



## Celiac Disease

### MU Patient Education Series

#### Definition:

Celiac disease is an autoimmune digestive disease that damages a part of the small intestine and interferes with absorption of nutrients from food. This means the body is attacking itself every time a person with celiac consumes gluten.

#### WHAT IS GLUTEN?

Gluten is a protein found in all forms of wheat, barley, rye, and triticale (a cross between barley and rye). This means gluten may be an ingredient in most forms of bread, pasta and other baked goods.

#### FACTS ABOUT CELIAC DISEASE:

- Celiac disease is hereditary (passes from parent to child)
- One out of every 133 Americans has celiac disease or 1% of population
- 95% of people with celiac disease remain undiagnosed or misdiagnosed
- Stressful events such as pregnancy, surgery, infection, or severe emotional distress can trigger the disease
- There is no medicine or surgeries to cure celiac disease
- A strict gluten-free diet is the only treatment for celiac disease

#### HOW IS IT DIAGNOSED?

- Antibody blood test
- Genetic test (family history)
- Small intestinal biopsy (tissue removed from the colon) \* the only definitive test

#### WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS?

- Abdominal pain
- Constipation



- Gas
- Bloating
- Decreased appetite
- Increased appetite in some
- Bloody or fatty stools
- Diarrhea
- Nausea

\*\*\* There are nearly 300 symptoms associated with Celiac Disease which makes it difficult to diagnose

\*\* People who suffer from unexplained symptoms for several months should speak to a doctor about celiac disease as a potential cause. A delayed diagnosis can increase the risk of developing new symptoms or other complications.

### WHAT FOODS HAVE GLUTEN IN THEM?

All forms of wheat, barley, rye, and triticale (a cross between wheat and rye).

### HIDDEN SOURCES OF GLUTEN:

Bullions/Broths	Imitation Seafood	Licorice	Play-Doh®
Seasonings/Spice Blends	Communion wafers	Salad Dressing	ChapStick®
Gravies/Starches	Deli Meats/Lunch meats	Dairy substitutes	Lipstick/Lip gloss
Natural Flavors	Vitamins	Soy sauce	Toothpaste

### TREATMENT FOR CELIAC DISEASE:

Lifelong gluten free diet.

### CHANGES THAT A PERSON WITH CELIAC DISEASE SHOULD MAKE:

- Learn about the Gluten free diet
- Learn how to read labels
- Meet with dietician or nutritionist
- Educate your family on celiac disease and diet changes
- Follow up with doctor



#### WHAT HAPPENS IF THE GLUTEN FREE DIET IS FOLLOWED AFTER DIAGNOSIS?

- May experience relief of symptoms within a few weeks
- May take up to six months for the small intestine to heal in children
- May take up to two years to heal in adults
- A small percentage may still have symptoms

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