

Gluten-free diet: Hidden sources of gluten

For individuals with a gluten intolerance, following a gluten-free diet involves eliminating all gluten-containing products. Baked goods made with wheat flour, such as breads and pastries, are well-known sources of gluten; however, gluten is often hidden as an additive in processed foods and non-food items.

What is gluten?

“Gluten” is the general term for a group of proteins that are found in certain grains, including barley, rye, and wheat. In nature, gluten proteins promote germination and seedling growth. In culinary applications, gluten is widely used to modify the quality, texture, flavor, and moisture content of foods.



Hidden sources of gluten

The graphic below shows various foods and products in which gluten is commonly found.



Alcohol

Ales, beers, lagers, and malt beverages are not gluten-free unless specified.



Art supplies

Some paints and other supplies, such as Play-Doh, contain wheat.



Soups

Cream-based soups often use flour as a thickener, while other soups may contain barley.



Additional sources of gluten



Personal care products

Gluten is sometimes used in cosmetics and body care products for binding and moisture.



Processed meats

Deli meats, sausages, and other processed meats may contain gluten as an additive or filler.



Medicines and nutritional supplements

Wheat starch may be used as an excipient (inactive ingredient).



Condiments and seasonings

Gluten-containing starch and dextrin may be used as fillers and thickeners.

Reading nutrition facts labels

The sample Nutrition Facts label below demonstrates how to read a food label and identify food allergens.

Reading nutrition facts labels



Nutrition Facts	
8 servings per container	
Serving Size 2 oz (56g)	
Amount per serving	
Calories	200
% Daily Value*	
Total Fat 1g	2%
Saturated Fat 0g	0%
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 0mg	0%
Sodium 0mg	0%
Total Carbohydrate 42g	14%
Dietary Fiber 2g	
Total Sugars 2g	
Includes 0g Added Sugars	0%
Protein 7g	
Vitamin D	0%
Calcium	0%
Iron	10%
Potassium	5%
*The % Daily Value (DV) tells you how much a nutrient in a serving of food contributes to a healthy diet. 2,000 calories a day is used for general nutrition advice.	

Serving Size: Indicates the number of servings per container and the individual serving size

Calories: Shows the number of calories provided in a single serving

Amount per serving: Nutrients with an established daily requirement will show the amount in both weight and % daily value to help you understand how you're achieving your dietary requirements

Daily Values: Reflects the percentage of daily nutrient requirement provided in a single serving (5% or less is low, 20% or more is high)

Total Sugars: Indicates the amount of both naturally-occurring and added sugar present in a single serving

Added Sugars: Indicates the amount of sugar from added sources in a single serving

Lists the nutrients that are generally low in current diets to help you consume enough

INGREDIENTS: SEMOLINA (WHEAT), DURUM WHEAT FLOUR, NIACIN, IRON (FERROUS SULFATE), THIAMINE MONONITRATE, RIBOFLAVIN, FOLIC ACID.

Ingredients are listed in order of predominance.

CONTAINS: WHEAT.

Allergens are listed at the bottom of the label.

Alternative names for gluten

Checking the ingredients label is the simplest way to recognize a gluten-free product. Don't see wheat, barley, or rye? Gluten could be in the ingredients list under a different name. Below are common gluten-containing ingredients.

- Bread crumbs
- Brewer's yeast
- Bulgur
- Cereal extract
- Club wheat
- Couscous
- Cracker meal
- Durum
- Einkorn
- Emmer
- Farina
- Farro
- Flour (all-purpose, bread, cake, high-gluten, high-protein, instant, pastry, self-rising, soft wheat, steel ground, stone ground, whole wheat)
- Freekeh
- Graham
- Hydrolyzed wheat protein
- Kamut
- Malt (malt extract, malt flavoring, malt syrup, malt vinegar)
- Seitan
- Semolina
- Spelt
- Sprouted wheat
- Starch (gelatinized starch, modified starch, modified food starch, vegetable starch)
- Triticale
- Vegetable protein
- Vital wheat gluten
- Wheat berries
- Wheat bran hydrolysate
- Wheat germ oil
- Wheat grass
- Wheat protein isolate





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This handout was developed and medically reviewed by Fullscript's Integrative Medical Advisory team.
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