



Do you need to 'glutox'?

Nutritional therapist Becky Graham provides a handy guide on what to eat, what to avoid and how you can keep your gluten-free diet fresh, fun and full of imagination...



BECKY GRAHAM is a registered nutritional therapist based at the renowned Institute for Optimum Nutrition in Richmond, London. She is trained in functional medicine, which uses a completely personalised approach to nutrition, working with a wide range of conditions from stress and low energy to digestive or hormonal imbalances. As well as working with clients on an individual basis, Becky works with large companies to support health and wellbeing initiatives. Combining nutrition with work in television, she is passionate about supporting busy lifestyles with food.

YOU MAY HAVE SPENT THE whole of January 'detoxing' in the traditional sense, avoiding alcohol, caffeine and sugar and eschewing fun in favour of a night on the sofa with a cup of green tea and a bowlful of berries. And who can blame you? The festive season can take its toll on the most resilient party goer and now is definitely the time to hunker down and hibernate until there's something worth leaving the house for! Even if you were super diligent over the Christmas period and made sure that everything was gluten-free, you still may have been caught out by some seemingly innocent sounding ingredients. If you're gluten intolerant or gluten sensitive and really want to get to down the nitty-gritty of your symptoms this year, a 'gluten detox' might be the answer.

Gluten, the Latin for 'glue', is a mixture of proteins found in wheat, barley and rye. It is gluten that gives our food its chewy consistency, helping to keep other ingredients together, gives dough elasticity and helps our bread to rise and keep its shape. Aside from the obvious culprits like bread, pastries, pasta and cereals, gluten is often hidden in lots of other foods for its texture-improving properties, many of which you might not necessarily expect.

As well as causing digestive issues, gluten has been indicated in joint pain and cognitive complaints such as 'brain fog', so if you really want to focus in on your symptoms. You might need to spend some time playing detective to identify all the potential culprits that could be sabotaging your good intentions.

If you've eliminated the offenders listed on the right and your symptoms aren't improving, read the ingredients of some non-food products that may also contain gluten, such as:

- shampoos
- cosmetics

- lipsticks, lip balm
- medications
- non self-adhesive stamps and envelopes
- vitamins and supplements (check label)

If all that sounds a bit exhaustive and a lot to take on, don't panic! Following a gluten-free diet doesn't have to be restrictive or lack variety and fun. A diet based on a mix of healthy fats, proteins, fruit, veg and non-gluten grains should form the foundation for healthy eating across the board, not just those with gluten sensitivities.

Follow these guidelines for general dietary advice:

These foods should be consumed liberally. Try to buy organic and local where possible:

- Healthy fat:** extra-virgin olive oil, sesame oil, coconut oil, grass-fed,

organic or pasture-fed butter, ghee, almond milk, avocados, coconuts, olives, nuts and nut butters and seeds (flaxseed, sunflower seeds, pumpkin seeds, sesame seeds, chia seeds).

- Protein:** whole eggs; wild fish (salmon, black cod, grouper, herring, trout, sardines), shellfish and molluscs (shrimp, crab, lobster, mussels, clams,

- oysters), grass-fed meat, fowl, poultry, and pork (beef, lamb, liver, chicken, turkey, duck, veal), game.

- Vegetables:** leafy greens and lettuces, spinach, broccoli, kale, chard, cabbage,

- onions, mushrooms, cauliflower, Brussels sprouts, sauerkraut, artichoke, alfalfa sprouts, green beans, celery, bok choy, radishes, watercress, turnip, sweet potatoes, asparagus, garlic, leek, fennel, shallots, spring onions, peppers, ginger, parsley, water chestnuts.

- Low-sugar fruit:** avocado, cucumber, tomato, courgette, squash, pumpkin, aubergine, lemons, limes.

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Food that often contain gluten

Malt/malt flavouring	Cold cuts	Mayonnaise	sauces – choose tamari, which is gluten-free
Energy bars	Blue cheeses	Flavoured coffees and teas	Meatballs
Non-dairy creamer	Marinades	Commercially prepared chocolate milk	Meatloaf
Soups	French fries (often dusted with flour before freezing)	Ketchup	Hot dogs
Trail mix	Wheatgrass	Vodka	Salad dressings
Fried vegetables/tempura	Tinned baked beans	Breaded foods	Veggie burgers
Commercial stock and broths	Processed cheese	Malt vinegar	Ice cream
Syrups	Instant hot drinks	Wine coolers	Imitation crab meat
Gravy	Cereals	Fruit fillings and puddings	Roasted nuts
		Soy sauce and teriyaki	Oats (unless certified GF)





Herbs, seasonings, and

condiments: Check your labels – ketchup and chutneys usually contain gluten and are very high in sugar, however mustard, horseradish, tapenade and salsa are usually free of gluten, wheat, soy, and sugar. Use tamari instead of soy, which is naturally gluten-free. Herbs and seasonings are usually fine so use liberally, but be mindful of packaged products, often made in factories that process wheat and soy.

Include these foods once a day or a couple of times weekly:

❖ **Non-gluten grains:** amaranth, buckwheat, rice (brown, white, wild), millet, quinoa, sorghum, teff, oats. (Although oats do not naturally contain gluten, they are frequently contaminated with gluten because they are processed at mills that also handle wheat, so try and get the guaranteed gluten-free variety).

When non-gluten grains are processed for human consumption (e.g. milling whole oats and preparing rice for packaging), their physical structure changes and this increases the risk of an inflammatory reaction – this is why we should be cautious with these foods.

❖ Monitor your symptoms with consumption of legumes – beans, lentils, peas – as they may contribute to

inflammation. However, chickpeas are fine so load up on houmous, it's a great source of protein.

- ❖ Limit carrots and parsnips as they are high in sugar.
- ❖ Whole sweet fruit: berries are best; be cautious of sugary fruits such as apricots, mangos, melons, papaya, prunes, and pineapple.
- ❖ Cow's milk and cream: use sparingly.
- ❖ Cottage cheese, yoghurt and kefir: use sparingly.
- ❖ Sweeteners: natural stevia and chocolate (choose dark chocolate that's at least 70 percent or more cocoa).
- ❖ Wine: one glass a day if you so choose, preferably red.

If you need more advice or specific guidance on any of these recommendations, or would like to talk to a professional who will take into account your full health history, you can find a Registered Nutritional Therapist at www.bant.org.uk.

In the meantime, dig out your magnifying glass so you can read that really tiny label font, find yourself a nice hat and do your best Miss Marple... Venture out to the supermarkets armed with this information. ❖

For more information, visit www.healthyhedonist.co.uk

Here's a 'cut out and keep' shopping list



Mixed greens	Coconut oil
Berries	Grass-fed/organic beef
Spinach	Garlic
Kale	Free-range eggs
Broccoli	Onions
Almonds	Peppers
Wild salmon	Avocado
Walnuts	Black pepper
Free-range turkey	Coconut
Olive oil	Goat's cheese
Free-range chicken	Sweet potatoes

The following ingredients can be code for gluten

Avena sativa Cyclodextrin	Brown rice syrup
Secale cereale	Hydrolysed vegetable protein
Dextrin	Modified food starch
Triticum aestivum	Maltodextrin
Fermented grain extract	Hydrolysed vegetable protein (HVP)
Triticum vulgare	Phytosphingosine extract
Hordeum distichon	Hydrolysed soy protein
Tocopherol/vitamin E	Samino peptide complex
Hordeum vulgare	Caramel colour
Yeast extract	(frequently made from barley)
Hydrolysate	
Natural flavouring	
Hydrolysed malt extract	