

# Living Gluten Free: What, Why And How?

## Learn Why It's So Important From A Parent's Point Of View

(NAPSA)—More and more individuals and families are following a gluten-free diet; learn why it's so important from a parent's point of view.

For Colette Prohofsky, a trip to the grocery store requires more than just crossing items off the shopping list. Both her husband and daughter have been diagnosed with celiac disease, a chronic and inherited autoimmune disorder that requires them to completely avoid gluten, a protein naturally found in wheat, barley, rye and some oats. The disease affects approximately one out of 133 Americans and there is currently no cure other than following a diet completely void of gluten.

### What Causes Celiac Disease?

The cause of celiac disease is unknown and the effects of the disease can vary from patient to patient. According to the Celiac Disease Foundation, potential symptoms include, but are not limited to, chronic constipation and bloating, unexplained weight gain or loss, bone or joint pain, and fatigue. The disease runs in families—as it does in the Prohofsky family—and should not be considered a food allergy.

### How Are Patients Diagnosed?

The diagnosis process consists of two steps. The first step is a series of specific blood tests to identify the presence of celiac disease. The second step involves assessing symptoms and other internal tests before beginning a gluten-free diet, and is necessary to make a final diagnosis.

### Living With Celiac Disease

Following a gluten-free diet can be challenging for the approximately 3 million Americans living



**Colette Prohofsky and her daughter enjoy a gluten-free breakfast.**

with celiac disease, as gluten can be found in foods you might not expect, including soups, salad dressings, and seasonings. According to Prohofsky, “Shopping for gluten-free products is tricky because you have to be a good label reader. When my daughter was first diagnosed, the cereal aisle was especially overwhelming. I would look at it and think there are maybe two things she can have and I would still be concerned if there had been some cross-contact.”

Recently, more mainstream options, such as gluten-free Chex cereals, have become available for those following a gluten-free diet, without the premium price of specialty foods. “It’s a huge relief for us,” noted Prohofsky. For many mainstream gluten-free products, visit [www.LiveGlutenFreely.com](http://www.LiveGlutenFreely.com).

### A National Health Concern

You may be hearing more about celiac disease and eating gluten-free foods recently, but keep in mind that this isn’t a dietary trend and will not decrease in importance for the millions of people with celiac disease. For additional information, visit [www.celiac.org](http://www.celiac.org).