

Celiac Disease

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Definition & Facts

Celiac disease is a chronic digestive and immune disorder that damages the small intestine. The disease is triggered by eating foods containing gluten. The disease can cause long-lasting digestive problems and keep your body from getting all the nutrients it needs.



Symptoms & Causes

If you have celiac disease, you may experience digestive symptoms or symptoms in other parts of your body. Digestive symptoms are more common in children than adults. Some people with celiac disease have no symptoms.

Diagnosis

Doctors use information from your medical and family history, a physical exam, and medical test results to look for signs that you could have celiac disease. Doctors diagnose celiac disease with blood tests, biopsies of the small intestine, skin biopsies, and genetic tests.

Treatment

To treat celiac disease, you will need to follow a gluten-free diet. Your doctor will explain the gluten-free diet and may refer to you a registered dietitian who specializes in treating people who have celiac disease. A dietitian can teach you how to avoid gluten while eating a healthy, balanced diet.

Eating, Diet, & Nutrition

If you have celiac disease, you will need to remove foods and drinks that contain gluten from your diet. Following a gluten-free diet can relieve celiac disease symptoms and heal damage to the small intestine. People with celiac disease need to follow a gluten-free diet for life.

Clinical Trials

The NIDDK conducts and supports clinical trials in many diseases and conditions, including digestive diseases. The trials look to find new ways to prevent, detect, or treat disease and improve quality of life.

Related Diagnostic Tests

- [Upper GI Endoscopy](#)

For Health Care Professionals

- [Dermatitis Herpetiformis](#)
- [Dental Enamel Defects & Celiac](#)

Your Digestive System & How It Works

The digestive system is made up of the

Additional Languages

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- [Spanish](#)

- Disease
- Celiac Disease Testing

gastrointestinal (GI) tract—also called the digestive tract—and the liver, pancreas, and the gallbladder. The GI tract is a series of hollow organs joined in a long, twisting tube from the mouth to the anus.

Last Reviewed October 2020

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