

Gluten Free Throughout the Year is a two-year, month-to-month guide for healthy eating. With tips, recipes and names of the healthiest gluten-free food brands and products, it is a handbook for living the gluten-free lifestyle like no other.

## **Gluten Free Throughout the Year**

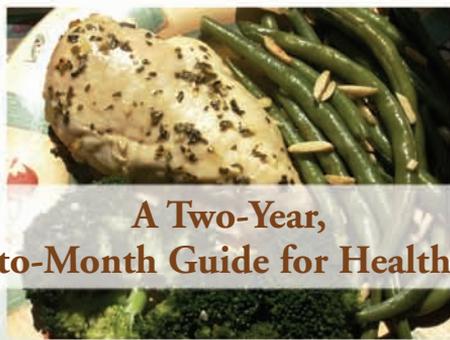
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*“This is such an amazing book! It is just what the gluten-free community has been waiting for... and urgently needs.”*

— Rodney Ford, M.D., author of *The Gluten Syndrome*

# Gluten Free Throughout The Year



A Two-Year,  
Month-to-Month Guide for Healthy Eating

## Melissa Diane Smith

AUTHOR OF *Going Against the Grain*

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## **Introduction**

Gluten-free eating is a growing movement. More and more people are realizing they can get far better results improving their health by adopting a diet that's free of gluten, a protein found in wheat, rye and barley, than by submitting to countless expensive medical tests and potentially harmful pharmaceutical drugs. That's big news for the United States whose general population is loaded with health problems. Eating gluten free helps overcome a wide range of medical maladies that even the best of modern medicine can't help.

An increasing number of consumers know this, even if their doctors don't. The number of people diagnosed with celiac disease, an autoimmune reaction in the small intestine to gluten, has increased in the past several years. But so has the number of people who do not have celiac disease but find that they have health complaints – everything from abdominal pain and bloating, to chronic fatigue, to migraine headaches – that are remedied by going gluten free.

The growing number of new gluten-free eaters has created more demand for gluten-free foods, leading to the gluten-free market growing at an average annual rate of 28 percent since 2004. Sales of gluten-free foods went from \$300 million in 2003 to \$1.3 billion in 2008, and market research publisher *Packaged Facts* projects double-digit growth in the gluten-free market through at least 2012. That means more new gluten-free foods and more existing food products that will be reformulated to be gluten free.

## **The Need for a Better Gluten-Free Diet**

More new gluten-free foods means more choices and decisions about the foods you buy and how you put them together to create a gluten-free diet that promotes health. What you may not realize is that *for all the good that eating gluten free can do for people, it also can do plenty of harm if you eat gluten free the wrong way.* And plenty of people are doing just that. One study found that 82 percent of people gain weight after two years of eating gluten free, including 81 percent of people who were originally overweight. Many gluten-free foods aren't healthy, but many people who eat gluten free don't realize that because they are focused on gluten free and nothing else. To maintain health over the long term, it's important to be knowledgeable about other aspects of nutrition, too, and to know how to select healthy gluten-free foods and work them into your diet in all parts of your life – from eating in restaurants, to making a picnic, to what to eat and take when you have a cold or flu. This book will help you do that.

Through a diet guidelines chapter and a series of twenty-four short, easy-to-read articles, this book will teach you how to develop a more health-promoting gluten-free diet that you can maintain through all the months and seasons of the year. From my experience counseling clients, it takes time to learn all the do's and don'ts of a healthy gluten-free diet and how to personalize the gluten-free diet for you. These lessons are best learned on the job, in little snippets, as you follow a gluten-free lifestyle in real life. So, I have set up this book as a collection of

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month-to-month articles that will address common issues and questions that come up when most people start to eat gluten free – everything from other food sensitivities to how to get enough fiber on a gluten-free diet. Each short article will offer a personal story or brief introduction to a nutrition issue or a happening or event in our lives, followed by tips on how to put the information into practice.

### **Why Gluten Free is Becoming More Popular**

Before the diet guidelines and month-to-month articles start, let me first fill you in on how and why so many people are going gluten free today. Awareness of gluten sensitivity by the public has spread like wildfire, thanks in large part to the Internet helping us share information and personal experiences much more easily. People who at one time never considered that they were gluten sensitive have gradually started to realize that gluten is a problem for them, too. The gluten-free lifestyle is a grassroots movement fueled mostly by the Internet, the great equalizer of the people – and it's spreading.

New research has also helped the growth of the gluten-free movement, showing what many people have long suspected: Non-celiac gluten sensitivity is a bona fide medical condition and the picture of celiac disease is much different than what was commonly thought ten years ago. People diagnosed with celiac disease today are more likely to have either no symptoms at all or symptoms formerly called “atypical” instead of the symptoms of diarrhea, weight loss, and malabsorption that

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most doctors look for. In adults, some of the more common presenting symptoms are constipation, acid-reflux-type conditions, bone disease, neurologic symptoms, and especially anemia and chronic fatigue. Children older than three who are diagnosed with celiac disease are more likely to have nongastrointestinal conditions, including type 1 diabetes, thyroid disease, Down syndrome, iron-deficiency anemia, short stature, or mood disorders. And it's more common to be normal weight or overweight than underweight when diagnosed with celiac disease.

But for every person who has celiac disease, there are seven to ten people with gluten sensitivity. Some researchers say the number of people with gluten sensitivity may be as high as two-thirds of the population. This is significant because people with gluten sensitivity experience uncomfortable symptoms just like people with celiac disease. In gluten sensitivity, the innate immune system, the most ancestral form of defense we have against "invaders," reacts to gluten, just like it does in celiac disease. In celiac disease, the adaptive immune system also reacts, but the adaptive immune system does not react in gluten sensitivity, according to recent research. Consider that the nervous system likely reacts adversely to gluten as well. Based on thirty years of experience working with patients and studying the growing research on gluten and the nervous system, Dr. Rodney Ford, a pediatrician, gastroenterologist and allergist from New Zealand, has concluded that gluten detrimentally affects the brain and nervous system that connects every cell and organ in the body and the damage done

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to the nerves leads to many symptoms in different parts of the body. While the exact specifics of how gluten provokes adverse symptoms are still being researched and debated, we don't have to wait to act on this information. Just know that gluten sensitivity is real, affects many more people than celiac disease does, and results in countless symptoms. The following, while not a complete list, is a list of some of the more common symptoms associated with gluten sensitivity.

**Common Symptoms Associated with Gluten Sensitivity**

- Acid-reflux-type conditions
- Anemia
- Autoimmune diseases (including autoimmune thyroid disease, rheumatoid arthritis, and type 1 diabetes)
- Depression
- Bone disease (including osteopenia and osteoporosis)
- Constipation and/or diarrhea
- Fatigue and tiredness
- Gas and bloating
- Neurological conditions (including attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, headaches/migraines, and ataxia)
- Skin conditions (including dermatitis herpetiformis, eczema and psoriasis)
- Unexplained infertility

A rundown on diagnostic tests is covered in Appendix A, but the most important “test” you can do at this point is finding

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out whether your health improves when you eat gluten free. (Until more diagnostic tests become available, even Alessio Fasano, M.D., director of the Center for Celiac Research, agrees that this is an important way to determine gluten sensitivity.) If you have uncomfortable symptoms when you eat gluten, and they go away when you no longer eat gluten, you have discovered on your own (and inexpensively, I might add) that you are gluten sensitive and that the gluten-free diet is your best medicine. A gluten-free diet trial is much easier on your wallet than the expense of numerous doctor visits and diagnostic tests, and the treatment for gluten sensitivity – to continue not to eat gluten – is a lot less expensive than the pharmaceutical drugs people are prescribed for all of the above gluten-related symptoms and conditions. Therefore, if you have any type of unexplained illness that isn't getting better with medical treatment, it's a good idea to try a gluten-free diet and see if it helps you. [One caveat: This experiment works for virtually everyone except those who have silent celiac disease, a condition in which there is the damage to the gut seen in celiac disease, but these people experience few or no noticeable symptoms.]

### **Eating Gluten Free and Healthfully**

If you're one of the growing number of people who find they experience better health by eating gluten free, then your only prescription is to go against the grain. When I say go against the grain, I mean of course to eat gluten free. But I also

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mean to buck the common mistake to eat gluten-free junk foods and too many sugars and gluten-free grains, and instead eat more vegetables, which are lower in carbohydrates and richer in nutrients than grains.

The next chapter outlines this and other diet guidelines to live by to improve your health and subsequent chapters show you practical ways to apply those guidelines in real life. Through school days, holidays, eating out in restaurants, traveling, and more, this book will guide you through how to eat smart with tips, recipes, and information you can use day in and day out to improve and maintain your health over the long term. Whether you read through this book quickly or just read one chapter every month, get started so you waste no time living gluten free healthfully throughout the year!

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