

# YOUNG CHAMPIONS



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## Facts about coeliac disease

These are some key facts about coeliac disease to share with your friends and classmates!

### What is coeliac disease?

Coeliac disease (pronounced see-lee-ac) means that part of your tummy called the small intestine doesn't like something called 'gluten'. It means that you have to eat food that does not have 'gluten' in it so you need a 'gluten free' diet.

### What is gluten?

Gluten is found in some of the grains we eat. These grains are called wheat, rye and barley. Grains are ground down to make flour. Flour is used to make lots of the foods we eat such as bread, pasta, pizza, crackers and cakes. Some children with coeliac disease also get poorly when they eat oats.

### Why does gluten make me ill?

When you are ill, your body attacks bad bugs to help you get better. When you have coeliac disease your body makes a mistake and thinks that gluten is a bad bug and hurts your tummy. If your insides are sore because of gluten, you can't soak up all the goodness from your food. Because it is gluten making you poorly, when you stop eating gluten you will get better. But if you eat gluten you will feel poorly again.

  
live well **gluten free**



## How can I tell what foods have gluten in?

It can sometimes be tricky to tell if food is okay for you to eat because wheat, barley and rye can be in things you wouldn't normally think of. For example, some sausages have wheat added to them, and some chocolate bars contain biscuits. Food companies have to show on the label if a food has wheat, barley, rye or oats in it. You need to learn to read labels to understand what food you can have. When you go out, restaurants have to tell you what foods contain gluten so you can make sure you don't eat these and choose the right foods for you.

## Can you live a normal life?

Yes! You can still eat a lot of your favourite foods, they might just be made by a different company or from a different shop. Don't worry, you will be able to find gluten free versions of your favourite foods that will be fine for you to eat and are just as nice. There are also lots of foods that are naturally gluten free, like meat, vegetables, fruit, milk, plain yoghurt, cheese, jelly and most ice creams.

## Can you catch it?

No. You can't catch coeliac disease like a cold. One in 100 people has coeliac disease and you are more likely to have it if someone in your family does.

## Is it okay to sometimes eat food with gluten in it?

No. Even a tiny bit of gluten, like a breadcrumb, can make someone with coeliac disease poorly. This is why it's so important to make sure that you do not eat gluten. You can have things like a separate toaster or toaster bags and your own butter and jams to make sure you don't accidentally eat any gluten.

## Is there a cure or can you grow out of it?

At the moment there is no cure, the only treatment for coeliac disease is a very strict gluten free diet. You can't grow out of coeliac disease, you will always have it. You will get better on a gluten free diet but if you eat gluten again, you will get poorly.

## How can you get tested for coeliac disease?

To find out if you have coeliac disease you will have to see your doctor. They will have to take a tiny bit of blood but they will be very gentle. You may then have to visit a hospital where another doctor may use a tube with a tiny camera on the end to see inside your tummy to check why you are feeling poorly.

Whether you're eating out on the move, in restaurants, or shopping for gluten free food for you and your family, look out for our trusted symbols which mean we're working for you to make things better.



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