

Menu planning for children's education and care

Coeliac Disease



Key Information

- Coeliac disease is not the same as a wheat allergy. An allergic reaction to wheat is immediate and life threatening.
- Coeliac disease is a lifelong autoimmune condition.
- Children with coeliac disease must completely avoid gluten. Gluten is a protein found in wheat, rye, barley, and oats.
- If a child with coeliac disease eats gluten, they will not have an immediate life-threatening reaction. They can become very sick and develop serious long term health problems.
- There is no cure for coeliac disease and children with coeliac disease must follow a strict gluten free diet for life.

Providing food and drinks to children with coeliac disease

This fact sheet is for cooks and chefs working in children's education and care.

Like food allergy, coeliac disease must be taken seriously. When preparing and serving food for children with coeliac disease use the same strategies that you use for children with food allergies to make sure their food does not contain gluten and is not contaminated with gluten from other foods.

For more information on preparing and serving food for children with food allergies, complete the National Allergy Council's [All about Allergens for Children's education and care course](#) and download the National Allergy Council's [All about Allergens for Children's education and care booklet](#).

The Healthy Eating Advisory Service course, [Managing allergies and other dietary requirements in children's education and care](#), should then be completed. You will find a micro-module specific to managing [coeliac disease](#) within this course.



Reading food labels for gluten

It is important to check the labels of all packaged foods products for gluten-containing additives as ingredients.

You should also check for precautionary allergen labelling for gluten, for example 'may be present' or 'may contain' statements.

If a food does not have a label, ask the supplier for a product information form.

You should read food labels for gluten each time you buy the product, when it is delivered, and when you serve the food or before you use it in cooking for a child with coeliac disease.



For more information, refer to the [Reading food labels for food allergens](#) section of the National Allergy Council's Food Allergy Aware website.



Check for wheat, rye, oats or barley in the statement of ingredients

INGREDIENTS: Wheat bran (50%), rolled oats (40%), sugar, barley malt extract, maltodextrin (wheat), salt, minerals (iron, zinc oxide), vitamins (niacin, vitamin B6, riboflavin, folate).

CONTAINS: Wheat gluten.

Check for gluten in the summary ('contains') statement

Reading labels for coeliac disease (gluten)



INGREDIENTS: Wholegrain brown rice (43%), white rice (28%), millet, inulin, potato starch, maltodextrin (maize), sunflower oil, potato flour, black **sesame** seeds, salt.

CONTAINS: Sesame.

MAY BE PRESENT: Gluten.

Check for gluten in the precautionary allergen labelling ('may be present') statement

Reviewing your menu for gluten

Foods and drinks that contain gluten, or likely to contain gluten as an ingredient, are listed below. Check the [Menu planning guidelines for long day care](#) for more information on foods to include on your menu as some of the foods listed as examples do not meet the menu planning guidelines.

MADE FROM WHEAT

- Bread, bread rolls
- Wraps, pita breads, flat breads
- Turkish bread, Lebanese breads
- Roti, naan
- Crumpets, English muffins
- Pancakes, pikelets
- Wheat based cereals
- Pasta, spaghetti
- Noodles
- Cous cous
- Semolina
- Freekeh
- Spelt
- Baby food products, including teething rusks

BARLEY, RYE, TRITICALE

- Foods made from barley – malt, malted vinegar, malted milk powder
- Foods made from rye – rye bread, rye wraps
- Foods made from triticale – triticale flour, triticale flakes

MADE FROM OATS

- Rolled oats
- Quick oats
- Oatmeal
- Oat bran

Food Group	Foods and drinks containing, or likely to contain, gluten. Always check the label.
Used in Baking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wheat flour • Wheat bran • Semolina • Wheaten cornflour • Baking powder • Wheat-based breadcrumbs
Gravies and Sauces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gravy powder, gravies, thickened sauces • Stock, stock cubes • Soy sauce • Worcestershire sauce • Malted vinegar
Soups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Canned soups with thickener • Commercial and homemade soups with noodles or pasta
Jams and spreads	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yeast spreads – Vegemite, Promite, Marmite
Drinks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Malted milk powder • Soy milk with wheat-based maltodextrin • Some flavoured milks
Meat alternatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Textured vegetable protein • Hydrolysed vegetable protein

Planning meals for children with coeliac disease

Replacing gluten-based products on your menu

Gluten containing foods contain important nutrients for children's growth and development including energy, fibre, vitamins and minerals. Children who do not have coeliac disease should continue to be served gluten-containing foods and products. Children with coeliac disease should be served replacement foods that contain similar nutrition.

When replacing gluten-containing products on your menu, remember to check if children also have food allergies and check that the replacement does not contain those allergens.

Below is a list of suggested replacements to use in place of a gluten-containing foods.



For more ideas, see the National Allergy Council's [Ingredient Substitution Tool](#) for foods you can use to replace these foods in recipes.

Gluten containing product	Suggested replacement
Wheat flour, wheaten cornflour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gluten free flour • Gluten free corn flour • Gluten free baking powder
Bread products	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gluten free bread • Gluten free breadcrumbs
Wheat-based cereals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gluten free cereals
Pasta, noodles, cous cous	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gluten free pasta and noodles • Pulse pasta, such as red lentils and chickpeas • 100% Buckwheat noodles • Rice • Rice noodles or rice vermicelli • Quinoa • Buckwheat groats • Corn-based couscous
Crispbreads, dry biscuits, crackers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rice cakes • Corn thins • Rice crackers • Gluten free crackers
Sauces and Stock	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gluten free soy sauce • Gluten free gravy • Gluten free stock powder or liquid stock made from scratch • Other gluten free sauces

How to change recipes

Here are some examples of how to change recipes for coeliac disease. If a separate meal is required, make meals for children with coeliac disease look like meals served to the rest of the children. This way children with coeliac disease will feel included at mealtimes.

Recipe	Modification to recipe
Pasta dish	<p>You can swap pasta for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gluten free pasta – many products available • Legume-based pasta – red lentil pasta, chickpea pasta • 100% buckwheat noodles • Rice noodles • Quinoa • Buckwheat groats • Corn-based cous cous
Homemade muffin or other baked product	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gluten free alternatives to use: • Gluten free flour • Gluten free baking powder • Gluten free cornflour • Rice or rice flour • Almond flour or almond meal (if you include almond in your centre)
Commercial Bread	<p>Swap commercial bread for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gluten free breads, rolls, wraps • Rice crackers • Corn thins.
Commercial Cereal	<p>Swap wheat-based cereals, muesli, and oats/porridge for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gluten free cereals

Storing, making, and serving food for children with coeliac disease

Children with coeliac disease can react to very small amounts of gluten in their food.

Make sure you have good food allergen management processes to prevent the risk of cross contamination from foods that contain gluten.

This includes:

- cleaning surfaces and equipment
- a separate toaster for gluten free bread
- storing food safely for allergies
- preventing cross contamination of food allergens during cooking and serving
- washing hands or changing gloves in between handling different foods.





More helpful resources and information

For more information see the National Allergy Council's [All About Allergens training for Children's education and care](#) and [All about Allergens for Children's education and care booklet](#), and the Healthy Eating Advisory Services [Managing allergies and other dietary requirements in children's education and care](#) online course.

Further information and support

Healthy Eating Advisory Service:

- Early childhood services
- Recipes
- Menu planning guidelines for long day care
- Online module: [coeliac disease](#)

National Allergy Council:

- All About Allergens training for Children's education and care
- All about Allergens Resource Hub (Children's Education and Care section)

Coeliac Australia website.



We're here to support you

Visit our website:

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