



FCS Summer Newsletter

June, July, August 2015

Gluten-Free Is Not the Same as Low Carbohydrate

Upcoming Events

Healthy Snack Workshop	June 10 & 25
Pillowcase Workshop	June 15 & 22
ABC Childcare Conference	June 27
Food Protections Managers Cert.	July 14 & 15
Kids in the Kitchen	August 4-6

Those with celiac disease cannot tolerate the protein gluten that is found in wheat, rye, and barley. (Gluten can also be found in oats if they are processed in the same plants that process wheat.) Although it is sometimes simply called *gluten intolerance*, celiac disease is an intestinal disorder. For people with celiac disease, gluten damages the lining of the small intestine. The damaged intestine cannot absorb nutrients very well, which can lead to malnutrition and other symptoms such as abdominal pain. Because those with this life-long disease cannot tolerate the gluten in wheat, they require a gluten-free eating plan.

However, many believe that the gluten-free diet is just another weight loss regimen. This is not true.

The first misconception is that the gluten-free diet is equivalent to a low carbohydrate diet. A gluten-free diet, as mentioned before, eliminates certain grains, which contain gluten. However, these grains are not the only source for carbohydrates. Other carbohydrate sources include gluten-free grains (such as corn, quinoa, and rice), vegetables, fruits, milk, and other items that contain sugar or starch. The gluten-free diet allows carbohydrates as long as they do not

contain gluten. (If you have celiac disease, gluten intolerance, or a wheat allergy, be sure to read the ingredient list and check the allergy warnings on food labels to ensure that the product does not contain items with gluten or wheat.)



Another misconception is that carbohydrates, grains and wheat in particular, are the villains. There are different reasons for this belief; but, the truth is that there is no evidence to support this idea. Carbohydrates are the only energy source for your brain and your red blood cells. Without consumption of carbohydrates, ketones produced from the breakdown of fat can cause the body to go into a dangerous condition called metabolic ketoacidosis. On the other hand, diets without wheat *can be* nutritious; however, these diets must be

managed very carefully. The average gluten-free diet only contains 6 g of dietary fiber, which is significantly lower than the recommended 25-38 g/day. Therefore, a major drawback and difficulty to eliminating wheat from the diet is meeting fiber requirements. Additionally, many people who follow a gluten-free diet do not receive adequate amounts of some other vital nutrients, such as iron, B vitamins, antioxidants, and folic acid.

A final misconception is that gluten-free diets promote weight loss. In reality, any weight loss seen with a gluten-free diet is likely due to the overall limitation of food options and thus calories in the diet and not due to gluten or wheat being harmful or fattening. In fact, diets such as a low carbohydrate diet may result in more weight loss initially but eventually have a higher dropout rate compared to a more balanced diet that does not eliminate entire food groups.

Gluten-free diets are medically necessary for those with celiac disease or a gluten intolerance but not indicated for the general public. Eating more whole-grain foods remains an important health recommendation.

Monthly Observances:

- June-National Safety Month
- July-National Ice Cream Month
- August-Family Heritage Month

Follow Safe Grilling Tips

Grilling and picnicking often go hand-in-hand. And just as with cooking indoors, there are important guidelines that should be followed to ensure that your grilled food reaches the table safely.

Marinate safely. Marinate foods in the refrigerator - never on the kitchen counter or outdoors. In addition, if you plan to use some of the marinade as a sauce on the cooked food, reserve a portion separately before adding the raw meat, poultry, or seafood. Don't reuse marinade.

Cook immediately after "partial cook-

ing." If you partially cook food to reduce grilling time, do so immediately before the food goes on the hot grill.

Cook food thoroughly. When it's time to cook the food, have your food thermometer ready. Always use it to be sure your food is cooked thoroughly.

Keep "ready" food hot. Grilled food can be kept hot until served by moving it to the side of the grill rack, just away from the coals. This keeps it hot but prevents overcooking.

Don't reuse platters or utensils. Using the

same platter or utensils that previously held raw meat, poultry, or seafood allows bacteria from the raw food's juices to spread to the cooked food. Instead, have a clean platter and utensils ready at grill-side to serve your food.

Check for foreign objects in food. If you clean your grill using a bristle brush, check to make sure that no detached bristles have made their way into grilled food.

www.fda.gov/food



Bethany Jackson, CEA-FCS

315 E. Milam, Ste. 112
Wharton, Texas, 77488

Phone: 979-532-3310
Fax: 979-532-8863

E-mail:
Bethany.Jackson@ag.tamu.edu



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Wharton County FCS

Family and Consumer Sciences (FCS) is part of the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service, Texas A&M System. AgriLife Extension offers practical information for families: raising children, housing and environment, eating well, managing money, and staying healthy.

For more information about Family and Consumer Science programs in Wharton County, contact Bethany Jackson at 979-532-3310.



Agua de Sandia

Watermelons, mostly made of water, are sweet fruit that are packed full of vitamins A, B6, C, and Lycopene. Lycopene has been shown to lower cardiovascular disease risk and might help reduce the risk for hardening of the arteries.

Agua de Sandia is a classic Mexican drink, perfect for hot summer days.

Ingredients:

4 generous cups of

cubed watermelon (seeded, if not using seedless)

1.5 cups cold water

Juice of 2 limes

Mint Sprigs

Honey, agave, or simple syrup

Place watermelon and water in blender and blend for about 30 seconds. Strain through a fine-mesh strainer. Add lime juice and sweeten to taste. Serve over ice with mint sprigs.

www.watermelon.org/nutrition

