CELIAC DISEASE FOUNDATION®
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National Recommendations for

SUPPORTING STUDENTS WITH CELIAC DISEASE IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Expert-Informed Best Practices for Accommodations in Housing, Dining, Academics, & Campus Life

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FORWARD

As the mother of a son who navigated college with celiac disease, I (Marilyn) witnessed firsthand the daily challenges of trying to live safely and fully in a campus environment. While his university made a sincere effort and got some things right, ongoing issues with gluten cross contact left him sick far too often. Even when food was technically safe, it often took too long to prepare and lacked the quality and taste that would make him want to eat. What should have been a time of growth and independence became a constant struggle to stay well.

In 2004, I (Vanessa) was diagnosed with celiac disease during my senior year of college. Like so many students, I struggled to access safe food, explain my medical needs to the food service managers, and navigate a campus that simply wasn't built with dietary accommodations in mind. I know firsthand how isolating, frustrating, and overwhelming it can be to manage this lifelong chronic autoimmune disease while trying to focus on your education and build your future.

Today, through our work at the Celiac Disease Foundation, we have the privilege of supporting students, families, and institutions in creating more inclusive college experiences. These recommendations were developed with that same mission: to help colleges and universities implement meaningful, evidence-based accommodations that empower students with celiac disease to thrive, not just survive, in higher education.

This document is the result of collaboration among healthcare professionals, university staff, disability rights legal experts, dietitians, food service managers, students, and parents who understand the realities of living with celiac disease. Their perspectives were essential to shaping a set of guidelines grounded in both clinical best practices and lived experience.

We call on colleges and universities to adopt these recommendations as a commitment to equity, access, and protecting the health of students with celiac disease. Every student deserves the opportunity to pursue higher education without risking their health or being excluded from the full college experience.

Together, we can build campuses that are truly inclusive for all.

With hope and determination,

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We are deeply grateful to all participants for sharing their time, expertise, and lived experience to help ensure that students with celiac disease are supported, included, and empowered to thrive in higher education.

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INTRODUCTION & PURPOSE

Colleges and universities play a critical role in supporting students with diverse health needs, including those with celiac disease. Celiac disease is a chronic, autoimmune disorder that requires strict adherence to a gluten-free diet to prevent serious health complications. Managing this condition on campus requires more than dietary options; it involves comprehensive protocols to address accessibility, safety, and inclusion across all aspects of campus life.

These recommendations provide a framework for institutions to develop campus-wide policies, accommodations, and resources that support the well-being of students with celiac disease. By proactively addressing the needs of these students, colleges and universities can foster an environment where all students can thrive academically and socially.

The purpose of this document is to offer clear, actionable recommendations for colleges and universities supporting students with celiac disease. This includes accommodations in dining services, housing, academic settings, and access to medical resources. Because each school is unique, accommodations plans may vary among schools. Establishing clear and transparent protocols helps institutions meet legal requirements, provide equitable access to essential services, and create a supportive, inclusive campus community for students with celiac disease.

While this document focuses on the specific needs of individuals with celiac disease, we recognize that the process for accommodating **food allergies and other medically necessary diets** often involves similar considerations. For comprehensive guidance on managing food allergies in higher education settings, please refer to the ***Updated Guidelines for Managing Food Allergies in Higher Education*** **published by FARE.**

HOW TO USE THIS HANDBOOK

This handbook was created to guide you in navigating college life with celiac disease. It outlines your rights, available accommodations, and practical steps to advocate for your health and success across academics, dining, housing, and campus life.

Use this handbook as:

- A reference for understanding your legal protections under the ADA and Section 504.
- A checklist for requesting accommodations and preparing for college.
- A tool for communicating with campus offices, professors, and peers.
- A place to organize your important contacts, deadlines, and personal notes.

Every college and university handles accommodations a little differently. While this handbook provides general guidance and best practices, it's important to research your specific school's policies, procedures, and timelines. Some accommodations may require documentation or advance planning, so getting started early is key.

We encourage you to bring this handbook to meetings with Disability Services, Dining Services, and other campus offices. Use the sections below to keep your essential information in one place.

Contact Type	Name	Phone	Email	Location on Campus
Disability Services				
Dining Services				
Dietitian				
Housing/ Residential Life				
Health Services				
Academic Advisor				

CELIAC DISEASE & THE GLUTEN-FREE DIET

Celiac disease is a serious autoimmune disease that occurs in genetically predisposed people where the ingestion of gluten leads to damage in the small intestine. It is estimated to affect 1% of the global population. When people with celiac disease eat gluten (a protein found in wheat, rye, and barley), their body mounts an immune response that attacks the small intestine. These attacks lead to damage on the villi, which are small fingerlike projections that line the small intestine. The villi are responsible for nutrient absorption. When the villi get damaged, nutrients cannot be absorbed properly and long-term complications may develop, including poor growth, osteoporosis / osteopenia, infertility and miscarriage, iron deficiency anemia, lactose intolerance, liver failure, malnutrition, neurological symptoms, dermatological issues, and increased risk for certain types of cancer.

The only current treatment for celiac disease is a strict lifelong gluten-free diet. Following a gluten-free diet involves avoiding wheat, barley, rye, and all foods made with these ingredients. Foods that are commonly made with wheat, barley, or rye include breads, crackers, pastas, cookies, cakes, and baked goods.

See Appendix 1 on page 25 for a full overview of the gluten-free diet.

ADA and Section 504 Protections

Students with celiac disease are protected under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. These federal laws require colleges and universities to provide necessary accommodations to students with disabilities, including access to safe, gluten-free food. Institutions that fail to provide appropriate accommodations risk violating civil rights laws, jeopardizing students' health and academic success, and facing legal consequences. Several recent settlements have reinforced that celiac disease is recognized as a disability under these laws, and that dietary accommodations are essential to compliance.

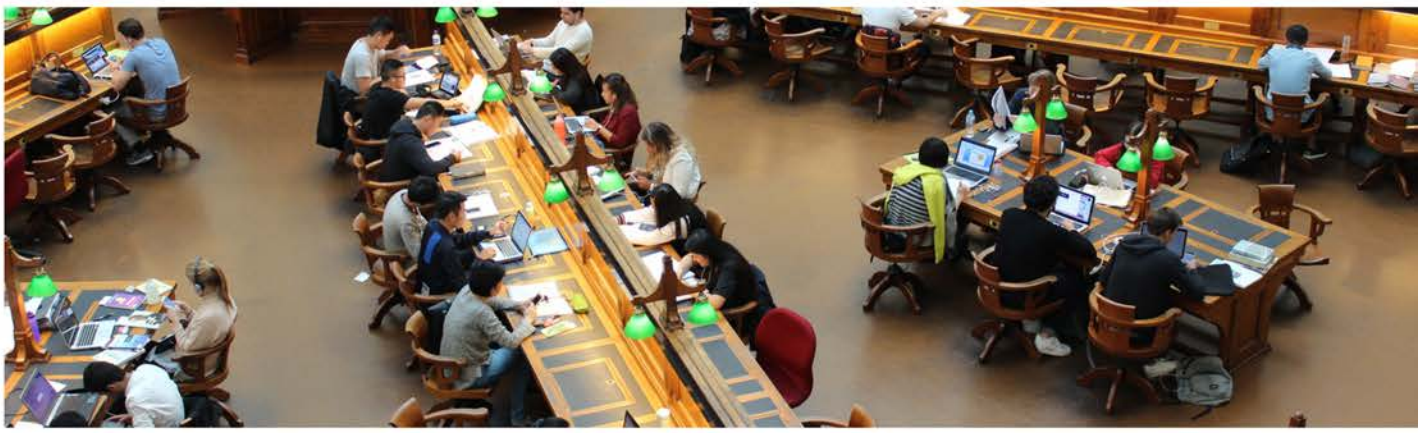
Recent Legal Precedents and Settlements

In 2013, the U.S. Department of Justice reached a landmark settlement with Lesley University, establishing that colleges must provide gluten-free and allergen-free food options as a reasonable accommodation for students with disabilities. Following this, additional cases have further solidified the legal obligations of institutions.

In 2019, Rider University in New Jersey entered into an agreement with the U.S. Department of Justice after a student with celiac disease alleged that the university failed to adequately accommodate her dietary needs. As part of the settlement, Rider agreed to improve dining services, staff training, and communication around gluten-free options.

In 2023, the University of Maryland entered into a settlement in Smith v. University of Maryland, a case brought by a student with celiac disease who alleged discrimination based on inadequate gluten-free dining accommodations. The agreement required the university to implement comprehensive improvements to its gluten-free offerings and staff training, setting an important precedent for enforcement of ADA protections in higher education.

Together, these cases send a strong message: ensuring safe, accessible gluten-free food is not just a best practice - it is a legal requirement under federal disability law.



ROLE OF DISABILITY SERVICES

The Office of Disability Services (ODS) at any college or university plays a vital role in ensuring that students with celiac disease have equitable access to their education and associated programs in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. While the Office of Disability Services (ODS) is typically responsible for collecting and reviewing medical documentation confirming a student's diagnosis of celiac disease, in some cases this process may also be managed by other campus offices. While we recognize that different colleges and universities may utilize different offices to manage this process, for the purposes of this document, we will refer to ODS as the primary office involved.

Celiac disease can significantly impair a student's ability to participate fully in academic and campus life when not properly accommodated. In many cases, collaboration between ODS and other campus offices is essential to develop and implement comprehensive support plans that meet the student's medical, dietary, and social-emotional needs.

Receiving and Evaluating Documentation

Documentation should confirm the student's diagnosis of celiac disease and outline the functional limitations it may cause (e.g., gastrointestinal distress, dietary-related cognitive impacts like brain fog or fatigue, etc.). Documentation should come from a licensed healthcare provider and explain how the condition affects academic performance and campus life. The school may also require that its own verification or accommodation request form be completed.

Conducting the Interactive Process

ODS will meet with the student to engage in an interactive dialogue about how celiac disease affects their daily functioning, academic responsibilities, and campus engagement. During this meeting, ODS and the student identify reasonable accommodations that will mitigate the impact of their condition without fundamentally altering academic or programmatic standards.

Determining Reasonable Academic Accommodations

Based on the documentation and the interactive process, ODS determines which accommodations are appropriate.

Please refer to page 45 for a list of reasonable accommodations adopted by the expert panel.

Issuing Accommodation Letters

Once accommodations are approved, ODS provides the student with an official accommodation letter to share with instructors. These letters outline the approved accommodations but do not disclose the student's specific diagnosis unless the student chooses to share it.

Supporting Implementation and Conflict Resolution

ODS assists in the implementation of accommodations across campus and may intervene if a faculty member is not adhering to the approved accommodations. If disputes arise between the student and faculty (e.g., around attendance flexibility or assignment deadlines), ODS serves as a mediator to ensure compliance and resolve concerns.

Coordinating with Campus Partners

In cases where a student's celiac disease affects other aspects of campus life, ODS should collaborate with other departments to ensure integrated accommodations such as:

- Safe dining options through campus food services.
- Access to housing with kitchen facilities.
- Roommate education and conflict resolution support.

While ODS may not directly control dining or housing, it should advocate on the student's behalf and coordinate communication among departments.

Protecting Confidentiality and Rights

ODS upholds student confidentiality throughout the process and ensures that students with disabilities are treated fairly, without stigma or discrimination. ODS also ensures that the student understands their rights and responsibilities in accessing accommodations.

The Office of Disability Services is the central hub for students with celiac disease seeking academic accommodations. By facilitating access, promoting understanding, and coordinating support across campus, ODS plays a critical role in ensuring that students with celiac disease can thrive academically while managing their health.

Collaborative Communication

It is the student's responsibility to disclose their medical needs to their school. However, some students may fail to do so because of concerns about social stigma or lack of awareness about how to request accommodation. Colleges and universities can remove barriers to disclosure by providing clear, consistent messaging about health-related accommodations. To support students effectively, schools should centralize information about dietary accommodations in a single, easy-to-navigate online location. This information should be visible across multiple campus webpages, including admissions, housing, dining, student health, and disability services, to ensure that students can find it easily. Additionally, students should be clearly informed about their responsibilities in maintaining accommodations, such as communicating with instructors, following up on housing or dining adjustments, and reporting any issues or changes in needs in a timely manner.

Students should submit documentation of their celiac disease diagnosis to ODS. This documentation can be used to determine necessary accommodations, including those related to dining, housing, and academics. Students should confirm if the school requires a specific form to be filled out.

To support a college student seeking accommodations for celiac disease, the medical letter should include the following components:

- Student Identification: Full name and date of birth of the student.
- Diagnosis: A clear statement confirming the diagnosis of celiac disease, including the date of diagnosis if available.
- Description of celiac disease as a chronic autoimmune disorder requiring strict, lifelong adherence to a gluten-free diet.
- ADA Qualification Statement: A statement confirming that celiac disease qualifies as a disability under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) because it substantially limits one or more major life activities, including eating and digestive function.
- Functional Impact: Explanation of how the condition may affect the student in an academic setting, especially during or after gluten exposure.
- Provider Information: Printed name, title, and specialty of the provider, Institution or practice name, contact information, signature and date.

A sample diagnosis letter can be found in Appendix 2 on page 27.

See Appendix 3 for a checklist for students to help guide them on accessing accommodations on page 28.

Academic Accommodations

Access to supportive academic accommodations is essential for the success of students with celiac disease. The following accommodations help minimize the impact of gluten exposure and ensure equal access to learning opportunities.

A1: Extended Time on Assignments or Exams (if symptomatic from a gluten exposure)

Gluten exposure can cause severe fatigue, brain fog, gastrointestinal distress, pain, and other symptoms. Temporary extensions of time or the ability to reschedule an exam allow students time to recover and return to perform at their best academically. Extensions should be an occasional need due to unforeseen flare up of symptoms related to a gluten exposure.

A2: Modified Participation in Food-Related Coursework or Labs

In courses involving gluten-containing ingredients or materials (e.g., cooking classes, science labs), students should be offered gluten-free substitutions or appropriate protective protocols (e.g., gloves, masks) to avoid exposure. Students must not be excluded or penalized due to the need for these modifications.

A3: Access to a Safe, Gluten-Free Environment for Exams or Class Activities

If food is provided during class, exams, group projects, or special events, comparable gluten-free options should be made available. These options should be discussed with the student in advance to ensure they are appropriate for their needs.

A4: Ability to Leave Class Without Penalty

If a student experiences illness due to gluten exposure during an academic activity, they should be permitted to leave and manage their symptoms without penalty. When possible, access to audio or video recordings of the lecture should be provided to support continued learning.

A5: Remote Learning Options and Lecture Recording

If a student is unable to attend class due to illness from gluten exposure, they should be provided access to recorded lectures, asynchronous materials, or the option to join remotely, when available. Additionally, students should be given the opportunity to meet with the professor or teaching assistant to address any questions or concerns in a timely manner.

See Appendix 4 on page 29 for a detailed FAQ for navigating academic accommodations.

Housing Accommodations

Access to safe and appropriate housing is essential for the well-being of students with celiac disease. The following housing accommodations help reduce the risk of gluten exposure and support full participation in campus life.

H1: Priority Housing Selection

Students with celiac disease may require specific housing arrangements to safely access gluten-free food and avoid cross contact. When appropriate, students should be considered for early or priority access to housing selection if it supports their ability to manage their medical needs. If the university is unable to provide a suitable on-campus option that meets the student's dietary safety needs, students should be permitted to live off campus or request alternative low-occupancy housing without penalty.

H2: Roommate Considerations

Students with celiac disease should have the option to:

- Request specific roommates to ensure placement with peers in the same academic year, helping to foster social inclusion and reduce isolation often caused by dietary restrictions.
- Work with residential life to create roommate agreements addressing food safety and shared space expectations.
- Roommate education and conflict resolution support should be available through residential advisors (RAs) and housing staff.

H3: Proximity to Gluten-Free Dining Options

Housing placement should, when requested, be near campus dining facilities that can reliably provide safe, gluten-free meals.

H4: Access to Single or Low-Use Bathroom or Nearby Communal Bathrooms

Because of the common gastrointestinal effects of celiac disease, access to a nearby single or low-use bathroom is preferred. If communal bathrooms are used, students should be placed in rooms that have bathrooms conveniently located and easily accessible nearby.

H5: Access to Select Small Appliances

To help prevent gluten cross contact, students with celiac disease should have reliable access to safe food storage and preparation appliances in accordance with university housing and electrical safety regulations. When possible, appliances should be shared only with individuals who are aware of and willing to follow agreed-upon cross contact prevention practices. If the university does not provide appliances, students should be allowed to bring and use personal units in their dorm room or shared housing space.

H6: Car Access for Grocery Shopping and Medical Appointments

If campus policy typically restricts car access for certain students (e.g., first-years), exceptions should be made for students with celiac disease to support off-campus grocery shopping and attending medical appointments when necessary. When granting personal vehicle access is not feasible, the university should help the student identify alternative transportation options.

See Appendix 5 on page 31 for a detailed FAQ for navigating roommate situations

See Appendix 6 on page 32 for a sample roommate agreement

Dining Accommodations

Access to safe and reliable food is critical for students with celiac disease. The following dining accommodations help ensure students can participate fully in campus life while maintaining a strict gluten-free diet.

D1: Consistent Access to Safe Gluten-Free Meals

Campus dining services should provide reliably gluten-free meals prepared using strict cross contact prevention protocols at every meal period, including weekends, holidays, and campus events. Balanced and varied gluten-free options must be available during all dining hours to prevent gaps in access.

D2: Training of Dining Staff on Celiac Disease and Cross Contact

Dining staff must be trained on the medical necessity of the gluten-free diet to treat celiac disease and how to safely prepare and serve gluten-free meals, with a focus on preventing cross contact.

D3: Access to Ingredient Lists and Allergen Labeling

Students must have easy access to complete ingredient lists and accurate allergen information for all food items, both online and at the point of service.

D4: Direct Communication with Dining Managers, Dietitians, and/or Lead Chef

Students should have access to a campus dietitian, dining manager, and / or lead chef to ask questions, report concerns, and make special requests when needed. The process for submitting concerns or requests should be clearly communicated to all students, and responses should be provided in a timely and supportive manner.

D5: Pre-Ordered or Custom Meal Options

When necessary, dining services should offer pre-ordered custom meals that meet the individual student's need and are prepared in a space free of cross contact. Meals should be prepared in a timely manner.

D6: Exemption from Meal Plan Requirements

Colleges are obligated to ensure students have full and equal access to their dining programs, meaning providing food that is safe, nutritionally appropriate, reasonably varied, and allows students to participate in campus life. When medically necessary, students may need an exemption from mandatory meal plans. Regardless of exemption status, students should retain access to campus dining halls to support social engagement and community integration.

D7: Access to Dedicated Gluten-Free Zones or Equipment (When Available)

Where feasible, dining halls should provide clearly labeled, dedicated gluten-free preparation and service areas, equipment, and utensils to minimize cross contact risk.

See Appendix 7 on page 34 for a detailed FAQ for setting up dining accommodations

Accommodations for Campus Life Beyond the Classroom

Celiac disease affects more than just academics, housing, and meals—it impacts every aspect of college life. The following accommodations help ensure students with celiac disease can safely and fully participate in extracurricular activities, athletics, travel programs, and other essential experiences.

C1: Athletics and Campus Recreation

Students with celiac disease who are involved in sports teams, clubs, or recreational activities may need accommodations such as:

- Safe, gluten-free options during team meals, travel, or training events.

- Flexibility with participation if symptoms arise due to accidental gluten exposure.
- Education for coaches and athletic staff about celiac disease, symptoms, cross contact risks, and how to find gluten-free food options on the road.
- Permission to bring personal snacks or meals for workouts, travel, or games.

C2: Study Abroad and Off-Campus Programs

Participation in study abroad or other off-campus academic programs should be accessible to students with celiac disease. Reasonable accommodations may include:

- Support in planning for gluten-free food access and available accommodations in the host country or city, while preserving access to the full cultural experience.
- Housing with access to a kitchen if gluten-free food is not reliably available.
- Coordination with host institutions or program providers about dietary needs in advance.
- Flexibility to modify or change placement if medical needs cannot be safely met abroad without academic or additional surcharge.

C3: Campus Events, Clubs, and Social Gatherings

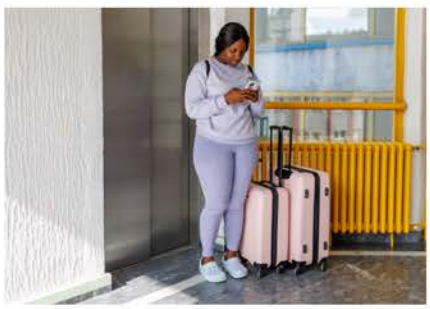
Students with celiac disease should be able to attend and enjoy campus events without being excluded due to food limitations. Accommodations may include:

- Gluten-free options at social events (e.g., catered events, club meetings, and orientation activities).
- Permission to bring personal food if safe options are not available.
- Event organizers trained or informed on safe food handling and labeling practices.

C4: Social and Emotional Well-Being

Living with celiac disease on campus can contribute to anxiety, social isolation, and fear around food, especially in communal or unpredictable environments. Institutions should consider accommodations and supports that address the mental health and social-emotional well-being of students managing medically restricted diets. Accommodations may include:

- Permission to step away from high-risk or emotionally stressful situations involving food (e.g., communal meals, events) without penalty.
- Coordination between ODS and Counseling Services to ensure support, especially if experiencing symptoms related to a gluten exposure.
- Opportunities for alternative participation in events or activities when food is central, and accommodations are not possible, without penalty.



C5: Emergency Planning Considerations

Emergency planning protocols should ensure that students with celiac disease have continued access to medically necessary gluten-free food and essential services during emergencies.

- Allowing access to transportation for grocery shopping or medical appointments.
- Emergency plans that include access to gluten-free food if students need to shelter in place or evacuate.

C6: Internships, Co-Ops, and Campus Employment

When students participate in on- or off-campus internships or work-study positions, accommodations may include:

- Coordination with employers about dietary needs during staff meals or travel.
- Flexible scheduling in case of illness from gluten exposure.
- Permission to store and eat personal gluten-free food during work hours.

See Appendix 8 on page 35 for a detailed FAQ on navigating celiac disease outside the classroom and dining hall.

End of recommendations. The following content is for training purposes only.

Training Materials

To ensure the safety, health, and inclusion of students with celiac disease, campus dining services should adopt clear and consistent protocols for gluten-free food preparation, labeling, and staff training. These practices not only protect student health but also support compliance with disability accommodation requirements under the ADA.

Cross Contact Prevention

Dining services should implement strict protocols to prevent gluten cross contact, such as:

- Using separate, clearly labeled prep surfaces and storage spaces for gluten-free food.
- Using dedicated utensils, pans, cutting boards, and storage containers.
- Washing hands and changing gloves before handling gluten-free meals.
- Cleaning shared equipment thoroughly before use or using single-use items.

EXAMPLE: If grilled chicken is served at both a regular and gluten-free station, the gluten-free version should be cooked on a separate grill or cleaned surface with clean utensils.

Dedicated Gluten-Free Stations

Where possible, dining halls should offer dedicated gluten-free food stations that:

- Provide meals comparable in portion size and macronutrient content to standard dining options, in alignment with USDA Dietary Guidelines for Americans.
- Are clearly marked with signage identifying them as gluten-free.
- Include safe options for celiac disease, such as entrees, sides, and packaged items.
- Restrict access to dining staff to minimize the risk of cross contact and ensure sufficient supply.
- Have a trained staff member present to monitor adherence to cross contact prevention protocols.
- Include dedicated gluten-free zones in both preparation and service areas.
- Use clearly labeled, clean utensils and service items reserved exclusively for gluten-free foods.
- Maintain separate storage areas for gluten-free ingredients and products.
- Follow stocking protocols that prevent cross contact during delivery and restocking.
- Utilize cleaning checklists to ensure consistent sanitation of gluten-free spaces.
- Require training for all relevant staff, including receivers, stock personnel, food prep, and service teams.

EXAMPLE: A designated gluten-free station could serve pre-plated gluten-free meals prepared in a separate area and handed out by trained staff.

Ingredient Transparency - Clear Food Labeling

To support safe and informed dining, the following labeling protocols must be implemented across all campus dining locations:

- Ingredient and allergen information must be available for all menu items at every dining location.
- If product substitutions occur, allergen and ingredient information must be updated and communicated immediately.
- Allergen information must be accurate, clearly displayed at the point of service, and visible on digital menu boards.
- A consistent labeling format – such as icons, symbols, or color coding – should be used across all platforms.
- All information must be based on verified recipes and current vendor-supplied ingredient lists.
- Where applicable, include brand names of packaged products to help students independently confirm ingredients.

EXAMPLE: A label next to each dish could read: "Contains: dairy, soy, wheat, gluten" or "Gluten-Free"

Online Menus and Ingredient Access

Dining programs should maintain up-to-date online menus with detailed ingredient lists, product lists if applicable, and gluten status so students can plan meals in advance. These menus should be easily communicated to students electronically and updated in real time to reflect daily changes.

EXAMPLE: A student can check the app before heading to the dining hall to see which entrees are marked gluten-free and confirm ingredients.

Dining Staff Training

All dining staff must be trained to understand the medical seriousness of celiac disease and how to safely prepare and serve gluten-free meals, with a strong focus on preventing cross contact. Training should include:

- What celiac disease is and how a medically necessary gluten-free diet differs from a dietary preference.
- The importance of strict gluten-free preparation and prevention of cross contact.
- How to identify gluten-containing grains and safe gluten-free alternatives.
- How to read labels for hidden sources of gluten.

- What gluten-free options are available in their specific dining facility.
- When and how to notify a supervisor if a gluten-free item is unavailable or has come into contact with gluten.
- How to answer basic questions or refer students to a dietitian or manager.
- Protocols for preventing cross contact and responding to suspected exposure.
- Emergency response procedures.
- Required training for all staff types, including full-time, part-time, student workers, and contractors.
- Onboarding and regular refresher trainings with documented oversight.
- Ongoing evaluation to ensure consistent implementation of safe practices.

Meal Plan Options and Policies

For students with celiac disease, access to safe and flexible meal plans is essential to maintaining health and fully participating in campus life. Colleges must ensure their meal plan structures accommodate medical dietary needs, offer alternatives when necessary, and provide consistent access to safe food throughout all meal service periods at no additional cost to the student. The following policies support inclusion, safety, and student well-being. Accommodation plans should be re-evaluated and agreed to by the student and staff at the start of each term.

Access to Safe Snacks and Grab-and-Go Options within the Meal Plan

In addition to full meals, colleges should provide gluten-free snacks and quick-service options for students with celiac disease during all hours where these options are available to other students. Examples include on-campus convenience stores, fast casual restaurants, vending machines, and campus cafes.

See Appendix 9 on page 36 for more information about safe food handling practices for celiac disease.

Gluten Exposure Response Protocols

Dining Services, Health Services, and Residential Life should collaborate to establish clear, coordinated protocols for responding to accidental gluten exposure. These should include:

- Reasonable access to on-campus or nearby medical evaluation and care.
- Individualized gluten exposure action plan for staff to identify and support students reporting a gluten reaction.
- Communication guidelines to notify the appropriate departments (e.g., dining, health, disability services) when an incident occurs, while respecting student privacy.

EXAMPLES:

- If a student reports accidental gluten exposure after eating in the dining hall, dining staff notify the food service manager, who documents the issue and directs the student to campus health.
- Health Services staff use a designated intake form to record symptoms, notify Disability Services if accommodations may be affected, and provide follow-up care or referrals as needed.

Collaboration with Healthcare Providers

Students should be encouraged to work with their off-campus gastroenterologist or primary care physician to develop a personalized response plan for gluten exposure. With the student's consent, schools should:

- Keep a copy of the healthcare provider's recommendations on file with Health Services and ODS.
- Follow any guidance provided for symptom management or activity modifications following an exposure.
- Allow students to update their medical file at any time with new care instructions or contacts.
- Should accidental exposures become a pattern, consider engaging the registered dietitian regarding assistance with modifications of student's meal choices.

EXAMPLES:

- A student's physician provides a gluten exposure action plan outlining steps for self-care after exposure (e.g., hydration, rest, medication), which Health Services uses to guide non-emergency treatment.
- If a student is recovering from gluten exposure and misses class, Disability Services can support temporary accommodations and facilitate the communication between the student and their instructors

If a student has gluten exposure on campus, there should be a standardized protocol that addresses the following:

- Symptom management and student support.
- Referral to student health as appropriate.
- Documentation of gluten exposure.
- Filing an incident report with food services and/or ODS.
- Review of dining/housing processes to prevent future exposures.

See Appendix 10 on page 37 for a detailed checklist for responding to accidental gluten exposures.

In-Case-of-Emergency Contact

- Students with celiac disease should be given the option to list an emergency contact who understands their condition and can help communicate on their behalf during a reaction. This contact may be:
- A parent, guardian, or caregiver.
- A healthcare provider or dietitian who has treated the student for celiac disease.

See Appendix 11 on page 38 for a detailed FAQ for students who have been exposed to gluten.

Colleges and universities should actively promote awareness of medically restricted diets, including celiac disease, food allergies, and other chronic health conditions, through ongoing outreach initiatives. This helps foster understanding across campus, reduces stigma, and encourages a culture of support and inclusion for all students managing dietary needs for medical reasons. When and how to notify a supervisor if a gluten-free item is unavailable or has come into contact with gluten.

Website Accessibility and Visibility

Information about accommodations for students with medically restricted diets, including celiac disease, food allergies, gastrointestinal conditions, and other chronic health needs, should be prominently featured and easy to find on university websites. Early, clear access to this information empowers students and their families to plan and feel supported in their transition to college.

Key information should be included on the following webpages:

- Disability Services: Clearly list celiac disease, food allergies, and other diet-related medical conditions as qualifying for accommodations under the ADA. Provide a step-by-step guide for registration, required documentation, and examples of common accommodations.
- Dining Services: Offer a detailed overview of allergen-friendly and gluten-free meal options, ingredient labeling practices, cross contact prevention protocols, how to request custom meals, and who to contact with dietary concerns.
- Housing & Residence Life: Include information on requesting kitchen access, private or low-occupancy rooms, and permission to use personal appliances for food preparation.
- Health Services: Explain how students can access medical care in the event of a reaction or flare-up related to food, including support for managing gluten exposure or other dietary-related health events. Provide guidance on coordinating care with off-campus providers when needed.
- Integrated Resource Page: Create a dedicated "Students with Medically Restricted Diets" page that links to all relevant departments and includes FAQs, contacts, and resources to streamline the student experience.

Orientation for Students with Celiac Disease

Orientation is a critical opportunity to empower students managing medically necessary diets to navigate college life with confidence and support. Institutions should ensure that orientation programs include targeted information and resources for students with celiac disease, food allergies, and other medical dietary needs.

Orientation Programs Should Include:

- A dedicated session or breakout group for students with medically restricted diets, hosted by Disability Services, Dining Services, and Health Services, to introduce relevant supports and services.

- Step-by-step guidance on registering for accommodations, including what documentation is required and how accommodations apply to academics, housing, and dining.
- Introductions to key campus contacts, such as registered dietitians, campus health providers, food service managers, and disability coordinators.
- A walkthrough of dining options with explanations of how gluten-free and allergen-free meals are prepared and how to identify safe stations, grab-and-go items, and ordering systems.
- A printed and digital resource guide outlining relevant policies, communication tips, accommodation examples, and campus safety protocols related to food and health.

Campus-Wide Awareness Campaigns

Colleges and universities should actively promote awareness of medically-restricted diets - including celiac disease, food allergies, and other chronic health conditions - through ongoing outreach initiatives. These campaigns help foster understanding across campus, reduce stigma, and encourage a culture of support and inclusion for all students managing dietary needs for medical reasons.

Examples of Awareness Activities:

- Food Allergy and Special Diet Awareness Week or Day: Host an annual event (e.g., during Celiac Awareness Month in May or Food Allergy Awareness Week in May) with educational booths, allergen-safe food tastings, guest speakers, and informational sessions in partnership with dining services, disability support, and student health.
- Dining Hall Pop-Ups: Set up interactive stations in dining halls that offer information on cross contact prevention, how to read ingredient labels, identifying common allergens, and safely navigating campus dining with a medical diet.
- Residence Hall Programming: Collaborate with Residence Life to include safety practices for shared kitchens and food storage in roommate agreements, RA-led workshops, and dorm-based health and wellness events.
- Peer Education and Student Organizations: Partner with peer health educators, student disability alliances, and identity-based groups to raise awareness about the challenges of living with medically necessary dietary restrictions and how to be a supportive peer or roommate.

Educational Materials and Signage

Institutions should develop and distribute accessible, inclusive educational materials in both digital and print formats that raise awareness of chronic health conditions requiring dietary management and outline strategies for safety, inclusion, and respect.

Educational Materials and Signage

Institutions should develop and distribute accessible, inclusive educational materials in both digital and print formats that raise awareness of chronic health conditions requiring dietary management and outline strategies for safety, inclusion, and respect.

Recommended Materials:

- Posters in dining halls and kitchens explaining food allergies, celiac disease, and cross contact risks, as well as how staff and peers can help.
- Brochures or infographics on managing food allergies, celiac disease, and other medically restricted diets in campus life, including dining, housing, academic, and social settings.
- Short educational videos shared on campus social media, orientation portals, or digital signage covering topics like safe food handling, communicating dietary needs, and how to support a friend with a medical diet.
- Tip sheets or guides for roommates, faculty, coaches, and event organizers on how to respectfully include and support students with dietary restrictions in academic and extracurricular settings.

Training for Faculty, Staff, and Student Leaders

- *Residence Life Training:* RA and orientation leader training on food allergies, dietary accommodations, roommate communication, and safe use of shared spaces like kitchens and lounges.
- Dining Services Training: Onboarding and regular refresher courses on identifying allergens, preventing cross contact, and preparing meals for students with dietary restrictions, including gluten-free and allergen-free preparation.
- Disability Services Staff Training: Education on a range of medically necessary diets and how they intersect with housing, academic, and dining accommodations, including protocols for celiac disease, food allergies, and gastrointestinal conditions.
- Health Services Training: Guidance for clinicians and health staff on recognizing symptoms of food-related reactions or flare-ups, responding to gluten or allergen exposure, and supporting students managing chronic dietary conditions.
- Greek Life and Other Student Leaders: Training on hosting events for students with medically necessary dietary needs, including providing safe food options, preventing cross contact, and responding to medical emergencies related to food.

Continuous Review

Institutions should regularly evaluate their accommodations for students with celiac disease by conducting annual reviews of all related policies, dining options, and support services. This process should include establishing clear channels for students to provide feedback on their experiences with gluten-free dining and campus accommodations, and actively engaging students, parents, staff, and medical professionals to share recommendations that inform continuous improvement and strengthen institutional practices.

Getting Started on a Gluten-Free Diet

CELIAC DISEASE:
Getting Started on a Gluten-Free Diet

WHAT IS CELIAC DISEASE?

Celiac disease is a genetic autoimmune disease that damages the villi of the small intestine and interferes with absorption of nutrients from food. A strict gluten-free diet is the only current treatment for celiac disease.

WHAT IS THE GLUTEN-FREE DIET?

Following a gluten-free diet means you will need to avoid foods made with gluten-containing grains including **wheat, barley, and rye.** These grains are found in common foods like bread, pasta, crackers, cookies, baked goods, and cereal.

WHAT FOODS CAN YOU EAT?

There are many **naturally gluten-free foods** that should play a central role in a well-balanced gluten-free diet. Use the chart below as a guide to help you make more informed choices for a healthy, balanced diet. Always remember to check labels on packaged foods to prevent accidental gluten exposure.

- FRUITS
- VEGETABLES
- MEATS
- DAIRY
- EGGS
- BEANS AND LEGUMES
- GLUTEN-FREE GRAINS

FOODS TO INCLUDE	FOODS TO QUESTION OR AVOID
Grains and grain-based products: Amaranth, Arrowroot, Buckwheat, Cassava, Corn, Polenta, Millet, Gluten-free oats, Potato, Quinoa, Rice, Sorghum, Tapioca, Teff, Gluten-free wheat starch Flours, pasta, breads, cereals, crackers and cookies made with the above grains	**Grains and grain-based products:** Wheat (includes kamut, semolina, spelt, triticale, farro, einkorn) Breads, panko, cereals, couscous, pasta, cakes, cookies, and snacks made from wheat; Communion wafers matzo; Rice pilaf; Orzo; Barley (flakes, pearl); Barley malt (flavoring, vinegar, extract, and syrup); Rye flour, bread, and flavoring; Oats not labeled gluten-free
Flours from nontraditional sources: Bean flour: chickpea, lentil, soy, black bean Nut flour: almond, chestnut, coconut Seed flour: flax seed	**Wheat, barley, and rye-based flours:** All-purpose flour Bread flour Cake flour
Dairy and related products: Dairy milk Non-dairy milks such as almond milk, soy milk, coconut milk Cheese, Yogurt, Kefir, Ice cream, Sour cream, Whipped cream	**Dairy and related products:** Oat milk that is not labeled gluten-free Dairy products with added cookie crumb or granola if not labeled gluten-free Ice creams with ingredients like cookie dough, cookies, pretzels, etc.
Animal Proteins: Meat Eggs Fish/Seafood Poultry	**Animal Proteins:** Imitation crab Marinated, breaded, or coated proteins Check labels for deli meats, sausages, salami, hot dogs, and prepared meats

APPENDIX 1

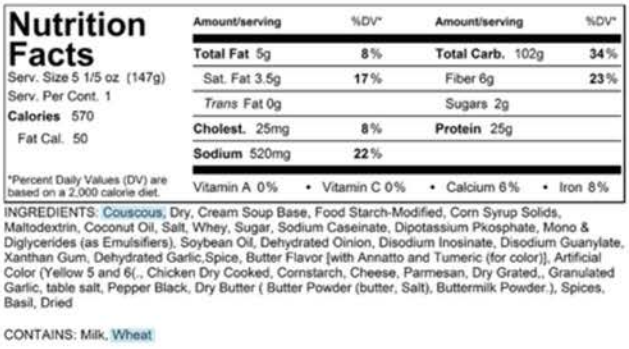
Getting Started on a Gluten-Free Diet

FOODS TO INCLUDE	FOODS TO QUESTION OR AVOID
Fruits and Vegetables: All in plain / whole form	**Fruits and Vegetables:** Check labels for fruits and vegetables prepared in sauces or packaged with other items (e.g. crackers)
Fats: All varieties of butter, margarine, and oil	**Fats:** Check labels for baking and cooking sprays
Sauces, seasonings, sweeteners, and spices: Honey Maple syrup Mayonnaise Mustard Ketchup Pasta sauce Pickles, olives, relish Plain spices Sugar Sugar substitutes Coconut aminos Tamari	**Sauces, seasonings, sweeteners, and spices:** (Check labels for all) Cake icing Licorice Candy Pickles made with malt vinegar Sprinkles / jimmies Soy sauce not labeled gluten-free Teriyaki sauce Hoisin sauce Worcestershire sauce Spice blends, taco seasoning, marinades Soups, gravies, sauces, bouillon cubes, and thickening agents
Alcohol: Distilled spirits Hard cider Wine Gluten-free beer	**Alcohol:** Beer Malt beverages

READING FOOD LABELS:

When shopping, always read food labels carefully, as gluten-containing ingredients are often hidden. Look for gluten-containing ingredients in the *INGREDIENTS STATEMENT* on every packaged food.

The use of the term 'gluten-free' on food products is regulated by law. Products may or may not be certified by a 3rd party, but this is not required. All products bearing a "gluten-free" claim of any kind must contain less than 20 parts per million (ppm) of gluten, which is an international standard. Products do not have to be certified by a third party in order to be considered gluten-free.



Nutrition Facts

Serv. Size 5 1/5 oz (147g)
Serv. Per Cont. 1
Calories 570
Fat Cal. 50

Amount/serving	%DV*	Amount/serving	%DV*
Total Fat 5g	**8%**	**Total Carb.** 102g	**34%**
Sat. Fat 3.5g	**17%**	Fiber 6g	**23%**
Trans Fat 0g		Sugars 2g	
Cholest. 25mg	**8%**	**Protein** 25g	
Sodium 520mg	**22%**		

Vitamin A 0% • Vitamin C 0% • Calcium 6% • Iron 8%

*Percent Daily Values (DV) are based on a 2,000 calorie diet.

INGREDIENTS: Couscous, Dry, Cream Soup Base, Food Starch-Modified, Corn Syrup Solids, Maltodextrin, Coconut Oil, Salt, Whey, Sugar, Sodium Caseinate, Dipotassium Pkosphate, Mono & Diglycerides (as Emulsifiers), Soybean Oil, Dehydrated Oinion, Disodium Inosinate, Disodium Guanylate, Xanthan Gum, Dehydrated Garlic,Spice, Butter Flavor [with Annatto and Tumeric (for color)], Artificial Color (Yellow 5 and 6(., Chicken Dry Cooked, Cornstarch, Cheese, Parmesan, Dry Grated., Granulated Garlic, table salt, Pepper Black, Dry Butter (Butter Powder (butter, Salt), Buttermilk Powder.), Spices, Basil, Dried

CONTAINS: Milk, Wheat

KEEP IN MIND: Even if the words "gluten-free" do not appear on a package, it can still be appropriate for someone with celiac disease if there are no gluten-containing ingredients on the label.

CONFUSING INGREDIENTS THAT ARE SAFE FOR A GLUTEN-FREE DIET

There are some ingredients that are made from gluten-containing grains that have been processed so that the gluten is removed. The following list contains examples of these ingredients that are safe for people with celiac disease.

If you're not sure whether a food product that contains a specific ingredient is safe, look for a gluten-free label. If in doubt, call the manufacturer.

1. **Glucose syrups** derived from wheat or barley, including dextrose.
2. **Distilled ingredients made from cereals** that contain gluten, for example, alcoholic spirits.
3. **Codex Wheat Starch:** This is also known as 'gluten-free wheat starch' and is used in some gluten-free products to improve the texture and 'mouth feel' of products. GF wheat starch and products containing it are safe for people with celiac disease to eat as the gluten has been removed to a trace level (≤20ppm).

Sample Diagnosis Letter from Licensed Medical Provider

Insert Date
RE: [Student Full Name]
DOB: [MM/DD/YYYY]

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing on behalf of my patient, [Student Full Name], a [Age]-year-old college student under my care at [Clinic/Hospital Name], who has a confirmed diagnosis of celiac disease.

Celiac disease is a serious, lifelong autoimmune disease in which the ingestion of gluten—a protein found in wheat, barley, rye, and contaminated oats—triggers an immune response that damages the small intestine. This damage leads to malabsorption of nutrients and a wide range of symptoms including abdominal pain, diarrhea, fatigue, joint pain, headaches, and cognitive impairment ("brain fog"). Even small amounts of gluten can cause significant physical and cognitive symptoms in individuals with this condition.

Celiac disease is recognized as a disability under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, as it substantially limits one or more major life activities, including eating and digestive function. The only treatment is strict, lifelong adherence to a gluten-free diet. There is no medication or medical procedure to manage this condition, and exposure to gluten can result in debilitating symptoms lasting several days, or even weeks, in some individuals. Ongoing exposure can also lead to long-term complications such as nutritional deficiencies, osteoporosis, and increased risk of other autoimmune diseases and intestinal cancers.

Because avoiding gluten requires constant vigilance and management, students with celiac disease may face specific challenges in the college environment—particularly related to housing, dining, and academic access. Due to the functional limitations associated with celiac disease, and the potential for sudden onset of symptoms following accidental gluten exposure, I recommend that [Student First Name] receive appropriate accommodations to support full and equal access to the academic, residential, dining, and social aspects of campus life. These may include, but are not limited to:

- Flexibility with class attendance and participation requirements during illness or recovery.
- Extended time on exams or assignments during symptomatic periods.
- Access to safe kitchen facilities or exemption from meal plans when dining services cannot provide safe food options.
- Priority housing placement to support gluten-free living.
- Use of personal kitchen appliances in residence halls for safe food preparation.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if further information or clarification is needed.

Sincerely,
[Provider Name, MD/DO/NP/etc.]
[Institution or Practice Name]
[Contact Information]

APPENDIX 3

Welcome to Campus: Student Checklist For Accessing Accommodations

Starting college with celiac disease requires preparation, communication, and proactive engagement. Use this checklist to set yourself up for a successful college experience:

- ☐ Review your school's accommodation process, including documentation requirements, deadlines, and communication protocols. Make sure you understand how to maintain your accommodations throughout the year.
- ☐ Schedule a meeting with the Office of Disability Services (ODS) or the designated accommodations office to confirm your plan and ask any questions.
- ☐ Connect with your Resident Advisor (RA) to discuss your dietary needs and advocate for gluten-free options at dorm events and gatherings.
- ☐ Meet with Dining Services to learn how to safely access gluten-free meals, navigate the dining hall, and ask questions about labeling, preparation, and cross contact prevention.
- ☐ Have a conversation with your roommate(s) about shared spaces, storage, and strategies to prevent gluten cross contact in your dorm.
- ☐ Review your academic accommodations with your academic advisor, including any support you may need in the event of a gluten exposure that affects your attendance or performance.
- ☐ Visit Student Health Services to understand the physical and mental health resources available to support your well-being, especially during times of adjustment or gluten-related stress.
- ☐ Consider how study abroad, internships, Greek life, or athletics will impact food access and accommodations, and start planning to address those concerns.
- ☐ Identify where to go and who to contact in the event of accidental gluten exposure.
- ☐ Know whether your accommodations need to be renewed annually, and put a reminder in your calendar for mid-year check-ins with ODS.
- ☐ Stock your dorm room with safe, gluten-free staples and snacks that you enjoy and trust.
- ☐ Save copies of your medical documentation, accommodation letters, and email communications in an accessible location.

Academic Accommodations FAQ for Students with Celiac Disease

Why would I need academic accommodations for celiac disease?

Celiac disease is a chronic autoimmune condition, and even small amounts of gluten can cause serious symptoms like fatigue, abdominal pain, brain fog, and many others. These symptoms may change over time. Nutrition is critically important to function successfully in the college setting. You have celiac disease. The only treatment is a gluten-free diet. To be successful in your new environment, you must advocate for yourself. Academic accommodation helps ensure you set yourself up for success.

How do I get academic accommodations approved?

Start by registering with your school's Office of Disability Services (ODS). Don't take this as a negative! They are there to help. You'll need to submit documentation from a healthcare provider that explains your celiac diagnosis and how it affects your ability to function in an academic environment. Set up an appointment with your healthcare provider to discuss what accommodations may be possible. Leave ample time for them to prepare this documentation. Once approved, you'll meet with ODS and food services to finalize your accommodations and discuss practical implementation.

What if I'm in a class with food or lab activities that aren't gluten-free?

Handling gluten is safe in celiac disease if it is not ingested. Washing your hands and appropriate cleanup is sufficient to keep you safe in most environments. You have the right to request modifications. When possible, the use of gluten-free alternatives should be encouraged. For example, in a culinary class you can request gluten-free products or alternatively, handle gluten-containing ingredients, but not be required to taste the food product. These changes help protect your health without affecting your grade.

What happens if I get glutened and can't attend class or meet a deadline?

If you're experiencing symptoms from gluten exposure, approved accommodations will allow you to access recorded lectures, join remotely, get an extension on coursework, and/or offer the opportunity to have a follow up meeting with professors or teaching assistants. It's important to communicate with your instructors and ODS so they can support you appropriately in the event of exposure.

Will my professors know I have celiac disease?

The choice is up to you and is something you should discuss during your meeting with ODS. Professors will only be informed of your approved accommodations—not your specific diagnosis - unless you choose to share more. You're in control of how much you disclose.

APPENDIX 4

Academic Accommodations FAQ for Students with Celiac Disease (continued)

What if my accommodation needs change during the semester?

You can update your accommodation plan at any time by working with ODS. If you are experiencing more frequent symptoms, we recommend first reaching out to your medical team to discuss possible gluten exposures or other medical conditions. If review or adjustment is needed, we encourage you to request a meeting with ODS and dining services. Meeting with your healthcare provider prior to enrolling with ODS, can help anticipate some of these potential challenges.

What if my professor doesn't understand or follow my accommodations?

Reach out to ODS immediately. They can advocate on your behalf and help ensure your accommodations are respected and implemented as intended. You should never be penalized for using your approved supports.

FAQ for Navigating Tricky Roommate Situations

Living with a roommate when you have celiac disease can bring up important questions about food, space, and safety. This FAQ is designed to help you and your roommate understand what's reasonable, what's not, and how to work together respectfully. Use it to guide conversations, set boundaries, and create a shared living environment that supports everyone's needs.

Q: Is it possible for me to live with someone who eats gluten?
A: Yes! Many students with celiac disease successfully live with roommates who eat gluten. With the right strategies and open communication, a shared space can be safe and supportive.

Q: Should my roommate stop eating gluten altogether if I have celiac disease?
A: No. Your roommate doesn't need to go gluten-free. With clear communication, labeled items, and shared cleaning protocols, it's possible to live safely in a space where gluten is present.

Q: Can I ask that all our shared kitchen appliances be gluten-free only?
A: It's not necessary or reasonable to require shared appliances to be gluten-free. Instead, use your own labeled cookware or tools, or establish cleaning routines. Studies show thorough washing removes gluten effectively.

Q: What if I don't feel safe unless the entire space is gluten-free?
A: It's understandable to want a very controlled environment, but total elimination of gluten from shared spaces isn't required for safety. Focus on preventing cross contact through boundaries, organization, and communication.

Q: Do I need to educate my roommate on everything about celiac disease?
A: Your roommate doesn't have to be an expert. But sharing basic information, helpful resources, and your personal needs can go a long way in building understanding and cooperation.

Q: Can I ask that all the food in our apartment be gluten-free?
A: Not typically. Instead, consider designating shelves or containers for gluten-free and gluten-containing items and labeling them clearly. You can coexist with different diets using simple systems.

Q: Is it safer to avoid shared meals or social food events altogether?
A: Not necessarily! With good planning—like checking menus, asking questions, or bringing your own food—you can still participate in shared meals and social gatherings safely.

Q: Since I have celiac disease, do I get to make all the rules about how our space is used?
A: Shared living means shared responsibility. You can—and should—set boundaries to protect your health, but it's important to collaborate with your roommate to create systems that work for everyone.

Q: Can I ask my roommate to never cook or bake with gluten?
A: It's more reasonable to ask that they follow cleaning protocols and avoid using your gluten-free tools. You can also suggest using designated prep areas to avoid cross contact.

APPENDIX 6

Sample Roommate Agreement

This roommate agreement is intended to help students communicate their needs, expectations, and boundaries to create a respectful and safe shared living environment. It can be used as a starting point for any roommates, and is designed keeping students with celiac disease in mind. This is not a legal document, but a mutual understanding.

Roommate Information

Roommate 1 Name: _____

Roommate 2 Name: _____

Room Name/Number: _____

Date of Agreement: _____

Cleanliness & Shared Spaces

We agree to:

- Keep shared areas clean and organized.
- Share responsibilities for taking out trash, vacuuming, and cleaning.
- Clean up after ourselves in the kitchen and bathroom areas within a reasonable amount of time.

Additional agreements:

_____

_____

Kitchen Use & Food Storage

We agree to:

- Respect dietary restrictions and food safety needs.
- Discuss and agree on shared vs. separate cooking utensils, cookware, and appliances.
- Avoid cross contact when preparing food.

Optional Celiac Disease Considerations: (Check or initial all that apply)

□ Keep separate cooking utensils and equipment for gluten-free use
□ Not use shared appliances (e.g., toaster, air fryer) for gluten-containing foods
□ Label food items clearly (GF / not GF)
□ Keep gluten-free food on separate fridge or pantry shelves
□ Wash hands after handling gluten-containing food

Other food/kitchen agreements:

_____

_____

Sample Roommate Agreement (continued)

Shared Items

We agree to:

- Ask before borrowing or using each other's items.
- Respect any items that are off-limits.

Optional considerations:

□ Not share dish sponges or dish towels

□ Use separate storage containers or dishes for gluten-free use

Other agreements:

_____

_____

Schedules, Guests & Quiet Hours

We agree to:

- Respect each other's class, study, and sleep schedules.
- Communicate in advance about having guests or overnight visitors.
- Keep noise at a reasonable level during study and rest times.
- If one of us isn't feeling well, the other will respect any necessary adjustments to guest visits and quiet hours.

Agreed-upon quiet hours: _____ to _____

Other agreements:

_____

_____

Communication

We agree to:

- Talk openly and respectfully if problems arise.
- Have regular check-ins (weekly or monthly) to discuss any concerns.
- Be understanding and flexible when possible.

In the event of a concern about gluten exposure or illness, we agree to:

- Listen and problem-solve together
- Adjust routines as needed
- Ask for support from an RA or housing staff if needed

Signatures

By signing this agreement, we commit to working together to maintain a safe, respectful, and inclusive living space for everyone.

Roommate 1 Signature: _____ Date: _____

Roommate 2 Signature: _____ Date: _____

APPENDIX 7

Dining Accommodations: Requesting Support & Coordinating with Food Services

Navigating campus dining with celiac disease can feel overwhelming, but support is available. The Q&A below outlines how to request dining accommodations, connect with the right people, and ensure you have safe access to gluten-free meals throughout your college experience.

Q: How do I request dining accommodations for celiac disease?
A: Start by registering with your college's Office of Disability Services (ODS). You'll need to submit medical documentation confirming your diagnosis and explaining how celiac disease affects your ability to eat safely on campus. Once approved, ODS will help you coordinate with dining services.

Q: Who do I talk to in the dining department about my gluten-free needs?
A: You should be connected with a campus dietitian or dining services manager. They can explain gluten-free options, preparation methods, and help address any concerns. If you're not automatically referred, ask ODS or dining directly to set up a meeting.

Q: Can I tour the dining halls before the semester starts?
A: Yes—and you should! Touring the dining facilities helps you identify where safe gluten-free options are available, understand how food is prepared, and learn how cross contact is avoided.

Q: Will someone in dining services be assigned to help me?
A: Most campuses have a point person (often a dietitian or food service manager) who supports students with food allergies or special diets. This person should be your go-to contact for questions, concerns, or ongoing support throughout the year.

Q: What if I need custom or pre-ordered meals?
A: If daily options aren't safe or reliable, many schools will prepare custom meals or offer a pre-order system. Ask dining services if this is available, and work with them to set up a plan that meets your schedule and safety needs.

Q: How often should I check in with dining staff?
A: Regular communication is important. If anything feels off—whether it's mislabeled food, staff who seem unsure, or limited options—reach out to your dining contact right away so they can address the issue.

Q: What if the gluten-free food offered on campus is technically safe but I don't like the options?
A: It's okay to advocate for variety and quality in your meals. Start by giving feedback to your campus dietitian or dining services manager—they may be able to adjust recipes, rotate new options, or offer more choices. If you consistently feel that the food doesn't meet your needs, talk with ODS about whether adjustments or alternate arrangements are possible.

Q: What if the gluten-free options are technically safe, but they're the same every day and really boring?
A: You're not alone—many students with dietary restrictions feel this way. Share your feedback with dining services or the campus dietitian. Ask if there's flexibility to rotate new gluten-free meals, expand options, or get creative with ingredients. You can also suggest specific foods or meals you enjoy. Most dining teams want to improve the experience for students with medical diets and appreciate constructive input.

Q: What if the campus dining hall can't meet my needs?
A: If safe gluten-free meals can't be consistently provided, you may request a formal exemption from the required meal plan. This request typically goes through ODS with input from dining services.

Thriving with Celiac Disease in Campus Life Beyond the Classroom and Dining Hall

College is about more than just classes—it's about connecting with others, exploring new opportunities, and building independence. For students with celiac disease, that also means learning how to confidently manage your gluten-free needs in all areas of campus life. This FAQ offers guidance for navigating common situations like talking to friends, coaches, employers, and event organizers, so you can advocate for yourself without missing out.

Q: How do I talk to new friends or roommates about my celiac disease without making it awkward?
A: Keep it simple and clear. Use "I" statements like: "I have celiac disease, which means I can't eat anything with gluten—it makes me really sick. I'm happy to talk more about it, but just wanted to give you a heads-up." Most people will appreciate your openness and want to help. You don't have to go into every detail—just enough to set boundaries and open the door for questions.

Q: What should I say when I'm invited to an event or meal where I'm unsure if the food will be safe?
A: Be proactive but polite. You can say: "I'd love to come, but I have to be really careful about food because I have celiac disease. Do you know what will be served? If it's easier, I can bring something for myself." This keeps you included without putting pressure on others.

Q: I'm on a sports team—how do I talk to my coach about my dietary needs?
A: Let your coach know early on, ideally in a one-on-one setting. Explain that you have a medically necessary gluten-free diet and what that means during team meals, travel, or events. Provide examples of what you can and can't eat, and suggest ways the team can accommodate your dietary needs.

Q: I'm applying for a campus job or internship—do I need to disclose my celiac disease?
A: You're not required to disclose unless you need an accommodation. If you do, let your supervisor or HR representative know after you've received the offer. You might say: "I have celiac disease, which is considered a disability. I may occasionally need flexibility if I get sick from accidental gluten exposure, and I'll need a safe place to store and eat my own food."

Q: How can I prepare for studying abroad with celiac disease?
A: Start by researching gluten-free options in the country you're visiting. Work with your study abroad office to find programs that offer kitchen access or are in cities with gluten-free options. Ask for a letter from your doctor explaining your dietary needs in case you need help navigating local food systems or healthcare while abroad. Consider having the letter translated into the primary language spoken in the country you will be studying.

Q: What do I do if an event or club meeting only serves gluten-containing food?
A: It's okay to bring your own food or let the organizer know in advance. You might say: "I have celiac disease and can't eat gluten—would it be okay if I bring something for myself to the event?" Most campus groups want everyone to feel welcome and included.

Q: I'm tired of explaining my needs over and over. Any tips?
A: That's totally valid. Consider creating a short "script" you feel comfortable repeating, or use a celiac disease info card or app to share key details without having to explain from scratch every time. Some students also write a brief explanation in group chats when planning meals: "Hey, just a heads up that I eat gluten-free because of celiac disease—no stress, I'll bring something safe for me!"

Q: What if I get glutened and can't participate in an activity—what do I say?
A: Be honest but brief. For example: "I'm not feeling well due to a medical issue and won't be able to make it today. Thanks for understanding." If the person is close to you or needs more information, you can add that it was a reaction to accidental gluten exposure and you need time to recover.

APPENDIX 9

Safe Food Handling for Celiac Disease: A Guide for College Dining Services Staff

For students with celiac disease, consuming even a small amount of gluten can lead to long-term health problems. Your role in campus food service is essential to keeping these students safe and healthy. Gluten cross contact can occur anytime a gluten-free food comes into contact with gluten-containing food, surfaces, or equipment. This guide outlines clear practices to help prevent gluten cross contact in a campus setting.

Standard Practices to Prevent Gluten Cross Contact

- Wash hands thoroughly after handling any gluten-containing foods or ingredients.
- Use clean gloves and utensils when preparing gluten-free meals.
- Prepare gluten-free items before gluten-containing foods to avoid cross contact with gluten.
- Store gluten-free foods on upper shelves to avoid contact with gluten-containing crumbs or flour.
- Use separate, clearly labeled or color-coded utensils, cutting boards, and pans for gluten-free cooking.
- Check ingredients statements to ensure gluten-free ingredients are being used.
- Clean all surfaces, prep areas, and tools with soap and water before gluten-free use.

Equipment and Service Area Best Practices

- Fryers: Use a dedicated fryer with clean oil that has never been used for gluten-containing foods.
- Grills: Cook gluten-free items on a clean portion of the grill or on a separate, designated gluten-free grill.
- Pasta Water: Use a separate pot and fresh water to cook gluten-free pasta.
- Ovens: Use a clean baking sheet, foil, or parchment paper to keep gluten-free foods separated from gluten-containing items during baking.
- Utensils: Provide separate serving utensils for gluten-free dishes.

Questions Students May Ask

- How do you prevent gluten cross contact in your kitchen?
- Is there flour in this sauce or soup?
- Are gluten-free items cooked in a dedicated fryer?
- Are condiments served in squeeze bottles or shared containers?
- Is the gluten-free pasta boiled in clean water?
- What ingredients are used in marinades or broths?

Sample Protocol Checklist: Responding to Accidental Gluten Exposure

This checklist is designed to guide campus staff in responding to accidental gluten exposure experienced by students with celiac disease. It outlines key steps to ensure students receive timely support, appropriate medical care, and follow-up accommodations. Use this tool to promote a coordinated, student-centered response across dining, health, residential, and disability services.

Step 1: Immediate Support and Symptom Assessment

- Remain calm and validate the student's concern.
- Ask the student to describe their symptoms (e.g., nausea, vomiting, brain fog, fatigue, abdominal pain).
- Offer a quiet space to sit or rest if needed.
- Contact Campus Health Services if symptoms are severe or escalating.

Step 2: Medical Response and Documentation

- Refer or escort the student to Health Services, if appropriate.
- Document the time and location of the suspected exposure.
- Note the food item or dining location involved, if known.
- Ask if the student has a gluten exposure plan from their healthcare provider on file.

Step 3: Notification and Internal Reporting

- Notify the dining services manager or supervisor on duty (if incident occurred in dining hall).
- Submit a dining incident report to food service leadership and Disability Services.
- Notify the Office of Disability Services if academic accommodations may be impacted.
- If applicable, inform Residence Life staff (e.g., RA) for follow-up support in housing.

Step 4: Follow-Up with Student

- Ensure the student receives follow-up communication within 24–48 hours.
- Offer to assist with temporary academic accommodations (e.g., missed classes or exams).
- Check in to determine if ongoing dining adjustments or further medical follow-up
- are needed.

Step 5: Review and Improve

- Investigate the source of gluten exposure (e.g., cross contact in prep area, labeling error).
- Take corrective action as needed (e.g., retraining staff, updating signage or prep protocol).
- Review incident with the dining and health services team to prevent future occurrences.

APPENDIX 11

Sample Protocol Checklist for Students: What to Do If You Have Been Exposed to Gluten

This checklist is designed to help students with celiac disease navigate accidental gluten exposure on campus. It outlines important steps to take for self-care, seeking medical support, and communicating with campus staff to ensure proper follow-up and accommodations. Use this tool to advocate for your needs and coordinate with dining, health services, residential life, and disability services.

- Seek medical attention if symptoms are severe.
- Treat the symptoms you are having. This may include over-the-counter pain medications, anti- nausea or diarrhea medications, a heating pad, ice packs, and an emergency stash of gluten-free snacks. Hydrate well. Give yourself time to rest.
- Notify disability services about the exposure if you need housing or academic accommodations.
- Talk to someone in dining services about what happened to try to identify the source of exposure and help prevent future exposure.
- Reach out to the healthcare providers who manage your celiac disease care for additional support.

I accidentally ate gluten—what should I do first?

If you start feeling symptoms like nausea, vomiting, or abdominal pain after eating or being exposed to gluten, listen to your body. Your first step should be to find a safe space to rest and care for yourself. If symptoms are severe or worsening, contact Campus Health Services right away for medical support.

Should I tell anyone on campus?

Yes, let someone know. You can contact Campus Health Services, your RA, or Disability Services. If you think it happened because of something you ate in the dining hall, tell a dining staff member or manager. Reporting it helps ensure you get the care you need and helps prevent future incidents for you and others.

What kind of medical care can I get on campus?

Campus Health Services can help assess your symptoms and offer non-emergency support like hydration, rest space, or symptom management recommendations. If you've worked with your doctor to create a gluten exposure response plan, they can follow that too. In emergencies, they can refer you to off-campus care.

Do I need to go to class if I feel awful?

No, if you're feeling sick, focus on recovery. If you have accommodations through Disability Services, they can help you access support like missed lecture recordings, assignment extensions, or excused absences while you recover. Be sure to notify your instructors and ODS if you're missing class.

Should I let my doctor know?

If you work with an off-campus doctor (like a gastroenterologist), it's a good idea to let them know you had a reaction. They may want to document it or update your care plan. You can also share their recommendations with Campus Health or Disability Services to help guide future support.

What if this keeps happening?

Repeated exposures aren't normal, and you deserve to feel safe. Reach out to Dining Services, Disability Services, or Health Services to request a review of your accommodations. You may need adjustments like safer meal plans, kitchen access, or changes in dining routines. You're not being a burden. Your health matters.

How can I prepare in case this happens again?

Work with your doctor to create a personalized gluten exposure response plan. Include steps like what to eat or avoid, which symptoms to watch for, and when to seek medical care. Share this plan with Campus Health and Disability Services so they're ready to support you if you ever need it.

What can I do to feel better after a gluten exposure?

Recovery looks different for everyone, but here are some common strategies that may help:

- Rest as much as you can—your body needs time to recover.
- Stay hydrated with water or electrolyte drinks, especially if you're experiencing vomiting or diarrhea.
- Eat gentle, gluten-free foods if you're able—like rice, applesauce, bananas, or plain broth.
- Use heat packs or over-the-counter pain relief (as directed by your doctor) for abdominal discomfort.
- Avoid stressful situations and give yourself permission to slow down.
- Avoid foods and substances that may worsen symptoms—like fried, spicy, or heavy meals, dairy, chocolate, caffeine, and alcohol.
- Don't try to induce vomiting or use remedies like activated charcoal, which aren't effective for gluten exposure and could be harmful.
- If you have a care plan from your doctor, follow that. And if your symptoms don't improve or get worse, reach out to Health Services or your healthcare provider for support.

ACCOMMODATIONS TABLE

Summary of 24 Recommended Accommodations for Students with Celiac Disease in Higher Education

Domain	Accommodation	Description
Academic	Extended Time	Additional time on assignments or exams during recovery from gluten exposure.
	Modified Coursework	Substitutions or protections in food-related labs or courses to prevent gluten exposure.
	Gluten-Free Class Environments	Safe gluten-free options when food is served during academic activities.
	Leave Without Penalty	Permission to leave class if symptomatic from gluten exposure without academic penalty.
	Remote Access	Access to recorded lectures, asynchronous materials, or remote participation options when needed.
Housing	Priority Housing	Early or prioritized selection for housing that supports safe gluten-free living.
	Roommate Considerations	Ability to request or match with roommates who understand and support dietary needs.
	Dining Proximity	Housing located near safe gluten-free dining options.
	Bathroom Access	Nearby or low-use bathrooms for students with gluten-induced gastrointestinal symptoms.
	Kitchen Appliances	Permission to use or bring small appliances for safe food storage and preparation.
	Transportation Flexibility	Car access exemptions for food shopping and medical appointments.

Summary of 24 Recommended Accommodations for Students with Celiac Disease in Higher Education

Domain	Accommodation	Description
Dining	Reliable Gluten-Free Meals	Gluten-free meals available during all dining hours, including weekends and holidays.
	Staff Training	Dining staff trained in celiac disease, gluten-free preparation, and cross-contact prevention.
	Ingredient Transparency	Clear labeling and access to full ingredient lists and allergen information.
	Direct Communication	Students have access to dietitians or dining managers for support and issue resolution.
	Custom Meals	Option for pre-ordered or customized meals prepared in cross-contact–free environments.
	Meal Plan Exemption	Option to opt out of meal plans when safe food cannot be reliably provided.
	Dedicated Gluten-Free Zones	Use of gluten-free prep areas, equipment, and storage where feasible.
Campus Life	Athletic Support	Access to gluten-free food and flexibility during team events or after illness.
	Study Abroad Inclusion	Support for safe food access, kitchen housing, and flexibility in placement.
	Social Event Access	Gluten-free options or permission to bring personal food to campus events.
	Mental Health Support	Recognition of the psychosocial impact with referrals to campus counseling.
	Emergency Planning	Protocols to ensure gluten-free food and medical access in emergencies.
	Internship and Employment Flexibility	Accommodations for food safety and illness management during campus employment or internships.

CONCLUSION

Creating a truly inclusive college environment means ensuring that every student can learn, live, and participate fully without compromising their health. For students with celiac disease, that requires more than awareness; it requires action, collaboration, and compassion.

To students: This handbook is your guide and your voice. Use it to advocate for your needs with confidence, to educate others, and to help shape a campus culture that understands and respects medically necessary diets. You deserve not just access, but belonging.

To university administrators and staff: Implementing these recommendations is not only a matter of compliance. It's an opportunity to lead. By embedding clear policies, communication pathways, and accountability into your campus systems, you ensure equity, safety, and inclusion for all students managing chronic health conditions.

To dining and food service teams: You play a vital role in student well-being. Every meal prepared with care, every question answered with respect, and every protocol followed with consistency helps students thrive academically and socially. Your diligence makes independence possible.

To parents and families: Your partnership and advocacy remain essential. Share this handbook with your student's college team, and know that your efforts help strengthen campuses everywhere for the next generation of students with celiac disease.

Together, we can ensure that no student has to choose between their education and their health. By working collaboratively – students, families, and universities – higher education can become not just accessible, but empowering, for every student with celiac disease.

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