

Gluten-Free is Not Good for Everyone

Gluten-free food is beneficial to approximately 1% of the population – those that have celiac disease, and perhaps also to anyone who may have an allergy to gluten. For the rest of us, whole grain products containing gluten are a healthy option to include on our plates.

A low-fat, minimally processed, plant-based lifestyle is comprised of whole grains, legumes, vegetables, and fruit, with nuts and seeds. Artificially extracted oils are kept to a minimum. I recommend that you begin each meal with a piece of fruit, a salad, soup, or vegetables. It enables you to begin to fill “your tank” with nutrient dense but calorically dilute foods, leaving less room for the nutrient dense but more calorically dense whole grains and legumes. When you eat like this, you can eat when you are hungry and stop when you are full, never feel deprived, and still achieve and maintain an optimum weight.

Both ancient and traditional cultures today have relied and thrived on diets largely comprised of starches with the addition of vegetables and fruit. These starches include oats, brown rice, whole wheat, quinoa, barley, millet, bulgur wheat, wheat berries, rye, buckwheat, spelt, corn, potatoes, sweet potatoes, winter squash, and legumes. Legumes are anything grown in a pod such as beans, peas, and lentils. In a country that encourages the heavy consumption of meat, dairy, eggs, fish, and shellfish, which are the very foods you would do best to avoid, why would you want to make it more difficult and much more restrictive than you need to by also restricting gluten if you haven’t been diagnosed with celiac disease or a gluten allergy?

If you are gluten intolerant or allergic to gluten, please give gluten-free products the same nutritional scrutiny that you would give to any other food. Gluten-free does not automatically equate to health-promoting. Gluten-free products have their gluten removed, but may still contain unacceptable amounts of fat, sugar, refined flours, and may contain animal products. Instead, build your menus with minimally processed, naturally gluten-free grains like quinoa and buckwheat, legumes, vegetables, and fruit with nuts and seeds. Always try to eat plants as close to their natural packaging as possible.

If you suspect that you are gluten intolerant, your doctor can test you to determine if you are correct. If you were avoiding gluten because you were told that is unhealthy for everyone, then please add minimally processed gluten-containing whole grains

back to your plate and enjoy the increased variety and all of the wonderful dishes that can be made from them.

Source:

Gluten-Free Diets are Harmful for the General Population (except for one percent),
March 2013 McDougall Newsletter,
<http://www.drmcDougall.com/misc/2013nl/mar/130300.htm>