



Celiac Digest

A publication of the Southern Arizona Celiac Support Group (SACS)

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DISCLAIMER: This publication is intended as a general information resource for gluten-intolerant individuals. It is NOT intended for use in diagnosis, treatment, or any other medical application. Please consult your physician for professional medical advice and treatment.

Gluten-Free and Healthy? Many Times the Answer is No

By Melissa Diane Smith

The gluten-free diet is one of the most talked about and followed diets these days for good reason: It's the nutritional answer for the growing number of people who realize they are gluten sensitive. It's the best example we have of food as our best medicine. Virtually all of us in SACS have experienced the amazing feeling of having longstanding bothersome or even debilitating symptoms dramatically improve or completely go away when we eliminate gluten from our diet. Experiencing the powerful effects of avoiding gluten in our diet has given each of us firsthand knowledge of how the right food is so important for our health!

However, for all the good eating gluten free can do for those of us who are gluten sensitive, it can do plenty of harm if we eat gluten free the wrong way.

Unfortunately, many people are doing that without realizing it. It's common for people to experience a big improvement in health when they first go gluten free, and gradually develop unwanted, unhealthy weight gain or new health problems, such as diabetic or pre-diabetic blood sugar levels,

the longer that they eat gluten free. In one study, 82 percent of people who went on a gluten-free diet gained weight in the first two years of eating that way, including 81 percent of the people in the study who were originally overweight.

So, if the gluten-free diet is therapeutic for so many, why does it often lead to unwanted weight gain, pre-diabetes or diabetes, and sometimes other conditions, such as new allergies? It's because many "gluten-free" foods aren't healthy over the long term for reasons that don't have anything to do with gluten (although it's important to be aware that many packaged foods that are labeled "gluten-free" aren't completely free of gluten. If you'd like to learn more about that, you can read my article "A Closer Look at 'Gluten Free,'" which was posted on February 14 on my *Against the Grain Nutrition News & Notes* blog.)

Based on my experience specializing in the gluten-free diet and counseling clients around the country for more than 15 years, there are two main mistakes people make with the diet:

(1) They eat too many blood-sugar-spiking, high-carbohydrate, gluten-free foods that set off a cascade of metabolic changes in the body that lead to weight gain,

increased blood sugar levels, and the development of numerous heart-disease risk factors

(2) They eat a lot of corn and other gluten-free products that contain genetically modified foods that increase the risk of everything from gastrointestinal problems to allergies to immune system problems.

A GF Version of the Standard American Diet (SAD)

When most people first start on the gluten-free diet, they simply replace the wheat-containing breads, pasta, baked goods, and snack foods they were eating with gluten-free versions of those foods made with ingredients such as rice, corn, potato starch, tapioca starch, and sugar. Even though these foods are free of gluten, they stimulate sharp increases in blood sugar levels, and the body responds by increasing the production of insulin, a fat-storage hormone. The combination of high blood sugar levels and high insulin levels that develops from eating these foods sets off a cascade of events in the body that over time promotes weight gain, accelerated aging, and disease, greatly increasing the risk of conditions such as type 2 diabetes and cardiovascular disease.

Gluten-free flours, such as rice

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flour and cornmeal, spike blood sugar and insulin levels all on their own, but they're often made much worse by being combined with what I call "disease-causing" ingredients in many gluten-free products. Disease-causing ingredients include: sugar, high-fructose corn syrup, fructose, long lists of food additives, vegetable oils (including soybean, corn, cottonseed, sunflower, and safflower oils), and trans-fats (found in partially hydrogenated oil and most vegetable shortenings and margarine). We know from research that these ingredients contribute to disease processes in the body, including unwanted weight gain, inflammation, and the development of insulin resistance, the condition at the heart of degenerative conditions such as type 2 diabetes and a cluster of common heart-disease risk factors. My book *Going Against the Grain* provides more in-depth information on this subject.

The Bottom Line

Whether it's gluten-containing or gluten-free, a Standard American Diet (appropriately abbreviated SAD) sets us up for disease. In other words, those of us who eat gluten-free shouldn't want to emulate the Standard American Diet. Although substituting a lot of gluten-free breads, pasta, baked goods and snack foods may be a convenient and easy way to go gluten free, it sets us up for new, non-gluten-related ailments and diseases to develop. The better choice for health is to go *further* against the grain and gradually eat more and more vegetables in place of grains (even gluten-free grains). Many people who eat gluten free simply haven't learned this crucial nutrition information to protect their health.

GF Genetically Modified Foods

When people go on the gluten-free diet, it's also common for people to switch from wheat-containing products such as tortillas to corn-containing products. Corn is a blood-sugar-spiking food that fattens up cattle and can do the same to us.

However, there's a far more insidious problem with corn: In the past 15 years, it has been genetically modified – in other words, altered at the genetic level in a laboratory – to either tolerate otherwise deadly doses of herbicide (weed killer) or to produce its own insecticide in every bite of food – or both. So, the corn of today is a radical departure from the corn we grew up eating as children.

Corn isn't the only genetically modified food. Other common genetically modified organism (GMO) foods often found in gluten-free food products include: soy (i.e., soy protein, soy flour, soy lecithin, soybean oil, etc.), canola oil, cottonseed oil, and sugar from sugar beets (contained in all products with "sugar" listed in the ingredients unless it is specifically labeled cane sugar or organic).

Some important things to know about genetically modified foods are they have been allowed on the market in the United States without labeling and without testing on humans, even though in other countries, they are restricted, clearly labeled, and sometimes even banned. Unfortunately, that means that Americans are in a feeding experiment for which we didn't give our consent and about which we haven't been educated.

Animal research indicates serious health risks associated with eating GM foods, including infertility, immune system problems, accelerated aging, dysfunction of insulin, and changes in the liver, kidney, spleen, and gastrointestinal system. The health risks are so serious that the American Academy of Environmental Medicine (AAEM), an international organization of doctors, recommends non-GMO diets for all patients. The AAEM also says that many doctors are likely seeing the negative health effects from genetically modified foods in their patients right now but not realizing that these foods are contributors to the health conditions their patients are experiencing.

As a nutrition counselor, I have seen firsthand the health benefits of avoiding genetically modified foods. One notable story is that one of my clients from Denver who already had been eating gluten-free for nine years had a serious, "incurable" immune system condition and numerous allergic symptoms clear up when she removed genetically modified foods from her diet.

If you'd like to avoid genetically modified foods as she did, avoid processed foods, emphasize naturally gluten-free fresh foods such as vegetables, fruits, nuts, meats and fish, and avoid at-risk foods such as corn, soy, canola, cottonseed, and sugar unless they are labeled USDA Organic or Non-GMO Project Verified.

Be sure to select the gluten-free convenience foods you use carefully. My latest book, *Gluten Free Throughout the Year*, was written to help steer people to

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DR. LINDSEY PEARSON'S RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ANNUAL SCREENING FOR PEOPLE WITH CELIAC DISEASE

LABORATORY TESTING

- The anti-tissue transglutaminase (tTG) IgA & IgG, with total IgA levels
- The anti-deamidated gliadin peptides (DGP) IgA & IgG
- Comprehensive Metabolic Panel: Glucose, Liver & Kidney Function, Electrolytes, Calcium and Protein Levels
- Complete Blood Count (CBC) with Differential and Platelet Count: White & Red Blood Cell Counts, Hemoglobin, Hematocrit, Platelets, and Differential of White Blood Cells
- Vitamin D3 25-Hydroxy
- Vitamin K1
- Vitamin A
- Vitamin E
- Vitamins B₁₂, B₆, Folate
- Methylmalonic Acid (MMA) & Homocysteine (tHcy)
- Ferritin
- Urinalysis with Reflex to Culture if Positive
- Iron & TIBC
- C-Reactive Protein (CRP) & hs-CRP
- Lipid Panel: Total Cholesterol, HDL, LDL, Triglycerides

Suggested Expanded Testing

- ANA with Reflex if Positive: Screen for Lupus, Sjogren's, and other autoimmune conditions
- TSH, Free T3, Free T4: Thyroid Function Screening
- Anti-Thyroid Peroxidase and Anti-thyroglobulin Antibody Levels: Screening for Autoimmune Hypothyroidism Known as Hashimoto's Thyroiditis
- Prothrombin Time: Blood Clotting Function Screening
- Total Immunoglobulin A, E, G & M Levels – To screen Immune Function & Antigenic Load
- Adrenal Testing: AM Cortisol, DHEA-Sulfate, Salivary Cortisol x6 Samples, RBC Magnesium Levels
- Hormone Testing: Estradiol, Progesterone, LH/FSH, Testosterone Total & % Free, DHT

IMAGING

- DEXA Scan – Bone Density Testing, Baseline then recommended follow up as directed
- Endoscopy & Colonoscopy – Every 3 to 5 years or as directed by doctor

DIETARY COUNSELING

- Registered Dietician Consult – Once to twice yearly with dietician who is well versed in celiac disease; increase as needed for proper nutrition

REINFORCEMENT & EDUCATION

- Monthly Contact with Celiac Physician – need to find a doctor who is very knowledgeable on celiac disease. Patients may have to go out of network for such specialists, such as Dr. Pearson
- Membership in Advocacy Group – such as the Southern Arizona Celiac Support Group

Dr. Pearson is the head of SACS' Medical Advisory Board and practices integrative internal medicine, specializing in gastroenterology & endocrinology at LP Internal Medicine located at 899 N. Wilmot Road, Suite D1 in Tucson near St. Joseph's Hospital. Dr. Pearson is an out-of-network provider with insurance companies and provides time of service discounts for under-insured & non-insured patients.

Dr. Pearson may be reached by email at LPearson@LPInternalMedicine.com Appointments: 520.302.4033
More info at LPInternalMedicine.com

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healthier, non-GMO, gluten-free food choices on a day-to-day basis. You also can learn to avoid GMOs by following the Eat GMO Free Challenge that the GMO Free Project of Tucson and I developed at www.gmofreetucson.org/gmo-free-challenge. If you'd like to get further educated about GMOs and learn about local movie screenings and other education events on GMOs and how to avoid them, visit www.gmofreetucson.org and

sign up for the newsletter mailing list.

Time for a Higher-Quality Gluten-Free Diet

We all went on the gluten-free diet to improve and protect our health. However, the gluten-free diet as it's currently followed has been getting many of us into new health problems.

It's time for us to go to a new and improved gluten-free diet – what I call Gluten Free 2.0. That's an

eating plan in which we avoid the common nutrition mistakes that are causing people new health problems and an eating plan in which food quality is as important as avoiding gluten. Quality ingredients lead to quality health. By going further against the grain to gradually improve the diet and give our bodies higher-quality ingredients, we all can go to a new level of eating gluten free for health.

To learn more about Melissa's work, visit her websites www.melissadianesmith.com and www.againstthegrainnutrition.com. To sign up to receive her e-newsletter and emails of her local special event appearances, send an email to info@againstthegrainnutrition.com.

*Melissa's books *Going Against the Grain* and *Gluten Free Throughout the Year*, which give more in-depth information on the concepts covered in this article, are being sold by SACS at special prices. You can purchase these books at SACS roundtables or at our potluck on March 31, or you can make other arrangements to purchase the book(s) by emailing patriciahirsch56@gmail.com.*

SACS is YOUR support group. GET INVOLVED TODAY!

In order for SACS to be successful, we need your input and involvement. Your opinion matters! While your board is honored to serve and guide this support group, we have noticed that the same few dedicated volunteers are growing weary and this cannot continue if we are to keep up with the demand of those in need of our support group programs. We have all heard the term that “many hands make light work.”

If more volunteers do not come forward, we will become an outreach only organization out of necessity.

What does SACS need to succeed? Other than several board vacancies, we need help in following areas:

Volunteers for outreach events: This entails interacting with the public and sharing your knowledge of gluten intolerance and celiac disease while passing out literature. Most events are short, lasting 2-4 hours.

Special Events planners: This would include any upcoming food fairs. If we are to host another fair, we need more volunteers to help with planning it. Forming a planning committee is essential if we are going to host this enormously successful event on the level that we have before.

Data Entry and Organization: We could really put your skills to work.

Assistant Publicity Chair: Our current Publicity Chair also needs an assistant as she has many tasks to keep up with and often assists with most of the positions above.

Cel-Kids Organizer: Do you have a child or children with celiac disease or gluten sensitivity? This could be a wonderful chance to help others by sharing your knowledge.

There are also several board positions available

SACS is not hearing from you. We have asked several times for input and what our members would like to see. More guest speakers? Outreach education? Special Events? More frequent potlucks?

***Volunteering is not a full time job and requires only what you are willing to give.
That can be just a few hours a week or month.***

Speak with any SACS board member if you are interested in helping us succeed as a support group. If you would like to speak to me directly, please call me at 219-7076 or email kimpebley@gmail.com.

Celiac and Food Allergies in Older Adults

By Carol Poole

Celiac disease is an autoimmune disease in which the body's immune system attacks and damages the small intestines as a result of exposure to a protein commonly referred to as gluten.

As with other autoimmune disorders, Celiac disease can be difficult to diagnose because it presents with a broad array of symptoms, only some of which are gastrointestinal, or with no symptoms at all. Some individuals have been diagnosed as a result of early onset osteopenia (bone loss), unexplained persistent anemia, or vitamin or mineral deficiencies. Recent studies suggest that the occurrence of Celiac disease increases with age. Diagnosis of Celiac in older adults may be even more difficult since they are more likely to be experiencing other health issues.

In addition to Celiac disease, there is a growing recognition of the role of food allergies, sensitivities, and intolerances. "Classic" allergic reactions to food characterized by potentially life-threatening symptoms such as difficulty breathing have been recognized for some time. There is now a growing awareness of other adverse responses to foods that are less obvious. Although not immediately life threatening, these responses can be as diverse as mild gastrointestinal symptoms to an irregular heartbeat.

While there is no cure for Celiac, or food allergies, both conditions can be controlled by maintaining a diet that excludes the offending food. In recent years, government

regulations requiring improved food labeling are making it easier for people to identify gluten and the most common food allergens in processed foods, but adherence to a strict gluten-free and allergy-free diet requires constant vigilance.

The good news is that while these conditions are challenging, they are manageable. The bad news is that these disorders can make those affected fearful of food as well as social events involving food and can lead to social isolation.

SACS in the Community

By Patricia Hirsch

Sunflower Market on First near Wetmore once again held their annual health fair. We were so glad to be there. Desi May, their outreach coordinator said, "Having SACS at this event is special because you help our customers understand our company's dedication to health and wellness for all the right reasons." Desi, the feeling is mutual! You allow us to perform our mission to educate those who otherwise might continue to suffer in poor health. Ashley Hodgell, Kimberly Murray, Hetty and Stan Pardee and I enjoyed volunteering and look forward to the next Sunflower health fair because it's fun, successful and empowering! Thanks so much.

Interfaith Community Services' "Empty Bowls" (a benefit for their food bank) will be March 17, 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Tucson Chinese Cultural Center, 1288 W. River Road. **Gourmet Girls GF Bakery/Bistro** will be there with fabulous GF bread! It's

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Contacts

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No Tucson Gluten Free Food Fair in 2012

During the general meeting in January, it was announced that SACS will not be hosting a Gluten Free Food Fair (GFFF) in 2012. This announcement has also been made at several dining out/lunch bunch meetings and at roundtable. The SACS executive board has made a unanimous decision to revisit the possibility of hosting this event in 2013 due to several reasons.

As you know, our event has been growing each year in both the number of vendors and the number of attendees. After shopping for a new larger venue that could accommodate the anticipated amount of participants, it became clear that this event could possibly wipe out our entire budget. The food fair is no longer a fundraising event for SACS due to the rising costs.

The second reason for the board's decision has to do with the lack of volunteers willing to help plan the event, although we have been repeatedly soliciting volunteers for planning committees. **Did you know that it takes over 6 months to plan this event?**

While we are eternally grateful to those who have sacrificed their time on the day of the event to ensure it was a success, there is no plausible way that we can have another successful GFFF without **more committed volunteers during the planning stages**. Our event has grown too large to have only the limited number of planners it has had in the past. There are several tasks that could be divided to help keep our event fabulous while not over tasking the small handful of people who have planned the fair in the past years.

Yet another reason for this difficult decision is the fact that product availability is growing at a phenomenal rate. The concept of the food fair was first developed when gluten free products were hard to find. Now, they are even available in mainstream grocery stores such as Fry's and Basha's.

What will it take to have another successful GFFF in Tucson? **Our membership needs to come forward and commit a few hours of their time on a regular basis.** We desperately need grant writers,

and planners.

The Good News

During the very month that SACS would be having the Tucson GFFF, the CDF Chapter in Phoenix will be hosting theirs. Due to the overwhelming amount of work that it takes, they have a planning committee that began meeting and brainstorming shortly after their 2011 Gluten Free Expo. This year they will be holding the event in Scottsdale:

**Saturday, April 21, 2012
10:00 am to 4:00 pm
The Double Tree Resort
5401 N. Scottsdale Road
Scottsdale, AZ 85250**

If you would like to attend or find out more information, please visit their website at: <http://phoenixceliac.org>.

If you plan to attend, you are highly encouraged to purchase your tickets online using PayPal. This will expedite your entry, save you a few dollars and also help you avoid lengthy lines. If you have any questions regarding the Gluten Free Expo, please contact the Phoenix CDF Chapter through the website listed above.



SACS Treasurer Hetty and volunteer Ashley reaching out to patrons during Sunflower's annual health fair

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great that ICS and Gourmet Girls are introducing GF food to the general public in this way. ICS' food bank appreciates the GF foods SACS members have donated in the past (Sept. 2010 *Celiac Digest*). It is not known if other participating restaurants will have GF offerings but for \$15, I'm going just for the bread! Take a look at www.icstucson.org to learn more, or contact me. As for Gourmet Girls, they thank all of you for your business and plan to develop even more scrumptious products in the future.



Update to What's Happening at the UA?

By UA Gluten Free Club President Jenna Oertle



Emily and Jenna sign up many new UA Gluten Free Club members

The GF student group achieved official UofA club status. Forty-nine members, a club fair, and 2 meetings later, the **UA Gluten Free Club** officially has their foot in the door. As of February 22nd the club is working with UA dining services to improve GF options and eliminate cross contamination issues in dining areas. This partnership will allow Club Treasurer Emily Rich and me to walk through each restaurant in the Student Union to consult with and educate managers on what to improve on and what systems to implement to ensure a contamination-free environment.

The first restaurant being improved is On Deck Deli. This mini bagel/sandwich assembly line has GF bread and bagels from Udi's but faces problems with surface contamination. Emily and I walked the manager through several areas of concern including the use of different utensils, cutting boards, changing gloves, wiping down counters, and marketing. On Deck Deli has a separate toaster and preparation area for GF products. The initial consultation was a success and the manager was adamant in implementing the correct policies to stop cross contamination.

One great thing the UA is doing to help address health concerns is investing in nutrition specialists for each restaurant. There will be a nutrition specialist at each restaurant who will have extra training on dietary issues and whose job will be to constantly assure a cleaner and healthier environment for all UA students with health concerns including Celiacs. We held our club's first GF dining out event on 4th Avenue at Delectables

where UA students who are members of **UA Gluten Free Club** ate together and got to know one another. The food was delicious. Delectables did a fabulous job tending to GF issues. The next dining out event will be at PF Chang's. Overall the club is thriving and UA Dining Services is taking an active role in change.

Editor's Note:

UA club members must be UA students but many SACS members will want to support the club in many ways. As Hana Feeney said in her original article (Dec. 2011 *Celiac Digest*), if you have Facebook, please "Like" **UA Gluten Free** to show your support for the new club.

To read online about how UA is recognized as the #8 college offering GF products visit: <http://www.bestcollegesonline.com/blog/2012/01/10/14-colleges-that-cater-to-gluten-free-students/>



Saturday

March 31, 2012

Annual SACS Potluck - 11am

Please Bring a Gluten-Free dish to share and remember to list all ingredients

The Journey Church
4700 N. Swan Rd.
Tucson, AZ

Membership changes

Notify us via the website or email
sacs.stan@gmail.com.

CSA/USA: 877-272-4272

9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Central Time. Go to
www.csaCeliacs.org

Southern Arizona Celiac Support
Chapter 15, CSA/USA
P.O. Box 0905
Cortaro, AZ 85652-0905

PLEASE FORWARD IF NECESSARY



Sharing advice for a gluten-free life.

Save the Date!

Saturday
March 31, 2012

Annual SACS Potluck
11am

*Please Bring a Gluten-Free
dish to share
and remember to
list all ingredients*

The Journey Church
4700 N. Swan Rd.
Tucson, AZ



Oct. 6 General Meeting
Dr Rodney Ford speaks



Mark Your Calendar

Mar. 9, 12pm, Boca Taco Shop, 828 E. Speedway Blvd . Please RSVP to Jerry@JerryHeintze.com, 975-7322.

Mar. 27, 6pm, 4th Tuesday Dining Out, location TBD

Mar. 28, 1pm, Roundtable, Ward Six City Hall. 3202 E. 1st St

Mar. 31, 11am, Annual Potluck, The Journey Church, 4700 N. Swan Rd.

Apr. 21, 10-4, Phoenix Gluten free Expo. See Page 6 for info

Check the SACS website for more events and updates