

Gluten Free Food Prescribing

What's changing?

From January 1, 2017, Gluten Free foods will no longer be prescribed on the NHS for patients registered with Blackburn with Darwen GPs. Patients requiring gluten free food are expected to purchase these items themselves.

Why have the changes to GF prescribing on the NHS been introduced?

When GPs were first able to prescribe GF foods in the 1960s, the choice in shops was limited. It was therefore appropriate for GF foods to be prescribed. With NHS finances stretched, we have to make some hard choices. This one has been made for the following reasons:

- A wider range of GF products are now available at supermarkets, health food shops and online.
- Many carbohydrate foods are naturally gluten free, such as potatoes, rice and some noodles. These products can be bought from supermarkets.
- GF products are often **more expensive** when prescribed than prices in the shops and online. Food items are generally not available on prescription for other conditions.

Where can I get specialist advice?

You can get specialist advice on how to follow a GF diet from your dietician. It is very important that you make sure you have the recommended amounts of specific nutrients, such as calcium and iron. Patients are urged to attend annual review appointments when they are offered.

Which foods are naturally gluten free?

There are a variety of foods which you can eat that are naturally GF, such as fruits, vegetables, meat, fish, poultry, eggs, cream, milk, rice, potatoes, pulses and beans. Please see appendix 1 and 2 for a list of common foods that do and do not contain gluten.

Many of the supermarket chains have gluten-free ranges. Some companies that provide gluten-free products include:

- Free From
- Juvella
- Glutafin
- Genius
- Ener-G
- DS-gluten free
- Warburtons
- Proceli
- Barkat

Some companies offer free starter packs, so you can try a range of products and find ones that you prefer.

Where can I get more information about a gluten free diet and lifestyle?

Coeliac UK is an excellent support group for patients who need to adhere to a GF diet. For more information visit www.coeliac.org.uk.

Appendix 1

Food group	Foods that DO NOT CONTAIN gluten - <i>Try these!</i>
Flour	Corn flour, polenta, potato, cassava, bean and lentil flour, split pea flour, millet, quinoa, buckwheat, rice (all types), maize, arrowroot, sorghum, teff, amaranth, chestnut*, soya*, tapioca*, sago*.
Cereals	Some branded and equivalent supermarket brands of corn-based or rice-based cereals e.g. cornflakes, rice snaps, honey nut cornflakes. (Always check the label as some varieties may not be gluten-free.)
Breads, cakes & biscuits	Gluten-free products specially manufactured (supermarkets have specialised ranges): e.g. breads, biscuits, pizza bases, flour mixes, cakes. Products made from cereals or flours from the allowed list. Products made without flour (check the label for other gluten sources) or with gluten-free flour.
Pasta, rice & noodles	All types of fresh rice. Rice noodles (check the label). Gluten-free pasta, corn pasta, quinoa and rice pasta*.
Potatoes	All fresh potatoes. Some crisps (check the label). Home-made chips made from fresh potatoes and cooked in oil which has not been used to fry products containing gluten, e.g. battered fish.
Meat, fish, poultry & meat alternatives	All fresh meat, fish and poultry. Tinned fish e.g. tuna/salmon. Smoked, kippered or dried fish. Gluten-free sausages. Gluten-free fish fingers.
Milk, dairy, eggs & dairy alternatives	Natural plain cheese, fresh milk, cream, condensed milk, yoghurts, fromage frais, soya milk, goat's milk, coconut milk, almond milk, rice milk, dried skimmed milk powder, eggs.
Fats & oils	Vegetable oil, olive oil, butter, lard, reduced fat/low-fat spreads, ghee* (check the labels).
Fruit, vegetables, nuts & pulses	Fresh, dried or tinned fruit, vegetables, nuts, beans, pulses and seeds.
Desserts & puddings	Meringues, sorbets, ice creams, jelly, mousses, custard powders, milk puddings made with gluten-free ingredients. Always check labels of these food products.
Snack foods	Prawn crackers, poppadoms, gluten-free crisp breads and crackers. Check the labels for these products. Plain rice cakes and home-made popcorn.
Confectionary, sweets & preserves	Sugar, golden syrup, icing sugar, treacle, molasses, jam, honey, marmalade, peanut butter, boiled sweets and jellies.
Soups, sauces & seasonings	Fresh salt and pepper, herbs, spices, vinegars (e.g., rice wine, balsamic, barley malt vinegar), gluten-free soups, sauces and seasonings.
Drinks & alcohol	Tea, coffee, fizzy drinks, squashes, cordials, fresh juices, milk, some cocoa powders, cider, spirits, wines, liqueurs, sherry, port, gluten-free beer.
Other	Bicarbonate of soda, fresh and dried yeast, marzipan, some own brand yeast extracts, plain tofu, food colourings and flavourings, gelatine. Always check the labels. The majority of medicines prescribed by a GP are gluten-free but some may contain wheat starch.

Appendix 2

Food group	Foods that DO CONTAIN gluten - <i>Avoid these!</i>
Flour	Wheat, rye, barley, bulgar wheat, spelt, durum wheat, triticale, khorasan wheat (Kamut®), wheat flour, wheat starch, wheat bran, oat bran, semolina, couscous, malt and malted barley, bale, Einkorn*.
Cereals	Wheat-based breakfast cereals and muesli.
Breads, cakes & biscuits	All bread and bread products made from wheat, barley or rye - e.g. croissants, bagels, pitta bread, chapatti, naan bread, crispbreads, crackers, matzos, muffins, scones, croutons, pancakes, pizza, Yorkshire puddings, wafers and ice cream cones, pastries and pies.
Pasta, rice & noodles	Any fresh, dried or tinned pasta, and noodles (apart from some rice noodles). Processed rice found in salads or ready meals.
Potatoes	Processed potatoes e.g. potato salad, waffles, some chips, instant mash, crisps or potato snacks.
Meat, fish & poultry	Some processed meats or products coated in batter or breadcrumbs. Pies, puddings, suet, stuffing, fish fingers, chicken nuggets, fishcakes, sausages, burgers, haggis, faggots*, taramasalata, and rissoles.
Milk, dairy, eggs & dairy alternatives	Check the labels of processed cheese, low-fat cheese spreads, artificial cream, yoghurts and some ice creams. Yoghurts containing muesli or cereals. Scotch eggs.
Fats & oils	Suet, low-fat spreads.
Fruit, vegetables, nuts & pulses	Processed fruit and vegetables that are coated in breadcrumbs/or in sauces. Some brands of nuts. Pearl barley.
Desserts & puddings	Trifles, sponge puddings, semolina, tarts, and puddings made from flours in the 'foods to avoid' list.
Snack foods	Pretzels, Bombay mix, snacks made from flours in the 'foods to avoid' list.
Confectionary, sweets & preserves	Some chocolate bars, toffees and sweets (always check labels).
Soups, sauces & seasonings	Packet soups and sauces, gravies, soy sauce, ketchups, mayonnaise, salad dressings, pickles and chutneys, stuffing and stuffing mixes, stock cubes, bouillon, Worcestershire sauce. (Some brands may be gluten-free – always check labels).
Drinks & alcohol	Barley drinks or squashes, cloudy fizzy drinks (check labels), malted milk drinks, instant vending machine drinks, some milkshakes and sports drinks, beer, lager, stout, ale.
Other	Baking powder, some medicines and vitamins.