

## Wheat or Gluten May Be The Unrecognized or Undiagnosed Cause of Your Illness

If you suffer from symptoms of abdominal or stomach pain, excess bloating, gas, diarrhea, fatigue, bone or joint pain, skin rashes, headaches, difficulty concentrating or irritability you may have gluten sensitivity. It is the most common genetic condition and one that is frequently undiagnosed or misdiagnosed. Gluten proteins in wheat, barley, and rye are the cause. However most people and their doctors are unaware that gluten is the cause. Because they are unaware that there are screening blood tests (and stool tests) available they remain undiagnosed and untreated when a gluten-free diet usually relieves these symptoms. How could this be? Diagnostic blood tests are available for gluten sensitivity but many doctors are unaware that such blood tests exist. Most are unaware that specific genes result in an increased risk for gluten sensitivity and can be detected in blood. Even if they are aware of the tests they may fail to recognize the many symptoms of gluten sensitivity (over 250 exist) and don't order the tests. Sadly, the condition often goes unrecognized and untreated. Yet it is very common and reversible with a gluten-free diet. No medication is required. Worldwide nearly 1 in 100 people have the most severe form of gluten sensitivity or intolerance known as Celiac disease (CD). It is estimated that more than 90% are undiagnosed. As many as 10-30% of people of Northern European ancestry, have lesser forms of gluten sensitivity that cause symptoms that improve on a gluten free diet. The low carbohydrate diets have not only been popular because many have lost weight but many experienced dramatic improvements in their general feeling of well being, increased energy, relief of fibromyalgia, joint aches, improved skin, fewer headaches, and improved digestive symptoms. Full benefits may have been missed though because gluten was not completely eliminated. Though gluten can cause serious damage to the intestine that results in poor absorption and weight loss it may also cause weight gain. This is because it is insulinogenic, meaning it stimulates the release of insulin by the pancreas that promote fat storage and weight gain. This also can cause either too high or too low blood sugar levels. Some people will gain weight despite malabsorbing essential nutrients. More than 10% of insulin dependent diabetics have Celiac disease. Whether the Celiac or the diabetes came first is not known, but they commonly occur together. CD is also often associated with other autoimmune conditions including lupus, rheumatoid arthritis, Sjogren's syndrome, autoimmune hepatitis and thyroid problems. It is a reversible cause of infertility, low birth weight infants, pre-term labor and recurrent miscarriages. Untreated it is associated with a significantly increased risk of numerous cancers and lymphoma. It is a common cause of unexplained iron deficiency anemia and premature osteoporosis. If you have any of the above symptoms or problems, have a family history of Celiac disease or are of Northern European ancestry you should be screened for Celiac disease or gluten intolerance. If you have been diagnosed with irritable bowel syndrome or lactose intolerance make sure your doctor excluded Celiac disease.

### About the Author

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