sugar

Put the icing sugar into a large bowl.

Add melted butter, milk, peppermint essence (and food colouring if used) and stir well.

Turn out onto a clean board or counter, dusted with icing sugar.

Knead until smooth, then roll into approximately 40 small balls.

Flatten each ball slightly and put into individual mini paper cupcake liners.

Refrigerate then package into a pretty gift box, and don't forget a "made by..." label with your name on it.

STRAWBERRY SANTA



Ingredients:

8 oz packaged cream cheese
1.5 cups powdered sugar
20 large strawberries
1.3 oz tube black decorating icing (or chocolate chips)
Bag of round red sprinkles

Using a mixer beat the cream cheese until fluffy and then gradually beat in the powdered sugar. You can use less or more sugar based on how sweet you like it.

Prepare the strawberries by cutting the stems off to leave a flat surface on the bottom.

Cut the strawberry 3/4 of the way up from the bottom to create a smaller cone that will be the santa hat.

Place the cream cheese mixture into a piping bag with a round tip

On the larger bottom part of the strawberry, pipe the cream cheese.

In the middle of the cream cheese swirl, use the black decorating icing to dot two eyes, or use chocolate chips to dot eyes, and red sprinkle for nose.

Top the swirl with the strawberry Santa hat, and pipe a dot of cream cheese frosting onto the tip to create the pom pom.



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LIQUOR PLUS



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information contact TruCraft:
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Ingredients

For the Filling

2 cups shredded coconut
1 cup cashew nuts
1/2 cup walnuts
2 tbsp coconut sugar
1 tsp ground cardamom

For the GF Shells

2 cups GF flour
1/4 tsp baking powder
1/2 tsp sea salt
6 tbsp cold unsalted butter
1 cup cold milk (any)
2-4 tbsp ice water, as needed

For Deep Frying

1½ - 2 cups suitable oil

KARANJIS: TROPICAL CRUNCH

Instructions

Filling: In a skillet over low heat, toast the shredded coconut until golden. Lightly toast the cashews and walnuts in the same pan for 2 minutes. Add the toasted coconut and nuts to a food processor and pulse 2-3 times for a coarse blend. Transfer to a bowl, mix in coconut sugar and cardamom, and set aside.

Dough: Combine the flour, baking powder, and salt in a large mixing bowl. Cut the butter into small pieces, add to the flour mixture, and gently blend with your hands until it forms a crumbly texture. Slowly add the milk and mix until dough forms. Add ice water until the dough is smooth and soft. Cover with a damp cloth and chill for 15-20 minutes.

Shaping Karanjis: Divide the dough into 14 equal balls. Roll each ball into a small 3-inch circle.

Place 2 tbsp of filling on one half of the circle, fold over and seal the edges with a bit of water. Crimp with fingers or a fork to secure.

Fry: Heat suitable oil in a deep pan over medium heat. Fry 2 Karanjis at a time, cooking 2-3 minutes until golden and crisps

Transfer to a paper towel-lined plate to drain excess oil.

Moong Dal Halwa

Ingredients

1 cup yellow split moong dal, soaked for 4-5 hours and drained
1/2 cup ghee
3/4 cup sugar (adjust to taste)
2 cups milk
1/2 cup water
1/4 tsp cardamom powder
A pinch of saffron strands
2 tbsp chopped nuts (almonds, cashews, pistachios) for garnish

Instructions:

Blend the Lentils : After soaking, drain the moong dal and blend into a coarse paste.

Cook the Lentil Paste: Heat 1/4 cup ghee in a non-stick pan over medium-low heat. Add the moong dal paste and cook, stirring constantly, for 15-20 minutes until golden and fragrant. This process is essential for that rich, nutty flavour. Pour in the milk and water, stirring continuously to avoid lumps. Cook until the dal absorbs the liquid and begins to thicken.

Sweeten and Enrich: Add sugar and the remaining ghee, blending well. Continue cooking for 10-15 minutes until the halwa turns glossy and rich.

Add Aroma and Garnish: Stir in the cardamom powder and saffron, cooking for 2 minutes. Garnish with chopped nuts, and serve warm.





GREY FOX BREWING

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CRAFTSMANSHIP



SCAN FOR
LOCATIONS

Gluten Free Beer Cheese Dip



Original Recipe by Chef Shaun Downie, The Lodge at Arrow Lakes. A creamy, tangy, and savoury sauce with an unexpected twist of stout beer. Perfect for drizzling over roasted veggies, pairing with crusty gluten-free baguettes, or simply as a decadent dip. Shared by our friends at Grey Fox Brewing.

Ingredients:

200ml lemon juice
5 tbsp baking soda
1 can Grey Fox Buckwild Stout
1 tbsp dijon mustard
200ml whipping cream
350g gruyere cheese, grated

- **Heat and Combine Base:** Warm the lemon juice in a medium saucepan over medium heat. Add baking soda and stir continuously until frothing subsides and the mixture thickens slightly.
- **Add Flavour:** Stir in the Dijon mustard, then slowly pour in the stout and whipping cream, whisking gently to create a smooth base.
- **Incorporate Cheese:** Bring the mixture to a gentle simmer, then add the grated Gruyere cheese, stirring until fully melted. Remove from heat.
- **Season and Serve:** Season to taste and serve warm with your favorite dipable items.

The key to this recipe is the sodium nitrate trick, the reaction that occurs when you combine baking soda and lemon juice together! This method is used in place of a roux in the sauce. The combination of baking soda and lemon juice is used to give it a nice stretchy texture, perfect for dipping!

Serve it warm alongside fresh baguette slices or pour it over steamed vegetables for a comforting and unique twist. It's a surefire way to elevate any gathering, bringing gourmet flair with minimal effort. But be prepared to share the recipe...

Cassava with Beef

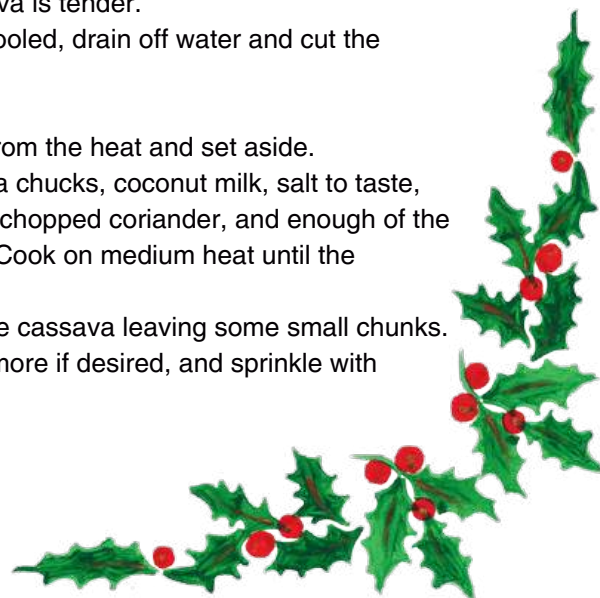
A delicious gluten-free African dish with Indian influences. Cassava can be eaten boiled, fried, roasted or as coconut-based curry. Cassava (known as muhogo in Swahili) is almost fat free (0.3gm per 1 cup), cholesterol free and is a good source of fibre and Vitamin C.

Ingredients:

1 pound beef, cut into cubes
1 1/2 pounds cassava
1 heaping teaspoon ginger
1 heaping teaspoon garlic
1 teaspoon crushed green chillies - optional
1 teaspoon salt
1 tin coconut milk
1/4 teaspoon turmeric
Cilantro

Method:

1. Marinate beef cubes in ginger, garlic and crushed chillies if using. Marinate for at least 1/2 hour or longer.
2. While beef is marinating, boil the cassava. If using Instant Pot to boil the cassava: lay the cassava on the trivet, add water, salt and crushed chillies to the water and set the IP to Steam mode for 10 minutes. If boiling the cassava on the stove, combine cassava, water, salt and crushed chillies in a large pot. Cover and cook for 30-40 minutes until the cassava is tender.
3. Once the cassava has boiled and cooled, drain off water and cut the cassava into small chunks and set aside.
4. Boil the beef until tender.
5. Once the beef has boiled, remove from the heat and set aside.
6. In a large pot, add the beef, cassava chunks, coconut milk, salt to taste, crushed chillies, pinch turmeric, handful of chopped coriander, and enough of the beef broth to cover the beef and cassava. Cook on medium heat until the cassava is soft.
7. Remove from the heat and mash the cassava leaving some small chunks.
8. Add lemon juice of half a lemon or more if desired, and sprinkle with chopped coriander





Bread Sauce

By Julie Clement

For many families with British heritage, this is a must alongside the roast turkey and cranberry sauce - and great added to turkey sandwiches too!



Ingredients

750ml milk
1 onion, finely chopped
2 cloves garlic, peeled
6 cloves
2 bay leaves
Salt and pepper to taste
6 slices of white gluten free bread, torn into small chunks *
A large knob of butter
A splash of heavy cream

Pour the milk into a small nonstick pan, add the chopped onion and garlic to the pan, along with the cloves and bay leaves and season well

Bring the milk mixture to the boil then add the chunks of bread and simmer, stirring occasionally, over a low heat for 5-10 minutes until onion is cooked and softened

Remove the cloves and bay leaves, then transfer the sauce to a blender and blitz until pureed

Return to the pan, adjust the seasoning to taste and continue to cook on a gentle heat, stirring constantly, for a few minutes to thicken

Stir in the butter and cream to finish

* If you want the finished sauce to be very white, you may wish to remove the crusts. A light wholegrain bread works too (like Western Family or Promise) if the colour is not important to you, but you do NOT want to use a bread with a heavy texture or with seeds



Ingredients

300 g gluten-free plain flour
1.5 tsp xanthan gum
3 tbsp sugar
145 g unsalted butter very cold (use hard margarine if dairy-free)
2 large eggs
mincemeat (homemade or store-bought)
1 additional egg to egg-wash / brush the pastry, or you can use milk instead - dairy-free if necessary

Mince Pies

Place your flour and xanthan gum into a large bowl and mix. Make sure your butter is cold, cut it into small cubes and rub it in until the mixture resembles breadcrumbs. Stir in your sugar. Beat your eggs together in a separate bowl & gradually add them. Use a fork to bring it all together. It should form a ball and be smooth, not too crumbly. .

Critical : Wrap your pastry in cling film - place in the fridge for 30 minutes (or the freezer, but don't forget it!).

Preheat your oven to 180C Fan/200C/350F and lightly grease a 12-hole muffin/cupcake tin. When your pastry is cold enough, roll it straight onto a floured work surface. Roll it to about 3mm thick.

Use a 9-10cm (circular or fluted circle) cookie cutter to cut out the bases of your mince pies. Carefully ease them into the holes, pressing them in gently.

Spoon about 1.5 tsp of mincemeat filling into each hole, safely below the top of the pastry case. Re-roll the rest of your pastry to a thickness similar to before. Cut stars or rounds to cover the filling, egg-wash and bake in the oven for around 20 minutes until golden.

Leave to cool before removing from the tin, dust it to your liking with icing sugar or regular sugar.



Gluten Free Stuffing

A Delicious and Inclusive Twist on a Holiday Classic

By Kathleen Semple



Orthodox Christmas, celebrated on January 7th, is a holiday with deep religious roots, observed by millions in Eastern Europe, the Middle East, and parts of Africa. While much of the world celebrates Christmas on December 25th, Orthodox Christians follow the Julian calendar, which is 13 days behind the Gregorian calendar (the one most people use today). This is why Orthodox Christmas falls on January 7th, but in the Julian calendar, it's still December 25th!

The tradition of celebrating Christ's birth began in the 4th century. While Christmas was first marked in Rome, it wasn't until the Byzantine Empire (around the 5th and 6th centuries) that January 7th became the official date for Christmas in the Eastern Orthodox Church. The Julian calendar, introduced in 45 BCE, was used until the Gregorian calendar came along in 1582 to fix errors in the solar year. Though Western churches quickly adopted the new calendar, many Orthodox churches continued using the Julian calendar, which is why Orthodox Christmas still falls on January 7th. As of 2023, Ukraine adjusted its celebration of Christmas to fall in line with the Gregorian calendar, allowing them to further separate from the Russian Orthodox Church that claims sovereignty over Orthodoxy in Ukraine.

Christmas Eve (January 6th) is just as important. Families often attend church and then gather for a festive meal, breaking their fast with dishes that vary by region but are usually meat free. Traditional foods like kutia (a sweet grain dish most definitely NOT celiac safe) are served, symbolizing unity and abundance.

Pro Tips:

Prepare the stuffing ahead of time and set it in the fridge.
Pre-heat the oven to 350F before guests arrive.

The ratio of cooked veggies to crumbs should be 50/50;
60/40 is okay too.

Ingredients:

1 Loaf GF Bread or bag of
coarse GF Bread Crumbs
1 LG or 2 M Cooking Onion
4 LG stalks of Celery
1lb Mushrooms
3 Cloves Garlic
2 TBSP Olive Oil
Salt, Pepper
3+ TBSP Poultry Spice
1 Ltr Chicken Stock
1 lg sauce pan
1 Lg mixing Bowl
Heat Safe spatula
Oven Safe Baking Dish



Directions:

- Dice Onion, celery, and garlic – set aside
- Halve, and then slice the halves of mushrooms – set aside
- Heat a large pot over medium heat and add Olive oil. Once it starts to shimmer add diced ingredients. Sweat down in pot until celery begins to soften.
- Add mushrooms. Add salt and pepper to taste.
- Remember your bread will be quite dull, and if your stock is salt-free, this is where you are adding most of your flavour. Be generous! If anything starts to stick, add a dash of your broth
- Sprinkle poultry spice over ingredients, and mix in well. Let spices blend in, and taste to see if more or anything is needed.
- Keep cooking until onions are sweet, and celery is cooked through. Remove from heat
- Get a giant bowl, place breadcrumbs in the bowl
- Add cooked veggies to breadcrumbs – mix well, but don't let the breadcrumbs break down too much.
- Slowly add chicken stock as needed for moisture while tossing. Only add a 1/3 of a cup at a time and mix between. You want the bread to stay smooth, just a lovely softness with some texture from the outside.
- Taste! Add more salt and pepper as needed. Place in ovenproof baking dish. Heat at 350 F until centre is cooked . If you notice it drying out, add little stock.



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Butternut squash soup



FOR THE SOUP

Ingredients:

- 2 cups butternut squash, peeled and diced
- 1 medium onion, peeled and diced
- 2 medium carrots, peeled and diced
- 1 medium apple, peeled, cored, and diced
- 1 small fennel bulb, trimmed and diced
- 2 cloves garlic, peeled and minced
- 1 tbsp olive oil
- ½ tsp cayenne pepper (adjust to taste)
- 1 tsp dried oregano
- Salt to taste
- 4 cups vegetable stock

FOR THE GARNISH

Ingredients:

- 1/4 cup Pumpkin seeds

By Chef Sergio, 2guys with knives.

Warm, comforting, and rich in flavour, this butternut squash and fennel soup is perfect for a cozy meal. It's sure to please your palate with hints of apple and a touch of spice.

Directions:

1. Prepare the Garnish:

- Preheat the oven to 350°F (175°C).
- Spread the pumpkin seeds on a parchment-lined baking tray. Toast in the oven for 10 minutes. Remove and set aside.

2. Prepare the Ingredients:

- Wash, peel, and dice the butternut squash, onion, carrots, apple, and fennel.
- Peel and finely mince the garlic.

3. Cook the Soup:

- In a large pot, heat the olive oil over medium heat. Add the diced onion and sauté for 2 minutes. Add the minced garlic and sauté for an additional minute.
- Add the butternut squash, carrots, apple, and fennel to the pot. Cook while stirring for about 10 minutes.
- Season with cayenne pepper, oregano, and salt, stirring for another minute.
- Pour in the vegetable stock and bring the mixture to a boil. Reduce the heat and let it simmer gently for 20 minutes, or until the vegetables are soft.

4. Blend the Soup:

- Remove the pot from the heat and let it cool slightly. Transfer the soup to a high-speed blender (work in batches if needed) and blend until smooth.

5. Serve:

- Pour the soup into individual bowls. Garnish with toasted pumpkin seeds for a delightful crunch and serve warm.

Comfort Foods

By Catherine Dunwoody

Rain, cold and early sunsets.

Sure, we have lots of winter ahead, but these gluten-free foods make meals a little cozier.



Taste Republic GF Four Cheese Tortelloni are the puffiest pillows of deliciousness, nice with a cream sauce.



Sprague's Triple Bean Chili is super satisfying, vegan and high in fibre. Mexican night got more fun.



M & M Food Market's Sesame Japchae Noodles are Korean sweet potato glass noodles with shiitake mushrooms, red peppers, carrots, spinach and eggs.



The Plant-It Food Co Biryani Bowl contains plant-based Chick'n chunks in Indian spices with raisins, cauliflower, spinach, peas served over Basmati rice.

Winter Holiday GF-TREATS

By Catherine Dunwoody

We don't have to miss out on all the fun with these goodies, perfect for sharing, from a variety of cultures and traditions - and all delicious.



Gluten-Free Speculoos Spiced Cookies from Schär are a Belgian biscuit served with coffee. Great for that evening with friends & family. Schär brings Gluten-Free Panettone, a part of any Italian Christmas. Panettone is a loaf of sweet bread with raisins and candied citrus peel.

Katz Gluten Free Cinnamon Rugelach. Dunk them into a glass of milk during Hanukkah, or pack a few for a snack.

A visit to America for any Celiac usually involves a stop at Trader Joe's. Grab these GF Papadums Crisps made with lentils, chickpeas & Indian spices.

Cole's Christmas Pudding is not only gluten-free but contains no nuts, alcohol or dairy.

Celebrate Kwanzaa with your own Personalized Belgian Chocolate Bars, great to gift to friends and family.

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Feast of the FISHES

A Celiac-Friendly Holiday Tradition

By Kathleen Semple

The Feast of the Seven Fishes is a cherished Italian-American tradition, especially on Christmas Eve, where families celebrate with a festive seafood meal. The origins of the feast come from Italy's Catholic tradition of fasting on Christmas Eve, where fish, as a meat substitute, became the star of the dinner. The number seven holds symbolic meaning, possibly representing the seven sacraments, the seven days of creation, or the abundance of seafood in Italy.

Though the tradition is most common in Southern Italy, it has been embraced by Italian-American communities across the US. The meal often features a variety of seafood dishes, such as:

- Baccalà (salted cod)
- Fried calamari (squid)
- Clams or mussels

These dishes can span several courses, and families often add their own regional specialties, creating a festive, multi-course celebration.

A Celiac-Friendly Feast

For those with celiac disease or gluten sensitivity, the Feast of the Seven Fishes is easily adaptable. Many of the traditional dishes, like baccalà (salted cod) or fried calamari, can be prepared without gluten. For fried dishes like calamari, you can use gluten free flour for breading. Gluten free pasta or side dishes can replace traditional pasta to make the meal safe for everyone at the table.

With some simple substitutions, families can enjoy the rich flavors and tradition of the feast while accommodating dietary needs, ensuring that no one misses out on the fun.

The Joy of the Feast

The Feast of the Seven Fishes is more than just a meal - it's a time for families to come together, celebrate their heritage, and create lasting memories. Whether enjoyed with traditional recipes or modified for dietary restrictions, the feast remains a symbol of unity, joy, and the spirit of the holiday season.

Baccalà (salted cod) may not be everyone's cup of tea, so here's a similar version with fresh cod!

COD WITH TOMATOES AND PRUNES



Ingredients

- ½ a large Cod
- 1 Jar Passata – strained tomatoes
- 1 large cooking onion
- 1 - 2 cups Prunes
- Salt
- Pepper
- Baking Dish with a lid or tin foil to cover

Directions

- Preheat oven to 375 F
- Cut Cod into 7cmx7cm pieces with similar thickness
- Place into baking dish, evenly spaced
- Sprinkle with salt and pepper
- Chop onion into strips, separate layers and evenly disperse through pan
- Chop prunes in half, evenly disperse through pan
- Open passata, and pour evenly through pan over fish and other ingredients. Depending on the size of your dish, you may not need the whole jar (it does not need to be more than 1cm pooled at the bottom)
- Cover dish and bake in middle of oven. Check after 20 minutes
- Fish should be warm in the middle, the flesh turns opaque in colour and it easily flakes with a fork.
- For the last 5 minutes or so, remove lid and return to oven to reduce some of the liquid inside.
- Serve and Enjoy!



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Navigating the holidays with Celiac Disease

Advocating for yourself at the table



By Ailish Douglas

The holiday season brings an abundance of shared meals, baked treats, and potluck gatherings - traditions that help make this time of year so special. But for people with celiac disease, this can also present challenges. Every dish, every ingredient, and every spoon shared can present a risk. Living with celiac disease means avoiding even tiny amounts of gluten, as this can cause a variety of symptoms and long-term health impacts.

When you're with family and friends, it's not uncommon to feel awkward about asking questions, requesting accommodations, or declining food offered by a gracious host. It's especially tricky around those who may not know much about celiac disease or understand that even a crumb can have consequences. Here are a few ways to make the season more manageable and enjoyable without compromising your health.



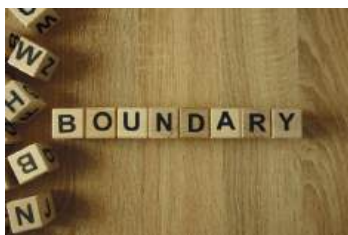
Take a Moment to Educate: The reality is that many people - even those with good intentions - may not fully understand the strict dietary requirements of celiac disease. Before the gathering, take a moment to explain the basics to your host: celiac disease is an autoimmune condition, not a choice, and even a crumb of gluten can cause harm. Some people might mistake it for a preference or intolerance, so a quick explanation can clear things up and help avoid misunderstandings.



Be Proactive in Planning: To reduce risk, bring a dish or two that you know is safe. This way, you're guaranteed something to eat without navigating the uncertainty of unfamiliar foods or cross-contact risks. Plus, this opens up opportunities to introduce others to gluten free dishes and dispel any myths about how they might taste!



Watch Out for Cross Contact: Holiday tables are often a mix of shared utensils and plates, which makes cross-contact a real concern. If possible, ask to serve yourself first, and request that gluten free food be presented on a separate plate. For larger gatherings, consider bringing a meal that's just for you if you're uncertain about cross-contact risks.



Don't Be Afraid to Set Boundaries: You may encounter well-meaning friends or family members who offer you foods that aren't safe, saying things like, "It's just a little bit," or "Are you sure you can't just try some?" Politely but firmly set a boundary by saying, "Thank you so much for offering, but I really can't have any gluten. It's just not safe for me." Having an ally, perhaps a close friend or family member, who understands your condition and can help support you can be a significant relief. They can help advocate or explain for you if you feel overwhelmed.



Enjoy the season in your own way: Living with celiac disease can feel isolating during food-centred celebrations, but remember, there's more to the season than what's on the table. Find joy in other traditions, and don't hesitate to start new ones, like sharing a favourite gluten free recipe with those around you. Shifting the focus away from food can make gatherings feel less daunting and allow you to celebrate fully.

Your health is the priority. Celebrate Safely!





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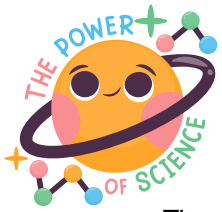
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CELIAC IN THE NEWS

By Val Vaartnou, Member CCA BC and Tomi Ismail, MPH, Volunteer CCA BC

The subsequent content comprises summaries of research that is either underway or has been completed, sourced from reputable medical journals and trusted celiac-related websites. Hyperlinks are included for additional information as of the time of this writing. The DOI serves as the link to the complete published article available online. Should the link not direct you to the article immediately, please copy it into the URL field at the top of your browser and press ENTER. It is important to note that, over time, some links may become inactive due to information being deleted or removed

Obesity and Celiac Disease: Surprising New Trends at Diagnosis

A new study from Iranian researchers highlights a surprising trend: *37% of patients newly diagnosed with celiac disease (CeD) are overweight or obese.* Traditionally, CeD has been associated with malabsorption and underweight, but the findings show that people of various body weights may be affected, challenging assumptions about how the disease presents itself. This meta-analysis reviewed *data from 23 studies and over 15,000 CeD patients worldwide, including US and UK studies*, to assess the prevalence of obesity, overweight, and underweight in people with CeD at diagnosis.

The study found that, at diagnosis, 11.78% of CeD patients were obese, and 18.42% were overweight. Over the past two decades, the combined rate of overweight and obesity in CeD patients rose from 22% to over 32%, while underweight cases dropped. Higher BMIs were more common in older patients and, to a lesser extent, in women.

The implications for those with celiac disease are that physicians should not exclude the possibility of CeD in overweight or obese patients, as weight alone is not a reliable indicator of the disease. Early diagnosis is crucial, as untreated CeD can lead to complications, including nutrient deficiencies, osteoporosis, and other long-term health issues. With prompt diagnosis and management through a gluten free diet, many of these complications may be prevented.

Source: Maleki, F, Hosseinpour, M, Delpisheh, A et al. The prevalence of obesity and underweight in celiac patients at the time of diagnosis: a systematic review and meta-analysis. *BMC Gastroenterol* 24, 357 (2024). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12876-024-03446-x>

McMaster research identifies the immune response in CeD when gluten is ingested.

Researchers at McMaster University have found where celiac disease starts in the small intestine. Intestinal epithelial cells (IEC), when exposed to gluten with active celiac disease, result in the activation of gluten-specific CD4+ T cells, an immune response. They found that this inner lining, signals the immune system to attack when gluten is present. They also found that this reaction worsens if harmful bacteria are present in the gut. Therapeutics targeting the IEC can potentially stop the immune response seen in celiac disease.

Source: Rahmani S, et al Gluten-Dependent Activation of CD4+ T Cells by MHC Class II-Expressing Epithelium. *Gastroenterology*. 2024;167(6):1113-1128. doi:10.1053/j.gastro.2024.07.008

Saliva testing as a pediatric diagnostic tool for celiac disease

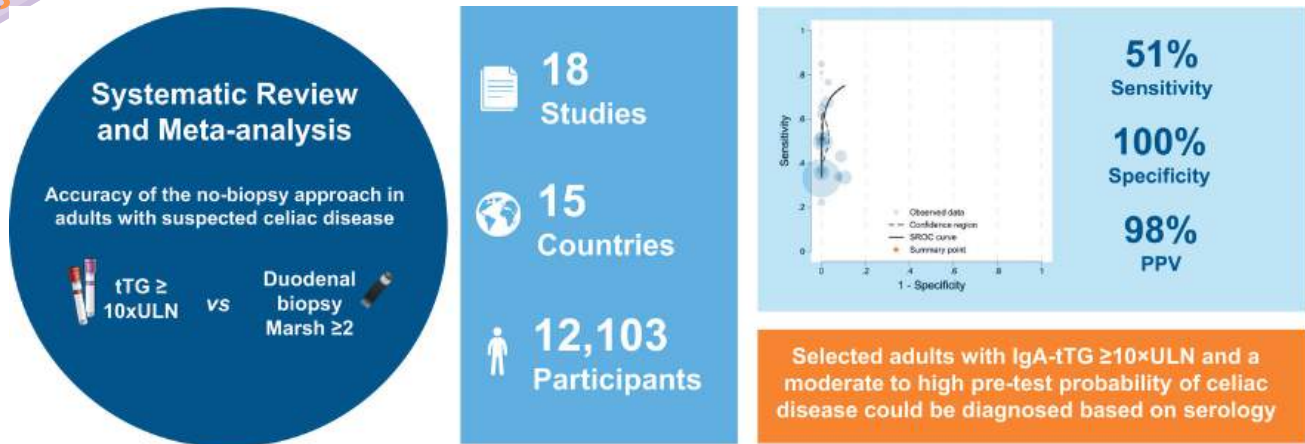
This small study (n=12) compared children with active celiac disease (CeD), children on a GF diet and healthy children. It looked at the oral bacterial mix in the study's participants. The study found that distinct bacterial strains were abundant in the saliva of patients with active CeD. There were significant differences in the composition of the oral microbiome of the three groups in the study. As a result, it suggests that the oral microbiome of patients may lead to a non-invasive screen test for the disease. Further testing of these theories is required.

Source: Noruzpour, A, Gholam-Mostafaei, FS, Looha, M A et al. Assessment of salivary microbiota profile as a potential diagnostic tool for pediatric celiac disease. *Sci Rep* 14, 16712 (2024). <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41598-024-67677-4>





CELIAC IN THE NEWS



Graphical Abstract - Shiha MG, Nandi N, Raju SA, et al ***Accuracy of the No-Biopsy Approach for the Diagnosis of Celiac Disease in Adults: A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis***. *Gastroenterology*. 2024;166(4):620-630.
doi:10.1053/j.gastro.2023.12.023

Gastroenterology

Moving Away from Biopsy Confirmation of Celiac Disease

Comments by Dr Benjamin Lebwohl, Columbia University Irving Medical Centre, respected researcher and practicing gastroenterologist.

For anyone in the process of being diagnosed with celiac disease, whether to have an endoscopy performed is clouded by differing opinions. Recent changes have challenged the necessity of duodenal biopsy as the primary diagnostic method for celiac disease. In 2012, the European Society for Pediatric Gastroenterology and Nutrition endorsed a biopsy-free diagnosis for symptomatic children with high TTG IgA levels (≥ 10 -fold) and elevated endomysial antibodies. Updated in 2020, these guidelines now include asymptomatic children. Following suit, the American College of Gastroenterology recently recommended a biopsy-free approach for children while suggesting "likely celiac disease" for adults unwilling to undergo a biopsy.

However, scepticism remains. A new meta-analysis by Shiha et al (2024) found that among 12,000 patients with high TTG IgA, 98% had celiac disease. Yet, variability across studies and concerns about biases limit these findings. While serology offers promise, relying solely on it might miss some cases. Biopsy, though imperfect, still provides essential confirmation, especially for lifelong dietary changes. The evolving landscape may eventually permit non-biopsy diagnoses, but further data is needed.

Dr Lebwohl delves into the research to provide insight into the answer. In Canada (other than some changes in the medical standard for the diagnosis of celiac disease in children), the endoscopy is still considered the gold standard for the diagnosis of the disease. The blood test (tTG IgA) is viewed as a screening test.

Source: Lebwohl B. Moving Away From Biopsy Confirmation of Celiac Disease. *Gastroenterology*. 2024;166(4):557-558. doi:10.1053/j.gastro.2024.01.037



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Other ways to support

If you would prefer to give of your time, send us an email to info@bcceliac.ca and we would be happy to discuss what opportunities for volunteering exist.





CELIAC IN THE NEWS

Depletion of gut microbes in a newborn's gut by antibiotics can lead to lifelong allergies.

A UBC press release caught our eye as being relevant to the development of celiac disease. Our immune system's development stage is set very early in life. Over the past two decades, research has pointed to microbes in the infant gut playing a pivotal role. Babies often receive antibiotics shortly after birth to combat infections, which can diminish certain bacteria. As uncovered in this research, some of those bacteria produce butyrate, which could be critical to halting the reaction cascade.

In their latest research publication, Dr McNagny's lab showed that ILC2s (type 2 innate lymphoid cells) proliferate if butyrate is not given to mice. ILC2s "produce molecules that 'flip a switch' on white blood cells to make them produce an abundance of certain kinds of antibodies. These antibodies then coat cells as a defence against foreign invaders, giving the allergic person an immune system ready to attack at the slightest provocation."

Without butyrate to dampen them, every cell, molecule, and antibody increases dramatically in number. "Butyrate must be given during a narrow window after birth—a few months for humans, a few weeks for mice—to prevent the proliferation of ILC2s and all that follows."

This study confirms a process that links antibiotics at a young age to the destruction and dysbiosis of the gut microbiome and the changes in the immune function that can last a lifetime. It does identify an intervention that may be able to reverse this process.

Source: Kabil A, Nayyar N, Brassard J, et al. Microbial intestinal dysbiosis drives long-term allergic susceptibility by sculpting an ILC2-B1 cell-innate IgE axis. J Allergy Clin Immunol. Published online August 10, 2024. doi:10.1016/j.jaci.2024.07.023

Psoriasis patients: prevalence of autoimmune conditions including celiac disease

This Saudi Arabian study looked at 839 psoriasis patients and their other autoimmune conditions. The autoimmune diseases included: "hypothyroidism, hyperthyroidism, alopecia areata, vitiligo, atopic dermatitis, and inflammatory bowel diseases like Crohn's disease and celiac diseases."

The results of the study showed that hypothyroidism was seen in 6.8%, hyperthyroidism at 2.6%, alopecia areata at 2.9%, and vitiligo at 1.9%. Celiac disease was found in under 1.0% of patients. However, like CeD, psoriasis is an immune-mediated disease where dendritic cells and T-cell activation lead to cytokine release (including "tumour necrosis factor-alpha, interleukin 23 (IL-23) and interleukin 17 (IL-17) from the neutrophilic granulocytes, keratinocytes, and vascular endothelial cells.)" This is also observed in rheumatoid arthritis, thyroiditis," and celiac disease.

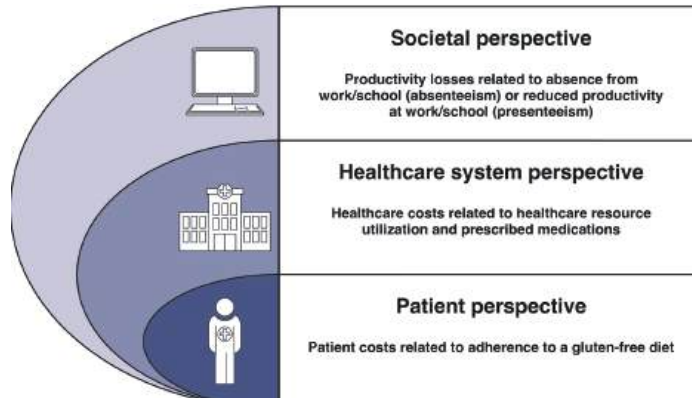
The relevance of this study for celiac patients is the interconnectedness of autoimmune conditions. The limitation of the study was that all study participants were from the same healthcare facility.

Source: Hakami AR, AlSalman SA, Aljaziri NJ, Homoud B, Almohideb M. Prevalence of Autoimmune Diseases Among Patients With Psoriasis: A Single Tertiary Center Experience. Cureus. 2024;16(5):e60455. Published 2024 May 16. doi:10.7759/cureus.60455



The Economic Iceberg of Celiac Disease: More Than the Cost of Gluten-Free Food

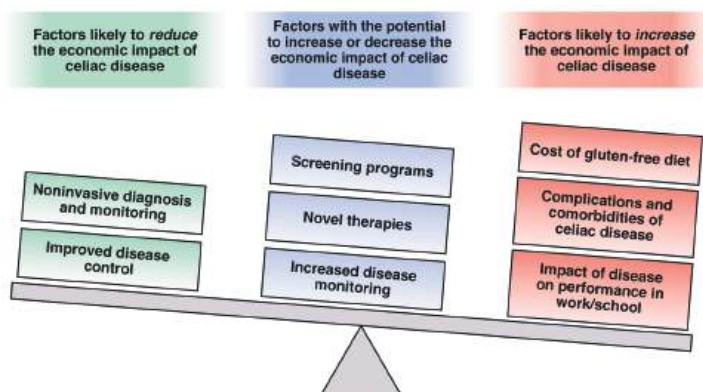
By Harpreet Kaur, PhD



In recent years, analysis of the financial burden of celiac disease has been taking centre stage. It is becoming more evident that its financial toxicity extends beyond the cost of gluten-free food. In this review paper, researchers from key medical institutes across North America and Europe provide evidence of more significant but hidden expenses related to excess healthcare use for complications and comorbidities and reduced productivity.

Key findings from N.America and Europe include:

- Costs and availability:** Besides excess costs of GF Foods (sometimes 2-3x the cost of wheat-based products), additional time spent on shopping, preparing food, or finding safe places to eat outside the home are factors associated with a significantly increased burden of the diet as a treatment.
- Nutrient Gaps:** GF products often need more essential nutrients compared to wheat-based alternatives. Studies show that GF diets can be deficient in iron, B vitamins, fibre, protein, calcium, zinc, and magnesium. Paradoxically, following a GF diet may lead to weight gain and increased BMI in celiac patients due to higher consumption of added sugars, fats, and refined starches in GF diets, potentially contributing to metabolic syndrome and fatty liver.
- Healthcare costs:** A US-based study on nearly 31,000 Celiac patients showed that the mean annual cost of healthcare use and prescribed medications in patients with CD was 2.48 times higher than in matched reference individuals (\$12,217 vs \$4,935).
- Indirect Costs to Society:** Data collected from the Swedish National Social Insurance register showed that working-age patients with prevalent CD had 1.49 times more work loss than matched reference individuals (42.5 days vs 28.6 days), equivalent to \$2,800 in lost productivity in 2015.
- Solutions:** Improved diagnostic techniques and controls, approval of novel non-dietary therapeutic modalities, increased awareness and screening programs.



Finally, a deeper understanding of how Celiac Disease affects the economy in multi-faceted ways could shape future policy decisions and help healthcare providers offer more comprehensive support to their patients.



Royal Victoria Marathon

EXPO - UPDATE

As part of our public education mission, our chapter was an exhibitor at the Royal Victoria Marathon Expo on October 11 and 12, 2024. As this was our first time at the event, we did not know what to expect, so we were armed with fact sheets, magazines, and other resources and a mission to educate and support all runners.

There were over 12,000 runners registered for the marathon, and it was not a surprise that our booth attracted many people. Nearly 500 people stopped to ask questions. Approximately 150 people had been diagnosed with celiac disease, and another 100 or so people were friends or family members who were eager to receive information and to learn about how to support their loved ones, friends, and their kids' friends with celiac disease.

Before the Exhibitor space even opened, other Exhibitors came to ask questions. We were thrilled to have so many people stop by our booth to play "Spin the Wheel," learn about celiac disease, and learn why a gluten-free diet is essential. One of the most memorable moments was meeting a young girl celebrating her first anniversary of being diagnosed with celiac disease while her mom was running the marathon. She was so thankful we were there. Many families were happy to receive information on how to support their loved ones, friends, and their kids' friends with celiac disease.



Sam working his magic as the Quiz Master at "Spin the Wheel"



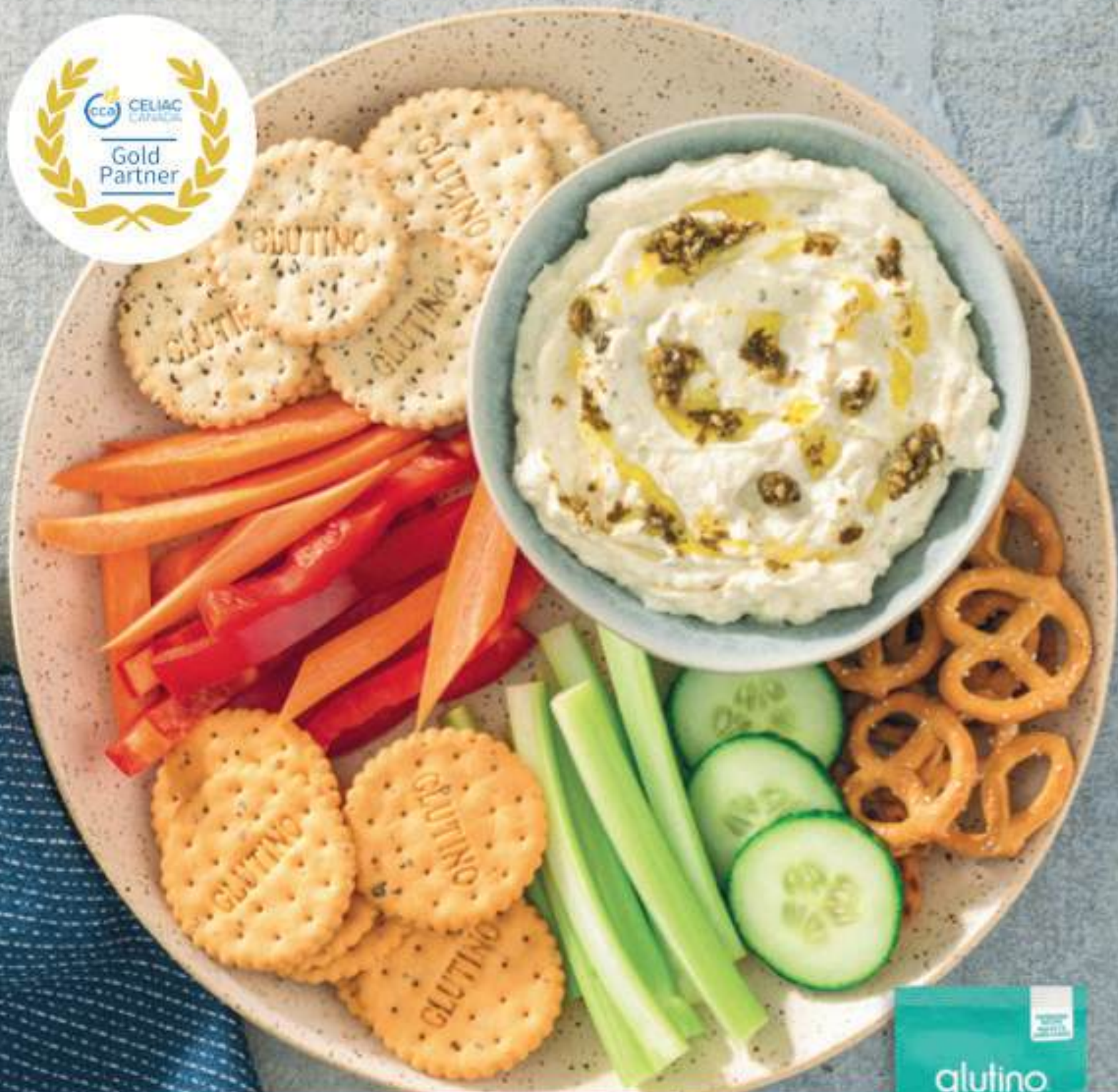
Mark Johnson and Prithpal Panesar manning the booth at the Expo

Additional volunteers were needed to help manage the busy booth—many thanks to Megan Weston and her son, Sam, Mark Johnson and Prithpal Panesar. We met several individuals celebrating milestones like their six-month or first anniversary of being diagnosed with celiac disease. One gentleman, newly diagnosed just a few weeks earlier, was relieved to find us and get the needed information.

Runners expressed that our presence helped them feel included and part of the race for the first time. Some even asked if we could help organize celiac-safe snacks for future races. Parents with recently-diagnosed family members sought advice on whether their whole family should go gluten free or get tested. We were able to guide them and encourage them to join our association for ongoing support.

The best part? Connecting with fellow celiacs who expressed gratitude for our presence, many said they finally felt "seen." They couldn't wait for us to return next year!





We Are What You Eat

Delicious gluten free snacks aren't something new we've cooked up — we've been perfecting them for over 20 years. And as long as people love delicious food, we don't plan on stopping.



THESA Conference

UPDATE

At the THESA (Teachers of Home Economics Specialist Association) Conference 2024 we expanded our public health education efforts by hosting a booth and delivering two oral presentations. After the last THESA conference, over 300 students were given presentations in their classrooms on Celiac Disease with a gluten free labelling exercise.

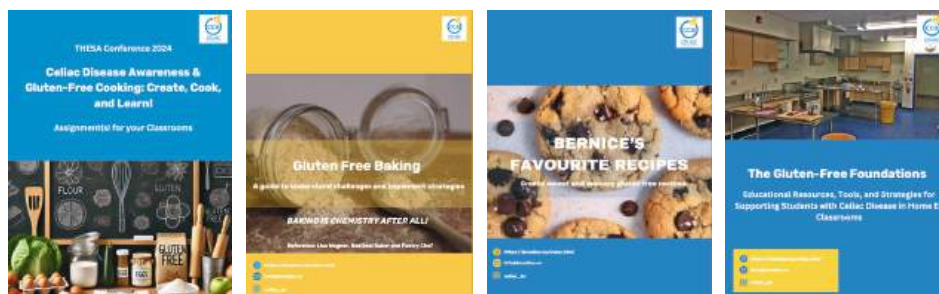
This year, at the conference in October, we engaged with over 250 teachers from across British Columbia, sharing strategies for managing busy shared kitchens in school settings, with nearly 40 teachers signing up for interactive presentations on Celiac Disease. Our team provided practical tips for maintaining safe, inclusive, and efficient cooking spaces and, with invaluable support from our volunteer Val Vartnou and Jen at GoodFlour, offered valuable techniques to improve gluten free baking and cooking, helping educators confidently address dietary needs.



CCA-BC Board Directors at THESA
L-R: Ravneet Mundi, Julie Clement, Cynthia Loveman

Our Vice President, Ravneet, delivered presentations to teachers highlighting the importance of creating inclusive environments for students with celiac disease, especially in Home Economics classrooms. She focused on how celiac disease can affect both mental and physical health and the need for mindful practices that support students in fully participating in all activities. Ravneet also emphasized the role of social engagement and the importance of students with dietary restrictions feeling supported and included. Through an interactive learning approach, we incorporated a crash course on Celiac Disease into the presentation and invited teachers to reflect on their classrooms using a case-based study.

This conference engagement reflects our ongoing commitment to enhancing public health initiatives within school settings, equipping teachers with the knowledge and tools to foster inclusive, healthy classroom environments for all students. By promoting awareness and understanding, we empower educators and students, ensuring that students feel more confident, supported, and fully included in every aspect of classroom life and allowing teachers to feel confident providing support for students with celiac disease.



Resources provided at the THESA Conference



Autumn Dine Out Review & Update

By Aliya Hirji

This autumn was busy with two Dine Out events and planning events for the upcoming year!

CCA BC President Cynthia Loveman and Director Aliya Hirji started the autumn season in September by meeting celiac community members in Granville Island (Vancouver) at Popina Canteen for delicious gluten free fish and chips and burgers. Popina Canteen is open from May to September so people can enjoy the beautiful sunny weather, the joyful ambience of Granville Island, and safe food items for celiacs and non-celiacs alike. The team at Popina Canteen assured us that the food was safe as all of their fryers are gluten free since all of their fried items are gluten free! The gluten free food is made on a separate surface to prevent cross-contact.



In October, we ventured to Olive & Anchor in Horseshoe Bay to enjoy a casual lunch overlooking the water with various gluten free options. Our server did a fantastic job of explaining how items could be modified to make them gluten free and changes to specific menu items to make them celiac-safe when they were not safe in the past. Hats off to the staff at Olive & Anchor for a beautiful experience. It is always lovely to see former CCA BC Directors attending our events. For me, it takes me back to my newly diagnosed years when I was still learning about celiac disease and how CCA BC advocates for our community.

The monthly Dine Out events are an opportunity for celiacs to come together in person to socialize and learn from each other in a restaurant where the Board of Directors have asked the staff questions (every person should do their due diligence by asking their questions though), and be introduced to a new restaurant where they can dine.

After the pandemic, the Board understood the importance of celiacs coming together in person, as we live in a world where we spend more and more time in front of a screen, so we continued to organize these restaurant outings. Each event is a time for laughing together about the trials and tribulations of celiac disease, an opportunity to ask questions of each other and the Board, learn about upcoming CCA BC events, and eat delicious food!

Stay tuned for CCA BC's Dine Out 2025 events, where we will host meals at restaurants across the Lower Mainland and Vancouver Island (when possible) and other programs for a change. Family members and kids are welcome to attend (based on restaurant rules).

Don't forget to ensure you receive the monthly e-newsletter to learn where we will meet in the coming months .

The True Cost of Living with Celiac Disease: Financial, Emotional, and Social Impacts of a GF Life

By Julie Clement

For those of us living with celiac disease or gluten sensitivity, we understand that the financial implications of the GF diet can be substantial.

One of the most apparent financial burdens is that gluten free (GF) products are often significantly more expensive - up to 500% more expensive, according to Celiac Canada's 2023 State of Celiac survey - than their gluten-containing equivalents. This can be attributed to the use of specialised ingredients, the potential need for separate production facilities, and fewer economies of scale, among other reasons. For people living in or close to larger urban areas, the availability of GF foods may not be an issue. Still, in many rural or remote regions, if GF products are stocked, they are more expensive because of the added transportation costs. If products are unavailable locally, consumers may travel significant distances for a loaf of bread or a package of cookies.

Many of us may bemoan the general lack of celiac-safe options in our stores, but we must remember that there is also a cost to the manufacturer. Whilst in North America it is generally understood that approximately 1% of the population has celiac disease, more than 2/3 of those are undiagnosed. So, the market for genuinely celiac-safe GF options is small, which deters many businesses from investing. It may also be that business owners still perceive the GF diet as a fad rather than a medical necessity, meaning they see no benefit in entering this "short-term" market. I've already mentioned the increased cost of specialized ingredients, but these can also be more difficult to source - we all remember the recent shortages of GF oats.

Maintaining a GF environment requires stringent production controls to avoid cross-contact, which may involve costly modifications to processes and equipment. Meeting the strict standards for labelling and production can be highly complex and challenging, which is another barrier for small-scale manufacturers, but it is still one that even large businesses may be loath to take on. And, of course, the cost of third-party certification - which gives that extra reassurance to many GF consumers - is a high upfront cost, along with annual payments on an ongoing basis.

Convenience foods like frozen dinners and meal kits - often cheaper and more accessible when people lead busy lives - cannot be relied on by celiac patients. We may be required to buy whole foods, like produce, nuts and beans, and GF flours - often in bulk - to prepare meals from scratch. This may be healthier in the long term but can require a significant upfront investment in specialty ingredients like GF flours, gums, etc. This added time spent shopping and prepping is another cost implication - maybe through lost productivity or leisure time. On rare occasions, we may decide to dine out, but we generally face an upcharge for a GF bun or a salad substitute for fries. The risk of cross-contact in a catering environment can lead to increased anxiety, which leads us to choose higher-end or dedicated GF environments - at yet more cost.

Yet, there is more to the cost of living with celiac disease (CD) than the impact on our wallets. The stress and anxiety associated with navigating this diet can have mental health implications; we may feel overwhelmed with the constant requirement to read labels and advocate for ourselves, leading to a need for therapy or stress relief activities. The emotional strain can lead to tension within families, especially when loved ones struggle to understand the gravity of the situation or don't understand why you prepare and eat different meals - because you can't afford to feed the whole family GF. The constant need for dietary vigilance may lead to obsessive thoughts about food, which can trigger or exacerbate anxiety and depression. Studies have shown that individuals with CD are at a higher risk for developing mental health disorders.

The True Cost of Living with Celiac Disease: Financial, Emotional, and Social Impacts of a GF Life

What about the cost of multiple appointments with medical professionals who know less than we do and send us on our way?

The cost of not being taken seriously because this is a “trendy” fad diet?

The cost of dismissive comments and inappropriate jokes at our expense?



The cost of feeling socially isolated because your friends don't understand you can't eat at their preferred restaurant?

The cost of missing work because you got glutened AGAIN?

Do we need to be our healthcare provider, support system, and patient? Advocating for ourselves can be draining.

The cost of missing out on celebrating big life events and holidays with friends and family?

I know that you are living this every day. Beyond the physical symptoms, the financial, emotional, and social costs of celiac disease or a gluten disorder are profound and often overlooked.

As awareness of CD grows, we must look to friends, family, healthcare professionals and the food industry to assist us in managing these costs, giving us a genuine sense of community and understanding. Yet we must also acknowledge the burden on manufacturers, retailers, and restaurants as we work towards more accessible and affordable solutions for those who MUST adhere to the GF diet. The actual cost of living with CD extends far beyond the financial implications, impacting our mental well-being, relationships, and overall quality of life.

GF Labelling: Canada VS USA

by Julie Clement



Shared with permission from Taylor Silfverduk

Are you travelling to the US soon? Labelling laws there are more complicated than here in Canada - but not as terrifying as the internet would have you believe!

Here's a free dietitian-led class that will teach you how to identify safe gluten free food in the US using four simple steps. The class is taught by Tayler Silfverduk, a registered dietitian in the US who specialises in celiac disease and who's lived with it for over 10 years herself, and a dietitian that I have a lot of respect for.

Class: <https://www.celiacdietitian.us/freelabelclass>

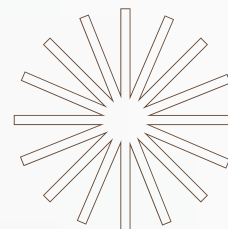


CeliacDietitian



Tayler Silfverduk





Mark Johnson

Sharing his gluten free travel journeys across the globe, here he is seen enjoying an empanada in Paraguay



SOUTH AMERICA DONE GF

A wonderful gluten free honeymoon in South America

When it comes to Canadians and their winter travel destinations, South America isn't usually atop the list. However, my wife and I decided to do some exploring for our honeymoon, visiting several countries in South America and adding on a cruise down around Antarctica.

I'm happy to report that it was a gluten free success!

As I always do, I spent a good deal of time planning, and for our visits to Asunción, Paraguay, and Buenos Aires, Argentina, I deliberately booked an Airbnb super close to gluten free bakeries. For the cruise, we went with Celebrity, which I've used a number of times before, always with tremendous success.

We actually started the trip in Santiago, Chile, and after my gluten free meals aboard the long Air Canada flight down, I relied on grocery store purchases to get by while there - fruits, vegetables, rice, etc.

GF: SOUTH AMERICA

I wasn't in Santiago long enough to explore the area, and whilst I considered going to a gluten free restaurant, there weren't any nearby, so we cooked ourselves. In fact, that's one reason I more often go for Airbnbs rather than hotels - the ability to easily cook for myself, especially in unfamiliar terrain or where I do not speak the language. I have picked up very basic Spanish, but still good to play it safe. There are apart-hotels with kitchens or kitchenettes, which are great, but if that's not an option (or not affordable), I definitely look for Airbnbs.

After about a day in Santiago, and another day out at Playa Luna beach on the coast, we headed to Asunción, Paraguay, where I immediately stocked up at Love Cook, a gluten free bakery that offered lots of doughy delights. Empanadas are pretty common throughout much of South America, and they had several choices for me (chicken and ham and cheese are quite popular). I also bought a few other items that, whilst I do not know their names, contained bread and meat and I was happy to give them a try. I also learned that alfajores are quite a delicious dessert! Definitely try one if you get the chance.



Love to cook Empanadas

At our next stop, Buenos Aires, Argentina, Goût Gluten Free also did not disappoint. They, too, had a line of empanadas and plenty of pastries to suit all tastes, including more alfajores. I visited that bakery on my first day. On the second day, I visited La Union Gluten Free Bakery, where I enjoyed a cappuccino with medialunas – a croissant with chocolate. Mmm! I was only in Buenos Aires for around 18 hours, and given that I had these two bakeries within a ten-minute walk, I didn't bother seeking out any restaurants.

We did pop into a grocery store, and I was surprised at the vast array of gluten free products available (versus Chile, where the supermarket I visited had almost nothing). After our brief stop in Buenos Aires, Mary and I embarked on a two-week cruise that sailed around part of Antarctica, with stops in Ushuaia, Puerto Madryn, the Falkland Islands and Montevideo, Uruguay.



Grocery store in Buenos Aires

Look for the "sin TACC" logo: it's the Spanish version of gluten free, and you'll see it on products in several South American countries. TACC = trigo (wheat), avena (oats), cebada (barley) and centeno (rye).

I ate extremely well aboard the Celebrity Infinity, with smoked salmon, an omelet for most breakfasts, and my dinners prepared in advance in a gluten free kitchen area. They are always very attentive to cross contact, and from tuna steaks to beef tartare, and from gluten free pizza to chocolate mousse, I never went hungry. I had no need to worry about gluten free at the various ports of call, as they were always just a few hours in length and I ate on the cruise ship.



GF food aboard Cruise

Heading home after the cruise, I found celiac-friendly service at the Centurion Lounge at the Buenos Aires (EZE) airport. Before leaving South America, I ordered gluten-free ham and cheese empanadas – one last empanada indulgence before leaving South America. I miss them!

If, down the road, you're looking to get away from winter and want to try something a bit out of the ordinary, consider South America! We certainly had no shortage of sun and heat. Chile, Argentina, and Uruguay all boast amazing beaches. There are travel deals to be found out there – though it's quite a trip down (our flight was via Toronto, and it was 10.5 hours from Toronto down to Santiago), so be ready for that. Whatever destination you choose, please be safe and always strictly gluten-free!

Dear Santa,

I HOPE YOU ENJOY THESE DELICIOUS GLUTEN-FREE AND NON-GMO COOKIES WE MADE FOR YOU. THEY ARE DELICIOUS, NUTRITIOUS, AND DAMN GOOD.

Love,

**What
the
Flour**



Free from
gluten, peanuts
& rice



Available at:



HOMESENSE



CLOVERDALE
COUNTRY MARKET



FRESH ST. MARKET

BulkBarn

[stoke]
MARKET



What the Flour

Making GF accessible, from online to retail.

Randy Sihota and his partners Sagar Sanghera and Sunny Burchha are enthusiastic fans and owners of What The Flour. In a quick chat with them the CCA BC team was delighted to learn of their story, their inspiration and future plans.

Randy Sihota is very familiar with the challenges of living gluten free. For a number of years, Randy's successful family-owned and operated business, Wescana Foods, has been a leading source of high quality Canadian gluten free oats.

But Randy wanted to do more for those of us who need to live gluten free. He saw an opportunity with What The Flour. Last year, Randy purchased What The Flour in partnership with Sagar and Sunny to offer a variety of delicious and easy to use gluten free flour mixes, to meet the needs of busy families.

Before becoming involved with What The Flour, Sagar was aware of the link between natural, organic food and health, but was not as familiar with celiac disease and gluten free food.

He described how gluten is a mainstay in many traditional, culturally important foods and dishes for various communities. However, when the potentially harmful effects of gluten are not well-known or recognized, gluten free options are often scarce. When some of Sagar's friends and family addressed health issues by reducing or removing items such as roti (Indian flat bread primarily made of wheat) and other gluten-containing food from their diets, he noticed that they quickly achieved positive health benefits.

Sagar is a proud new father of two young children and wants to set the pace and model healthy behaviours, one of which is to be mindful of the connection between health and food. Sagar was keen when Randy approached him with the opportunity to be part of What The Flour so he could support and provide for those needing gluten free food with more options.

Sunny, who is recently married, shared that many members of his wife's family have a gluten intolerance and some even celiac disease. He was stunned because he had not heard of anyone who needed to avoid gluten before this. And he quickly realized the challenges of sourcing gluten free flour and food.

Before joining the What The Flour team, Sunny and his wife conducted their blind taste test; his wife made cookies (using the flour blends) and sent them to family members who had no idea that the cookies were gluten free. Everyone loved them! That inspired Sunny to become a partner in this business.



We (CCA BC) were curious about what inspired Randy to take on What the Flour.

Randy shared that when the owner of What The Flour called Randy to ask if he knew of any buyers for the business, Randy jumped at the opportunity and immediately called Sagar and Sunny to assess if they'd be interested in partnering with him. Based on his own experience with Wescana Foods, he knew that there was a significant unmet need to be filled. Simple ingredients, simple recipes and tasty gluten free food options are a critical need. And bringing it to retail is his perfect cup of tea.

Great things can be expected from this motivated trio. They are driven to build new recipes and make the product more accessible across different provinces, reaching as many people as possible. They see this not only as a gluten free brand for those of us with celiac disease but also for those who may have a wide range of gluten sensitivities or want a plant-based option.

TAKE THE NEXT STEP
& JOIN THE COMMUNITY
ADVOCATING FOR CELIACS
IN BRITISH COLUMBIA

Monthly Membership Prize Draws*

Alkeme Artisan Bakery: 10% off orders +
subscription services

Iki Japanese Restaurant: 5% off each visit

Ask Jess: 30mins free with Registered
Dietitian Jess Pirnak

Samples and coupons

Celiac News Magazine Quarterly

Updates on programs, services + product
info in BC

Voting rights at our annual general
meeting

*For more details visit

www.bcceliac.ca/membership

Membership 2025 Benefits

2024 Monthly Membership Prize Draws completed so far...

Jan: Wescana & What The Flour

Feb: Grey Fox Brewery

Mar: The Skript (True Nosh)

Apr: Infusion Soy Sauce

May: 2 Guys with Knives

Jun: Innocent Ice Cream

Aug: Alkeme

Sep: Ghostfish Brewery

Oct: 2 Guys with Knives

Nov: Juke Fried Chicken

Dec: Virtue Natural Bakery

Are you a GF Business?

Consider becoming a Sponsor!

Advertise in Celiac News Magazine to reach
those of us who want to know about your
product the most.

Sponsor events with donations: coupons,
discounts, gift cards, merchandise, products
and samples.

Contact Kate to get involved: info@bcceliac.ca

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We are seeking a Treasurer to join our Board of Directors.



This volunteer role involves working with CCA BC's Board of Directors to oversee and approve financial information, ensure best practices are being met (according to government and legal standards) and, with the support of the board, help create financially sustainable strategies for the organization. The Treasurer may choose to focus entirely on this role but is welcome to join other committees at CCA BC (eg community outreach, research, editorial team, etc). The Treasurer is responsible for financial reports at each monthly board meeting, and QuickBooks knowledge would be an asset.



MAKE AN IMPACT BE OUR TREASURER

This is a call-out to accountants, financial professionals, or experienced treasurers.

Join us and become a leader in the community.

Contact: info@bcceliac.ca

If you have these skills and want to volunteer, reach out!

We are indebted to our treasurer, Betty Wong, who has contributed to the growth of the charity for nearly the past decade. Although Betty does not have celiac disease she volunteered her time and expertise to support the community. Betty will provide a detailed handover and remain available to help and advise as the new Treasurer comes up to speed. If you think you might be interested, check out the link on our LinkedIn page or feel free to email us at info@bcceliac.ca

If this is a position that would suit you well, reach out!



WWW.BCCELIAC.CA

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