

## **Why the Gluten-Free Diet is So Popular**

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Gluten is an amino acid protein sequence found in wheat, barley, rye, some common oats, spelt, kamut and a few other grains. Because grains or flours are used in the preparation of many or even most foods, gluten can be found in almost any food, drugs, personal care products and many other items. This brief document is only intended to address some of the reasons why the gluten-free diet is so popular. Visit my website for more relevant and related topics.

### **1. What is Old is now New**

Over 2,500 years ago, Hippocrates wrote that food would injure some people. This as well as the broad history of food allergies is discussed in a brief white paper available on my website for free. Many things that were done in the “old days” were done for good reason and were efficacious or effective even though people at the time didn’t understand the scientific mechanisms. The topic of food is thoroughly discussed in the previously mentioned white paper. Another example of what is old is now new is in the area of cleaning products. In years past, women used baking soda and vinegar for cleaning, which works exceptionally well, is inexpensive, and is environmentally green as opposed to harsher, toxic chemicals that can harm human health and the environment.

### **2. People are Sick and Tired of feeling Sick and Tired**

Probably never in the history of humanity have we had so many people sick and tired, and people are literally sick of it. People are looking for natural alternatives to medications that don’t solve the underlying problem. The interest in health and wellness has increased dramatically over the years as the number of people feeling unwell as proportionally increased. Consumers are taking matters into their own hands, reading, researching, and figuring out what works for their body and well being.

### **3. Mainstream Medicine recognizes the value of special diets**

The Ketogenic Diet is a rigid metabolic diet used by mainstream medicine for epilepsy patients or individuals with seizures. In the Ketogenic Diet, meals are high in fat and low in carbohydrates and protein to produce a high blood concentration of incompletely burned fat molecules called ketone bodies. While mainstream medicine may not understand the mechanism of why the Ketogenic diet works for seizures, it nonetheless is effective in many cases. Mainstream medicine uses the Low Oxalate diet for the prevention of kidney stones in some patients. Individuals on special diets are advised to have close medical supervision for nutritional levels as well as other medical testing as indicated by their physician as diet restriction can lead to nutritional deficiencies.

### **4. More Celiacs are getting diagnosed**

There has been a movement afoot to get the nearly 3 million Americans who have celiac disease but are not yet diagnosed – diagnosed. It is estimated that nearly 1% of the U.S. population has celiac disease; however 97% of them don’t yet know that they

have celiac disease. While this contributes to the idea of the gluten-free diet being popular, individuals with celiac disease must strictly adhere to a gluten-free diet for their health and well being.

**5. More Gluten intolerance is being diagnosed**

Separate and distinct from celiac disease is a condition known as gluten intolerance. It is estimated that there are about 18-20 million Americans who are intolerant to gluten. In a gluten intolerant individual, gluten causes a variety of physical symptoms; however there is not the autoimmune response of the body. Individuals with gluten intolerance use a gluten-free diet for health purposes.

**6. Gluten as a molecule can by pass the blood brain barrier and enter the brain**

About six or so years ago, a retired RN, who happened to have celiac disease and be a cloistered Dominican Nun sent me more than seven or eight studies on how the gluten-molecule could by pass the blood brain barrier and enter the brain. It was fascinating to me although to be perfectly frank, it was much more technical and scientific than I like to get. I only want to know the basics. Gluten, as a molecule, can do what 98% of the pharmaceutical drugs on the market cannot do- enter the brain. This is the underlying reason that gluten affects some people the way it does.

**7. People can either see or feel the difference it makes**

My two sons would have ADD and/or ADHD if it were not for the gluten-free, dairy-free and dye free diet. If they have gluten, dairy, or food dyes or other additives, it produces a visible effect that people outside of our family can observe. Physicians have documented this in videos for many decades. The fact that it works for some people is yet another reason for the growth in popularity.

**8. More people are waking up to the fact that food can affect how they feel**

Clearly there seems to be an awakening of sorts going on with increasing speed. There is more recognition in society that foods can impact health and well being. More consumers are purchasing organic foods, foods without chemical additives and preservatives, and dyes and the food industry is responding with foods that are free of such additives. In the past, it was widely accepted that food could affect how you felt. I say, what is old is now new again.

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