



DANNON INSTITUTE®

Nutrition for Health



GLUTEN INTOLERANCE

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Unlike allergic reactions to nuts, gluten intolerance is not associated with acute, life-threatening responses. That said, the child with gluten intolerance must avoid eating all foods that contain gluten, a protein found in wheat, barley, rye, and some types of oats. The protein causes an allergic reaction in the intestines that can lead to cramping, diarrhea, and damage to the lining of the intestine. Celiac disease is a severe form of gluten intolerance and is defined as a disability according to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the USDA. Public school systems participating in the National School Lunch Program are required to provide substitutions for all students with food allergies and intolerances that qualify as a disability.

Gluten, primarily in the form of wheat and wheat products, is so ubiquitous in foods that creating gluten-free cafeteria meals can be challenging. Fruits, vegetables, milk, plain yogurt, meats, poultry, fish, eggs, legumes, nuts, and other foods in their unprocessed state do not contain gluten. However, ingredients used in food preparation or processing may not be gluten-free. Labeling laws require that food products list allergens immediately under the ingredient portion of the package label. A food service department that has been trained on label reading and gluten-containing foods and ingredients can identify gluten-free options for students and staff members. Parents of gluten-sensitive children may be interested in helping educate school personnel on foods and ingredients with gluten.

Gluten-free snack foods

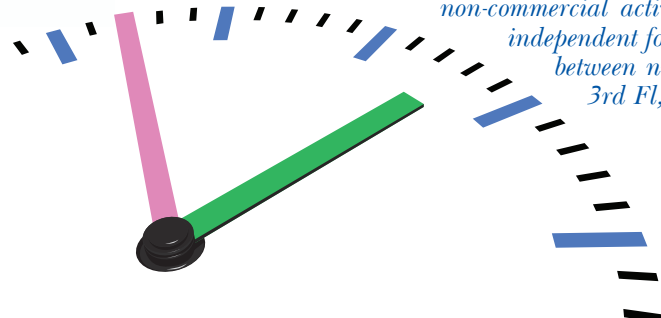
(Remember to always check the ingredient list on the label of the product to ensure the absence of gluten containing ingredients.)

- Fresh fruit
- Fresh vegetables
- Dried fruit
- Small applesauce or fruit cups
- String cheese
- Yogurt
- Rice cakes
- Popcorn
- Corn, tortilla, potato chips

Although many children with gluten intolerance bring their lunch to school to minimize risk of exposure, they still can face challenges at snack time, during parties, and even when working on classroom crafts. Encourage teachers to consult with parents on gluten-free snack and party foods. Alert teachers, art specialists, and purchasing managers to seek out gluten-free alternatives to moldable dough clay, papier mache paste, wallpaper paste, and school paste, especially for younger grades where students are more likely to put their fingers in their mouth or try to taste art supplies.

Ms. Hermann specializes in health communications for parents and children. Her articles have appeared in major health, women's, and parenting magazines and websites. She has worked with the Dannon Institute for the last ten years.

The Dannon Institute is a separately incorporated, 501(c)(3) nonprofit foundation dedicated to non-commercial activities. Launched in 1997, The Dannon Institute was established as an independent foundation to promote research, education and communication about the link between nutrition and good health. - The Dannon Institute | 100 Hillside Avenue, 3rd Fl, White Plains, NY 10603-2863 | Tel: 914-872-8543



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