

Mix it up



Healing the mind and body after gluten exposure

No matter how careful we are when researching and asking questions at restaurants, the possibility that food will come into contact with gluten while being prepared always exists.

Getting exposed to gluten causes both physical and emotional pain, and although symptoms may change over time, a familiar trigger will typically let you know it is time to get home or to a bathroom immediately.

Symptoms from gluten exposure vary widely from one person to the next, but can include brain fog, bloating, constipation or diarrhea, depression or anxiety, headaches or migraines, inflammation, joint pain and irritability.

While no magic remedy can halt a reaction, you can take steps to speed up the healing process.

DRINK

- Water helps flush out the system.
- Coconut water starts the hydration process and naturally replaces electrolytes.
- Hot tea, bone broth and broth all nourish the body.

SLEEP

- Sleep as much as possible to give the body time to rest and heal.

EAT

- Keep comfort foods in the house at all times in case of an emergency. Start out with clear liquids like broth and ginger ale then progress to full liquids. When your body properly digests these foods, move on to toast, a plain piece of gluten-free bread or crackers.
- Ginger settles the stomach and can help with cramping.
- Pineapple has its own enzymes that aid digestion.
- Stay away from dairy during recovery because the villi are in no shape to digest it yet.

MEDICATE

- Taking an increased dose of probiotics after symptoms have eased will promote

the growth of good gut bacteria to restore what gluten has washed away.

- Digestive enzymes naturally speed up digestion and push the gluten through the system quicker.
- GlutenEase is a digestive enzyme designed to be taken after accidental gluten exposure. People report success in alleviating symptoms and speeding up the healing process. It helps normalize the body's inflammatory response to the gluten peptide.
- Charcoal pills bind up and usher out gluten and reduce excess gas in the gut. They sometimes are used to reduce diarrhea because the charcoal neutralizes and absorbs methane or sulfide intestinal gases.
- Our bodies cannot produce glutamine when we are stressed or our systems are compromised. L-glutamine, a powerhouse amino acid, can heal the gut lining and reduce inflammation, which in turn can treat depression or anxiety brought on by gluten.
- Take an over-the-counter pain reliever to treat headaches, inflammation or joint swelling.

EXERCISE

- After a couple of days, add light exercise to the recovery process. The endorphins it produces can reduce anxiety.

If ever you are in doubt on the gluten-free status of a product, drug, over-the-counter medicine, lipstick or food, you are better off avoiding it. Taking a chance now could result in you paying the price later. It is your body, so choose wisely.

—Jennifer Harris

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