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Wheat Sensitivity

What does this mean?

Why is it 'bad' for you?

What can we do about it?

This leaflet aims to answer these questions so that you can continue to enjoy a healthy, interesting but wheat-free diet.

What does it mean to have an intolerance to wheat?

An intolerance or sensitivity to any food means any reaction that the body might make in response to you eating that food. Wheat is a common cause of food reaction.


Wheat Products

Wheat is found in many foods and disguised in many ways.

The following is a list of places where wheat can be found - or hidden!

Some alcoholic drinks like German wheat beer	Flours: ordinary self-raising & plain, Gluten, Gram, Semolina, Wheat
Batter	Gluten
Biscuits	Hydrolyzed vegetable protein
Bread	Modified food starch
Breadcrumbs	MSG (monosodium glutamate)
Bulgur wheat	Pasta
Cake	Pastry and crumble mixes
Coffee substitutes	Soy sauce
Couscous	Vegetable starch
Durum wheat (used to make most pastas)	Vitamin E
	White grain vinegar

This list is not exhaustive. You will need to check food labels very carefully to make sure manufacturers have not included any of the above in their ingredients.



Wheat Sensitivity

Why is it 'bad' for you?

The exact mechanism for food intolerances is not fully understood at present. Part of the cause may simply be over eating wheat foods for many years which in the end, wears down the digestive tract and causes inflammation. Sometimes it is caused by an attack of food poisoning where the 'good' bacteria that help to digest our food get washed out of the system and are not easily replaced. Repeated doses of antibiotics can also deplete friendly bacteria. Long-term food intolerances can also deplete our immune systems making us more prone to infections.

What can we do about wheat intolerance?

If you have been used to eating wheat regularly it can seem daunting to consider eliminating it from your diet.

What is there left to eat you may be thinking?

There are alternatives to wheat which are becoming more widely available. Some (*) you will now find in the bigger supermarkets. Others can be obtained from good health food shops.

Corn flour* Potato flour
Buckwheat* (not a true wheat)
Ground rolled oats* Soybean flour
Rye flour* Amaranth
Quinoa* Corn meal
Potato starch Rice flour*
Oat flour Barley flour
Millet flour Ground nuts
Pea flour Tapioca flour
Chickpea flour

Below is a full day's menu to illustrate that you don't have to starve yourself and still avoid eating wheat!

Breakfast

Wheat free muesli with nuts and seeds
Rice/Soya/Cows milk
Tea or coffee

Mid-morning

Apple, pear or small banana
Herbal or fruit tea

Lunch

Vegetable soup
Ryvita ham 'sandwich'
Water with lemon slice

Mid-afternoon

Small handful of nuts and raisins
Tea

Dinner

Spaghetti Bolognese (using rice pasta)
& Large salad
Fruit yogurt
Herbal or fruit tea

Evening

One piece of fruit and/or herbal tea

Recipe books that will also help you plan sumptuous meals include:

'The Food Doctor Everyday Diet' by Ian Marber

'Cooking Without' by Barbara Cousins