

WHAT IS CROSS CONTACT?

Cross contact is when a gluten-free product comes into **contact with gluten-containing food, surfaces, or utensils**, transferring gluten to the gluten-free product.

WHY DOES IT MATTER?

When it comes to celiac disease, healing depends on consistent and strict gluten avoidance. Even as little as 10 mg can cause intestinal damage, which is equal to about **one crumb!**

EVERYDAY EXAMPLES OF CROSS CONTACT

- Double dipping
- Crumbs on surfaces
- Dirty utensils and cookware
- Shared condiments
- Reused pasta water or frying oil
- Unwashed hands
- Dirty grill or cooktop



Gluten is not absorbed through the skin, so cosmetic and haircare products are not expected to cause a reaction in people with celiac disease. Products that could be swallowed, such as lip gloss or lipstick, should be gluten-free.



NAVIGATING SHARED EQUIPMENT AND PREPARATION SPACES



PREPARATION AREAS AND SERVING DISHES

Wash all surfaces, cutting boards, colanders, utensils, dishes, etc. with soap and warm water for at least 20 seconds before being used.

Change apron and gloves before preparing gluten-free foods.

Prepare gluten-free food in a separate area whenever possible.



KITCHEN EQUIPMENT

Use barriers when possible on equipment that cannot be easily cleaned. Barriers such as parchment paper, baking sheets, or aluminum foil work great.

Cook with new pasta water and fresh frying oil when preparing gluten-free food.



SELF-SERVE BUFFETS AND FOOD STATIONS

Ask to get gluten-free items from a fresh container when they are served on a buffet where gluten-containing items are present,

Use condiments from squeeze bottles or single-serve packets whenever possible. Avoid using any items that share a serving utensil which could have come into contact with gluten.

BEST PRACTICES TO PREVENT CROSS CONTACT



DINING OUT

Before You Go

Research menus ahead of time for gluten-free options. Contact the restaurant in advance if possible.

At the Restaurant

Identify yourself as having celiac disease or a gluten allergy to convey the seriousness of needing gluten-free food.

Ask how gluten-free foods are prepared. Are they able to use clean utensils and cookware and keep your meal away from gluten-containing foods?

Confirm that gluten cross contact preparation precautions were followed.



TRAVELING

Research food options ahead of time including menus, reviews, apps, etc.

Pack snacks especially on travel days.

Choose accommodations with kitchens when possible so you can prepare your own food.

Shop at grocery stores. You get to try gluten-free treats that may only be available while traveling!

Bring translation cards to communicate your dietary needs in places that don't speak your native language.



AT SOCIAL GATHERINGS

Before You Go

Communicate your needs to the host in advance. What food will be there?

Offer to bring a gluten-free dish yourself to share with others.

At the Event

Serve yourself first before others use shared utensils.

Bring a back up snack just in case!

Explain your needs confidently. If you don't feel comfortable eating something, you do not have to.



AT HOME

In Shared Environments

Wash hands thoroughly with warm soapy water for at least 20 seconds:

- Before handling gluten-free food
- After touching gluten-containing products, utensils, or surfaces.

Wash utensils or cookware thoroughly with hot soapy water for at least 20 seconds before preparing gluten-free food.

- Tip: Your dishwasher does this!

Think: If your hands or utensils touched raw chicken, how clean would it need to be to use again?

Think of gluten cross contact the same way.



Questions to Ask When Dining Outside the Home



- Do you offer gluten-free options or a gluten-free menu?
- Which dishes are gluten-free, or can be modified to be gluten-free?
- Are any ingredients made with flour or other gluten-containing ingredients?
- How are gluten-free meals prepared to avoid cross-contact?
- Are fried foods cooked in a dedicated fryer, separate from gluten-containing items?
- Are gluten-free pastas cooked in separate, clean water?