

CELIAC DISEASE

Celiac disease (CD) is an autoimmune small intestinal condition caused by a permanent sensitivity to gluten from wheat, rye and barley. It involves both a genetic susceptibility and an environmental trigger. The symptoms can develop at any age and may include diarrhea, weight loss and abdominal distension and pain and other non-gastrointestinal problems. First-degree relatives have a 10-15% chance of developing CD. Those with CD must follow a strict gluten free diet (GFD) and should meet with a registered dietician.

Do not start a GFD without obtaining a celiac screen (blood test), as the test requires at least 2 months of daily gluten equivalent to 2 slices of bread per day. Talk with your doctor if you are concerned your child may have celiac disease.

Resources:

- <http://www.celiac.ca>
- <http://www.calgaryceliac.ca> (Calgary chapter)
- <http://www.gikids.org>
- <http://www.celiac.org>
- <http://www.beyondceliac.org>