



TO EAT GLUTEN FREE OR NOT?



Gluten-free eating is becoming more popular nowadays, with the increasing amount of people who have celiac disease or gluten sensitivity. Also there is a much larger selection of foods available for people with these two conditions in the grocery store and health foods stores. The choice to eat gluten-free has to do with digestion: some people do not readily digest gluten grains. This indigestion causes undesirable side-effect, interferes with calcium absorption and causes fecal loss of other essential nutrients. Some people, in order to be truly healthy must choose this way of eating for their lifetime, and parents, relatives, or friends can do more than previously realized, by being supportive of this choice. Do not encourage someone on a gluten free diet to try some gluten-containing food, and see it as progress. Quite the opposite, a single morsel of gluten for a celiac can cause three weeks time to repair the intestinal flora from the damage. Instead educate oneself on gluten-free grains, and aim to provide foods without these grains. Indeed it is just a matter of grains, as gluten is not found in meats or milks, vegetables or fruits, nuts or seeds. This does leave quite a variety of whole foods to choose from. So don't be a martyr and loose weight on this strict regiment. You'll get used to cooking with rice and corn pastas, for example.

Grains such as brown and white rice, corn, quinoa, amaranth, teff (an African grain), buckwheat (a relative of rhubarb), wild rice, and millet are all innately gluten free. Sticky rice may contain gluten, and some people with gluten sensitivity can still eat oats. Just watch out for hidden sources of gluten, such as sauces and soups, with flours as thickener. Spelt, barley, kamut, and whole wheat all contain gluten, although traditionally healthy fare.

This is one of the most difficult diets for some people, but if you choose to embark upon this lifestyle, don't despair; the benefits for digestion and absorption, reduction of digestive toxins, and ongoing detoxification are great.