

The Lunchbox Nutritionist ***Kathleen Searles MS, RD, LDN***



Have you been hearing the buzz about gluten free diets? This month's newsletter will bring you up to speed about when a gluten free diet might be helpful and some of the challenges involved. It is usually not necessary to go gluten free unless you have a specific sensitivity or diagnosis of celiac disease. But, many people who eliminate gluten begin eating more fresh and unprocessed foods, and as a result find that they lose weight and feel better. A word of caution: If you suspect that you may have gluten sensitivity, do not change your diet until AFTER you have had testing done, otherwise the tests can be inaccurate. I hope you will enjoy this informative issue!

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- Kathleen Searles

Gluten Free Diet: 101



When it comes to nutrition, health, and weight there seems to be a new “buzz” word every 5 - 10 years. Food companies and the media will tout this “buzz” word as the “magic ingredient” to avoid if weight loss is your goal. In the early 1990’s we were told to “slash the fat”. People everywhere were eating fat free cheese, candy, cake, bread, ice cream, salad dressing, and butter all with the hopes to lose weight. Then around the turn of the century, a new weight loss craze appeared - “cut the carbs”. Consumers were told to liberally eat bacon, mayo, butter, heavy whipping cream, and full fat salad dressings, for the “fat” was not the problem but it was the carbohydrates. And today, in 2012 we are told that it is not the “fat” or the “carbs” that continue to pack on the pounds, but instead the “gluten”. Once again marketers and food manufactures have joined the band wagon to promote and market gluten free foods to consumers as the “magical ingredient” to slash the weight.

What is a gluten free diet?

A gluten free diet is a diet free of gluten. Gluten is a protein found in wheat, barley, rye, malts, oats, kamut, and spelt. It is also a food additive and commonly used as “dextrin”.

Who needs to follow a gluten free diet?

Gluten free diets were designed for people who have celiac disease, also known as gluten intolerance. Celiac disease is a genetic disorder that affects 1 in 133 Americans. Symptoms of celiac disease can include: diarrhea, weight loss, weakness, bone pain, malnutrition, and abdominal bloating. If you have been diagnosed with celiac disease, it is very important to follow a strict gluten free diet. There are some people who do not have celiac disease but instead have a sensitivity to wheat. Having a sensitivity to wheat is usually not as acute or severe as having celiac disease and can be harder to diagnose because the symptoms may not appear for a few hours or even days after the wheat product was consumed. Avoiding wheat products is the primary approach to dealing with wheat sensitivities. Unlike celiac disease or a food allergy, if someone has a wheat intolerance they may be able to build up a tolerance for a small amount of wheat over time.

Foods that are Naturally Gluten Free:

Fresh fruits and vegetables

Quinoa

Rice

Corn

Potatoes

Tapioca

Amaranth

Arrowroot

Millet

Sorghum

Teff

Chia Seed

Dairy products (cheese, milk, yogurt)

Other gluten free products include: beans, soy beans, nuts, and nut flours as well as meat, poultry and fish that have not been treated with any artificial flavorings or enhancers.

Foods that Contain Gluten:

Breads, cereals, pastas

Flour tortillas and wraps

Cereal bars

Cakes, cookies, pastries, and custards

Snack crackers

Convenience foods

Soups and sauces thickened with wheat, rye, barley or other gluten containing flours Vegetable proteins and starch Modified food starch (when derived from wheat instead of maize) Malt flavoring, including maltodextrin, dextrin, unless specifically labeled as corn malt Quote of the Month:

Gluten Free, Weight Loss, and Your Health:



Today it is “trendy” to follow a gluten free nutrition plan and we as consumers are marketed a wide variety of “gluten free” foods. There definitely can be some benefits of eating less gluten. First of all, when you go gluten free one does eliminate many packaged and processed foods. Also, by eliminating these packaged foods one is more likely to consume

News and Events:

Spring is here, and the warm weather too! Does this have you thinking of trying a 5K, joining a softball team, taking up hiking, or playing in tennis or golf tournaments? I have some new sports nutrition packages available to help you plan for your fueling and hydration needs. Call or e-mail today for more information!

Recipe of the Month: Spiced Quinoa with Veggies

Servings: 6

Ingredients

1 cup quinoa

3 cups water

1 pinch salt

1 tablespoons olive oil

3 cloves garlic, minced

1 red bell pepper, chopped

more fresh foods such as fruits, vegetables, raw nuts and seeds, as well as lean sources of protein. This is one principle that most nutrition and health professionals can agree on!

However, just because a food product is labeled and marketed as gluten free does not mean it is HEALTHIER than the gluten alternative. Many gluten free products are actually very calorie dense and when it comes to weight loss one still needs to watch overall calorie intake. Also, many gluten free products are made with rice or corn flour, and are not fortified or enriched and contain smaller amounts of folate, iron, and fiber than foods that are traditionally made with whole wheat flour.

The bottom line is that if you do suspect you may have celiac disease, an allergy to wheat, or have a wheat sensitivity, then talk with your doctor and nutritionist to make the correct diagnosis. With any type of medical condition it is important to follow the correct diet protocols for proper treatment and recovery. If you are following a gluten free diet because you have heard it can help you lose those stubborn pounds, make sure to consult with your registered dietitian. A registered dietitian can help you create a custom meal plan that takes into account your food preferences, medical history, and goals.

Quote of the Month

"Some of the world's greatest feats were accomplished by people not smart enough to know they were impossible."

-Doug Larson

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1/2 cup corn kernels
1/2 cup green peas
1 tomato diced
1/2 teaspoon cumin
1 teaspoon dried oregano
salt and pepper to taste
2 green onions, chopped

Directions

Bring the quinoa, water, and 1 pinch of salt to a boil in a saucepan. Reduce heat to medium-low, cover, and simmer until the quinoa is tender, about 20 minutes. Once done, drain a mesh strainer, and set aside.

Heat the olive oil in a saucepan over medium heat. Stir in the garlic, and cook until the garlic softens and the aroma mellows, about 2 minutes. Add the red pepper, corn, green peas and tomatoes. Cook for about 5 minutes. Season with cumin, oregano, salt, and pepper, and cook for 1 minute more, then stir in the cooked quinoa and green onions. Serve hot or cold.

Nutritional Information

Amount Per Serving Calories: 157 |
Total Fat: 4.5g | Total Carbohydrates:
25.5 | Protein: 5 g | Cholesterol: 0mg



About Kathleen Searles, MS, RD, LDN

I am a Registered Dietitian and am licensed to practice in Massachusetts, New Hampshire, and Maine. The exciting field of nutrition has been my passion ever since I took a foods class with my friends in high school. Through my work in different states and different settings I have developed my philosophy of helping people improve their diets by finding foods that fit into their particular routines, budgets, and preferences. I look forward to helping you solve your nutrition challenges with tasty and satisfying foods.