



Nutrition News

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Supplements for Celiac Disease or Gluten Intolerance

Though only a small percentage are diagnosed, an estimated 3 million Americans have celiac disease, an inherited, immune-mediated intolerance to dietary gluten. “Gluten” refers to the protein found in wheat, barley, rye, and some oats. When gluten is consumed, celiac sufferers have a specific, intense inflammatory response within the small intestinal mucosa that damages the lining and interferes with digestion and absorption. The longer gluten is consumed, the more the body is damaged and the greater the likelihood of health disorders and complications.

While there is no cure for celiac disease, eliminating gluten from the diet is the primary treatment. However, simply restricting gluten may not be enough to relieve all symptoms or correct deficiencies. The following is a list of supplements that may offer support to those suffering from celiac or wheat intolerances.

Multivitamins

Because mal absorption is a common side effect of celiac disease, those suffering from the condition may also suffer from a variety of nutritional deficiencies. In fact, nutritional deficiencies are responsible for most symptoms in those with celiac even though they may seem unrelated including anxiety, insomnia, hypertension, obesity and headaches.

Common deficiencies in those suffering from celiac include: Iron, Magnesium, Folic Acid, Zinc, Vitamin B12 and Vitamin D. Taking a multi (preferably a whole food vitamin) can help one avoid such deficiencies and ultimately prevent further complications. A recent study confirms that B-vitamin supplements are helpful in raising vitamin B6, B12 and folate levels and in reducing homocysteine levels in people with celiac disease.

Product Suggestions: Vital Choice, New Chapter or MegaFood multivitamins

These companies make one daily whole-food multivitamins that are naturally gluten free. Unlike USP vitamins, these companies do not isolate out just a part of the vitamin. They instead deliver whole vitamins and minerals in a food form that’s more biologically active and absorbed. MegaFood also makes a great vitamin D for those that just want to supplement with this. When purchasing a D supplement, make sure it says D3 or cholecalciferol.

Digestive Enzymes

Enzymes are produced in the pancreas and can also be obtained from raw fruits and vegetables. Your digestive system, immune system, blood stream, liver, pancreas, as well as every other body function runs on enzymes. Certain digestive enzymes, high in DPP-IV can aid in the

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digestion of gluten containing foods. DPP-IV assists in normalizing inflammatory response to the gluten peptide, improving digestion and utilization of gluten containing foods. Proper digestion is essential to obtaining the nutrients we need and can reduce common problems related to food intolerances.

Product Suggestions: *Enzymedica GlutenEase* and *MegaFood Gluten & Dairy Megazymes* both contain DPP-IV as well as other digestive enzymes. Though these products cannot prevent or cure Celiac, they can offer assistance in digesting the offending proteins if gluten is accidentally consumed or one wants.

Essential Fatty Acids (EFA's)

Omega-3 and Omega-6 are fatty acids that are considered “essential”, because though they are necessary for good health, our bodies cannot make them. We need to take them in and though many foods are rich in Omega-6, Omega-3 is not regularly consumed by Americans.

Because of the effects on digestion and absorption of fats in those with celiac, increasing intake of essential fatty acids is imperative to preventing EFA deficiency. A recent study in pediatric patients with celiac, showed a deficiency of Omega-6 in the mucosal lining. Also while omega-6 fatty acids may be deficient, increasing intake of omega-3 fatty acids may help reduce inflammatory processes in celiac disease. In addition to benefiting those with gluten intolerance, a large body of scientific research suggests that higher dietary omega-3 fatty acid intakes are associated with reductions in risk of cardiovascular disease, stroke, arthritis and possibly depression.

Product Suggestions: *Wholemega* from **New Chapter**

This is the next best thing to eating Wild Alaskan Salmon. It's a rich source of omega-3 and actually provides a natural balance of 16 Omegas including 5,6,7 and 9. Unlike processed “purified” fish oils, the gentle extraction process used for Wholemega preserves beneficial compounds such as the antioxidant Astaxanthin as well as Vitamin D.

Omega-7

We have all heard of Omega-6 and Omega-3, but did you know another essential fatty acid, Omega-7, supports mucous membrane health of the digestive system? Omega 7 fatty acids (sea buckthorn oil) are now being hailed as nourishment that may protect, replenish, moisturize, and restore. This may be especially beneficial to repairing damage done to the intestinal membranes in those that are new to restricting gluten as consuming gluten foods challenge these sensitive membranes.

Product Suggestions: **New Chapter's Supercritical Omega-7**

A special chemical free extraction technology ensures a pure, potent product. Constituents also known to add to Sea Buckthorn's “rescue role” are a naturally occurring rich array of carotenoids, tocopherols, tocotrienols and sterols. To complete the protective benefits of Supercritical Omega 7, New Chapter adds supercritical extracts of Calendula and Rosemary, which both have profound inflammation modulating and antioxidant properties.

It is important to recognize that no amount of supplementation will cure Celiac Disease and will offer little benefit without strict avoidance of gluten. Some professionals even suggest that any type of supplementation regiment should not be attempted until at least 3 weeks after gluten has been removed from the diet to allow the intestines to be functioning properly again.

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