

*Guide to  
Transitioning  
to a  
Gluten-Free  
Diet*



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# Paradigms for Success

While making this transition to a dairy-free (DF) diet, we believe it is helpful to explore and embrace the following paradigms to reach your goals in a fun and pleasurable way:

## Healthy for one person may not be healthy for you

- Embrace curiosity throughout this transition, especially when your body reacts differently to the changes than you may have expected it to.

## Your body is the most powerful, least expensive and BEST dietary experimentation lab in existence

- Listen to your body during this transition because your body has innate wisdom beyond any book or authority that will send you signals to let you know what it needs. These messages may be faint in the beginning, but the more you tune in and listen to them, the louder they will become.

## Diets are not useful as dogma, however they are useful as references

- This paradigm is about approaching this transition with flexibility vs. rigidity. Follow the 80/20 rule where you strive to eat dairy-free 80% of the time. Even eating dairy-free 51% of the time may be an improvement for you, and that is good enough!
- Life happens—there will be times when there are few non-dairy options available to you or you simply choose to eat dairy. Remember that eating is meant to be pleasurable. If you catch yourself judging yourself for a specific food you ate, turn back to curiosity. Ask yourself: What am I really craving in my life right now?

## Your perfect diet changes as you change

- You may find a way of eating that works for you right away, which is amazing! However, that may change if you enter into a new phase of life or a big event occurs in your life that changes your stress levels. Continue to listen to your body and stay curious as to which foods are going to best help you achieve optimum health wherever you are at right now.

# Overview of 8 Steps to Transition to a Gluten-Free Diet

Follow the 8 steps below to help you transition to a dairy-free diet:

## 1. Discover Your WHY

a. Before jumping right into a new way of eating, take a moment to press pause and understand what your motivation is for wanting to remove gluten from your diet. Knowing this will help you every time you are faced with the decision of whether or to choose a meal containing gluten.

## 2. Identify Your Support

a. Who in your life supports your decision to make this transition? Is this a radically different, and new way of eating from the way you ate when growing up?

b. Notice what thoughts or feelings come up as you imagine telling your family and loved ones about this decision you've made for your health.

c. Begin to notice how you would like to be supported throughout this transition. This could be from them cheering you on from the sidelines, trying new recipes you cook, exploring gluten-free or gluten-friendly restaurants, etc.

## 3. Build Awareness Through Education

a. Why should I consider going gluten-free? Why avoid it? Build your awareness and discover which foods and products contain gluten so you can make empowered choices about what you eat. There are many foods that are naturally gluten-free, but remember that gluten also "hides" in many unexpected places including—but not limited to—soy sauce, thick soups and sauces, bouillon cubes, alcohol, candy, over-the-counter prescription medications, lotions, etc.

#### 4. Shift Your Focus

a. When you first go gluten-free it can feel like all your favorite options are gone, however, that's simply an illusion. There are a huge variety of new foods, herbs, and spices to explore. Search out books, blogs, or apps to find quick, simple recipes to experiment with and find what you like best.

#### 5. Restock Your Kitchen

a. Fill your fridge and pantry with naturally gluten-free essentials such as fresh fruits, vegetables, legumes, nuts and seeds. When you purchase condiments and other ingredients, opt for gluten-free brands until you've overhauled your entire kitchen. Make sure to check out the gluten-free resource guide to make grocery shopping simple and easy.

#### 6. Cook at Home

a. Many traditional dishes prepared in commercial kitchens contain varying amounts of gluten. Cooking at home is one of the simplest ways to ensure what is, and what is not, in your food. Strive to prepare the majority of your meals at home and while dining out, focus on choosing healthy gluten-free options.

#### 7. Proceed Gradually

a. If this is a brand-new way of eating for you, honor the learning curve and any challenges you encounter along the way. You are learning new ways to shop, read labels and prepare new types of meals, as well as how to socialize with others in this new way. Each week choose how many meals you would like to eat that are gluten-free and gradually increase the number of meals until you have reached your goal.

b. Depending on your sensitivity or preference to remove gluten from your life, continue to remove dairy sources from all areas of your life including personal care products and medications when applicable.

#### 8. Create Success While Dining Out

a. Depending on the level of intensity of your reaction to gluten, visiting traditional restaurants may or may not work for you. While more restaurants provide gluten-free options, if you are highly sensitive to gluten you may still have a reaction due to cross contamination throughout the kitchen. Try exploring both gluten-free meals as well as full gluten-free kitchens to see if either works better for you and your body.

b. Dining out in the beginning of your transition may feel daunting—remember to embrace curiosity and learning. It may not be perfect each time, but through each experience you will learn how to navigate dining out more successfully!

# Step #1: Discover Your WHY

My decision to become gluten-free was prompted by:

By making this transition, I am looking to achieve:

I would like to feel more \_\_\_\_\_ in my life.

This is important to me because:

If I don't make this change now, what will it be like for me six months from now?

Does this future bring me stress or peace?

On the other hand, what good things will happen when I DO make these changes and stay with it consistently?

Does this future bring me stress or peace?

Based on these important insights, which is more important to me now: making these changes or staying the same?

What date will I begin making this transition?

# Step #2: Identify Your Support

Does my current environment set me up for success?

We humans like to feel a sense of belonging, so we mirror the people around us even if it doesn't move us toward our desires. For inevitable success, surround yourself with people you want to be mirroring.

Who am I currently receiving support from in my life to make this transition?

Is there anything I need to let go of in order to reach out and ask for the support I need?

Knowing myself, do I need more or less support to make this transition in the way that I would like?

How would I like to be supported through this process? What would it look or feel like to be supported in this way?

Who would I like to reach out to regarding the challenges I anticipate experiencing? (If currently aware of any.)

Today there are countless online resources and support groups to help navigate transitioning to a gluten-free diet. Below are a handful of the many resources available to you:

### **Celiac Resources:**

#### **Celiac Central:**

- <http://www.celiaccentral.org/support-groups/>
- [http://www.beyondceliac.org/SiteData/docs/NFCACeliac/658f7b59cef31774/NFCA\\_CeliacAwareCities\\_FINAL.pdf](http://www.beyondceliac.org/SiteData/docs/NFCACeliac/658f7b59cef31774/NFCA_CeliacAwareCities_FINAL.pdf)

#### **Celiac:**

- <http://celiac.org>

#### **Celiac Support Association:**

- <http://www.csaceliacs.org>

#### **American Celiac:**

- <http://americanceliac.org/celiac-disease/>

### **Gluten-Free Groups:**

#### **Gluten Intolerance Group:**

- <https://www.gluten.org>

#### **Gluten-Free Media Group:**

- <http://www.glutenfreemg.com>

# Step #3: Build Awareness Through Education

Use the following resources to help you navigate your transition to a gluten-free diet. Take it as slowly as you need to. If you notice challenges arising, work with your Health Coach.

## What Is Gluten?

- Gluten is a protein prevalent in wheat, barley and rye.
- While oats do not contain the gluten protein, they can be cross-contaminated during manufacturing so select oats specifically get labeled gluten-free.

## Why Avoid Gluten?

- Many (but not all) foods that contain gluten are highly processed, which typically means they are devoid of high-quality nutrients to nourish the body.
- Gluten acts like glue on the intestinal tract by "gluing down" the villi (finger-like tissue) that help keep the intestinal tract motile and healthy. The intestinal tracts motility maintains regularity and the villi help absorb nutrients.
- Whether you have a reaction to gluten or not, it has been shown to increase the permeability of the gut, also known as Leaky Gut Syndrome.
- Avoiding gluten can lower the overall systemic inflammatory reaction of the body. This may help alleviate or prevent neurological conditions such as depression and schizophrenia since the gut and the brain are deeply interconnected.

### **Gluten Is Found In:**

Wheat (and any food such as breads, pastas, tortillas, etc. that are made with wheat) / Spelt / Barley (including barley malt) / Rye / Wheat Starch / Seitan / Triticale and Mir (a cross between wheat and rye) / Vital Gluten / Wheatberry / Durum / Semolina / Farina / Farro / Graham / Kamut / Brewer's Yeast / Emmer / Some candies (like licorice) / Broth / Fried foods / Imitation crab meat/fish / Some lunch meats and hot dogs / Malt / Matzo / Modified food starch / Self-basting turkey / Pre-packaged seasoning / Processed, packaged food items such as seasoned rice/pasta mixes / Gravy / Veggie burgers (unless specified as gluten-free) / Worcestershire sauce / Beer (unless specified as gluten-free) / Dressings / Sauces

### **Foods to Avoid (unless specifically marked GF):**

Ravioli / Pasta / Dumplings / Couscous / Gnocchi / Ramen / Udon / Soba / Croissants / Pita / Naan / Bagels / Flatbread / Cornbread / Potato bread / Muffins / Donuts / Rolls / Cakes / Cookies / Pie crusts / Graham crackers / Crackers / Brownies / Pretzels / Corn flakes / Rice puffs / Pancakes / Waffles / French Toast / Crepes / Biscuits / Granola / Panko bread crumbs / Stuffing / Dressings / Croutons / Cream sauces made with roux / Flour tortillas / Malt beverages

### **Labels to Check Carefully:**

Energy bars / Granola bars / French fries / Potato chips / Soups / Multigrain/Artisan chips / Marinades / Starch / Dextrin / Brown rice syrup / Eggs served at restaurants / Meat substitutes / Cheesecake filling/ Lipstick / lip gloss / lip balm / Communion wafers / Herbal/nutritional supplements / Over-the-counter drugs / Playdough

## Gluten-Free Guide to Drinking:

- Avoid beer unless it is specifically brewed to be gluten-free (less than 20 ppm)
- Rum, most tequila, potato vodka, and wine are gluten-free and safe to drink
- Whiskey and bourbon are not universally accepted as gluten-free, so proceed with caution or take glutenase—an enzyme that helps the body break down gluten

### Gluten-free Beers (check your area for locally distributed brands):

Steadfast Beer Co. Oatmeal Cream Stout / Ipswich Ale Brewery: Celia Saison / Green's Gluten-Free Beers: Enterprise Dry-Hopped Lager / Sprecher Brewing Co: Shakparo Ale / Estrella Damm: Daura / Dogfish Head Craft Brewed Ales: Tweason'ale / Omission Beer: Lager / Harvester Brewing IPA No.2 (from Portland, OR) / Epic Brewing Company: Glutenator (Salt Lake City, UT) / New Planet Gluten-Free Beer: Raspberry Ale / Lakefront Brewery: New Grist / Glutenberg: India Pale Ale (Montreal based) / RedBridge / New Planet Tread Lightly / Bard's Tale Dragon's Gold

### Gluten-free Ciders:

Ace Pear Cider Angry Orchard / Blue Mountain Cider Company Blackthorn Cider / Bulmer's Hard Cider / Crispin Cider / Gaymer Cider Company / Harpoon Craft Cider / J.K.Scrumpy's Organic Hard Cider / Lazy Jack's Cider / Magners Cider / Newton's Folly Hard Cider / Original Sin Hard Cider / Smith and Forge Hard Cider / Spire Mountain Draft Cider / Strongbow Cider/ Stella Artois Apple and Pear Hard Cider / Woodchuck Cider / Woodpecker Cider

# Step #4: Shift Your Focus

Since beginning this transition, what is one thing I can celebrate?

What is one food that surprised me when I tried it?

I would like to experiment cooking the following dishes with gluten-free alternatives:

What is one thing I have learned about my body since making this transition?

Despite how well (or not well) I feel I am transitioning, what is one thing I can appreciate myself for?

# Step #5: Restock the Kitchen

Cooking at home is way easier when there is a plethora of healthy supplies to choose from. In step #3, you learned gluten is found and what food items to avoid. Use the resources below to stock your pantry with high-quality meats and produce to prepare your meals from.

## How-to Read Food Labels so You Can Confidently Choose Products

Labels tell us where and how our food was grown, raised or caught and what impacts this has on the environment. Companies WANT you to think their food is healthy and will resort to all kinds of marketing tactics to make you purchase their products.

Here's how to cut through the confusion so you can tell which labels matter for your health and which don't. Labels can be easily be differentiated by "certified" and "non-certified." **Choose certified labels as often as possible.**

### Certified Labels

**Certified Gluten-Free:** This product has been tested by an independent organization and contains less than 10 ppm—or was derived using ingredients with less than 10 ppm—of gluten.

**Grass-fed:** This implies that the animals spend their lives on pasture eating what nature intended; they are not treated with hormones or antibiotics and are not fed unnatural grain.

**Organic:** In order for animal meat and dairy to be labeled "organic", the animal must never have been given antibiotics, hormones or GMO grasses, grains or other types of feed.

**GMO-Free/Non-GMO/Non-GMO Project Certified:** Produced without the use of genetically modified organisms (GMOs).

**Naturally Grown:** Reserved for food produced on small farms that abide by the USDA Certified Organic methods of growing and selling locally.

## Non-Certified Labels

**Free-range or Free Roaming:** Birds raised in this manner are able to go outdoors in order to engage in natural behaviors. However, birds only have to be allowed 5 minutes of open-air access per day in order to meet USDA requirements. The rest of the time they are kept in tiny cages with no room to move.

**Pasture-Fed or Pasture-Raised:** This indicates that animals were raised with humane treatment and consume higher levels of micronutrients. For beef, labels must also read “organic” and “grass-fed” to make sure the animals were not fed GMO grains, grasses, corn or soy. For eggs, this is the safest labeling to ensure the chickens roam free and consume their natural diet and are never caged.

**Antibiotic-Free or Raised Without Antibiotics:** Meat and poultry carrying these labels must never have had any antibiotics administered during the animal's lifetime. This pertains to eggs and dairy.

**Cage-Free:** This implies that hens laying eggs are uncaged inside barns or warehouses. It does not mean the hens have access to the outdoors or daylight, but that they may be able to walk, nest or spread their wings within tiny quarters.

**Natural:** This vague labelling is supposed to imply the product does not contain artificial flavorings or coloring, chemical preservatives, or artificial or synthetic ingredients. Although, this is oftentimes a misnomer and a warning that you should stay away from the product.

**Minimally Processed:** A process that does not fundamentally alter the raw product.

**No Additives:** This implies a product (or packaging) has not been enhanced with the addition of natural or artificial ingredients.

## Gluten-Free Specifics

- Companies often label naturally gluten-free items as "gluten-free" such as bottled spring water, whole cuts of meat, or produce.
- Wheat-free does not necessarily mean gluten-free. Check the other grains or ingredients used to ensure they are free of gluten. Grains such as wheat, rye, barley or malt, and oats (unless specifically marked GF) are off limits.
- Oats are naturally gluten free but may be processed in a facility that also processes other products containing gluten. According to the FDA, if the oats contain less than 20 ppm they may also be labeled as gluten-free.

## Ingredients that may be derived from wheat:

The following ingredients are known to originate from wheat. If you are not entirely sure of the food's origin, products containing the following are best to be avoided:

- Modified food starch
- Starch
- Dextrin

## Choose High-Quality Produce

Reduce chemical and pesticide consumption by choosing organic produce as much as possible. Use the Dirty Dozen and Clean 15 lists below from the Environmental Working Group (EWG) to find out which fruits and vegetables are the most and least sprayed with chemicals. This will help you to know when to prioritize organic and when it's okay to choose conventionally grown produce so you can save a little bit of money.

The list below reflects the EWG's findings for 2019. It is updated each year, so depending on **when you are viewing this handout, make sure to check for the most up to date lists.**

<p>EWG's 2019 Shopper's Guide to Pesticides in Produce™ -- Dirty Dozen:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Strawberries</li> <li>2. Spinach</li> <li>3. Kale</li> <li>4. Nectarines</li> <li>5. Apples</li> <li>6. Grapes</li> <li>7. Peaches</li> <li>8. Cherries</li> <li>9. Pears</li> <li>10. Tomatoes</li> <li>11. Celery</li> <li>12. Potatoes and Hot Peppers</li> </ol>	<p>EWG's 2019 Shopper's Guide to Pesticides in Produce™ --Clean 15:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Avocados</li> <li>2. Sweet Corn</li> <li>3. Pineapples</li> <li>4. Sweet Frozen Peas</li> <li>5. Onions</li> <li>6. Papayas</li> <li>7. Eggplants</li> <li>8. Asparagus</li> <li>9. Kiwis</li> <li>10. Cabbages</li> <li>11. Cauliflower</li> <li>12. Cantaloupes</li> <li>13. Broccoli</li> <li>14. Mushrooms</li> <li>15. Honeydew Melons</li> </ol>
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## Flavor with Herbs and Spices

Flavoring with herbs and spices will enhance flavor, reduce cravings and boost metabolism.

- Cinnamon, cloves, coriander, ginger, nutmeg and cardamom are all “warm and sweet” spices. They stabilize blood sugar. These spices go well with yams, sweet potatoes, winter squash, sweet grains, curries, tea, fruits, yogurt and dessert dishes.
- Cumin is one of the most popular spices in the world second only to black pepper. It stimulates the secretion of pancreatic enzymes and enhances nutrient absorption. Try toasting whole cumin seeds and sprinkling on your favorite grains or vegetables.
- Oregano, basil, thyme, bay leaf, parsley, cilantro all have aromatic qualities that add a lightness, sweetness, and freshness to beans and heavy sauces in curries, soups, and pasta dishes, especially those that include tomatoes.
- Caraway and dill seeds add zest to breads, soups, cabbage and beet dishes. Poppy seeds work great in salad dressing.

- Coriander, cumin and ginger combine will with bean dishes to reduce flatulence. Fresh ginger also helps break down high protein foods such as meats, beans, tofu and tempeh.
  - Other therapeutic uses of ginger: nausea, indigestion, bloating and menstrual cramps. Drink ginger tea after a meal to ease digestion.
- Fennel seed alleviates gas pains, calms an acidic stomach eases irritable bowel syndrome. Use in Italian dishes, stir fry or eggs.
- Garlic and cayenne are great for the common cold. These spices stimulate sweating; and are high in Vitamin C and boost the immune system.
- Salt! Not all salt is created equal. Trade table salt for mineralized Sea Salt. It's loaded with alkalizing nutrients that are great for your skin and will help you feel naturally full. Lime sea salt, Celtic sea salt or Himalayan sea salt are of excellent quality.
- Turmeric has anti-inflammatory and antioxidant qualities and protects the liver from toxins. It also lowers cholesterol and decreases menstrual pain. It adds a bright orange color to food. It can be bought dried or fresh.
- Tarragon has a delicious fragrant scent. Add to dressings.
- Mustard and coriander seeds are essential spices for any great curry. Mustard seeds have multiple benefits including relieving migraines. Coriander seeds help ease digestive disorders and abdominal pain and add an unforgettable sweetness to food.

# Step #6: Cook at Home

Preparing and cooking your own food at home is one of the easiest ways to ensure you are eating the highest quality food. Follow the steps and use the resources below to set yourself up for success throughout your week.

**1. Assess Your Week:** Before your week starts, look at your calendar and notice any opportunities in which you can prepare gluten-free meals at home. Check to see if you have any lunch meetings or social events at restaurants. Then decided how many meals you would like to eat dairy-free that week.

Decide whether you will prep snacks and meals ahead of time or prep individual ingredients that you can combine in a way you like once you're ready to eat. Food prepping is immensely helpful is you have a busy week.

**2. Tap into Your Creativity:** Once you know how many gluten-free meals you are going to prepare, and when you plan to prepare them for your upcoming week, take a moment to check in on what your taste buds are craving that week. Whether it is a specific dish or the flavors of certain ethnic food, hop on Pinterest or Google to find a plethora of recipes for you to use. Explore the list of *Herbs and Spices* in the Restock Your Kitchen section to spice it up!

**3. Create Your List:** Look at the meals you want to prepare and check to see which ingredients you have on hand and which you need to pick up from the store. Create a grocery list organized in the same way as your grocery store layout. This will help you stay focused while at the store.

**4. Jam Out to Your Favorite Tunes:** Make cooking a fun experience that you look forward to rather than rush through.

**5. Build Connection:** This is not only a time for you to connect back with where food comes from, but also to build connection in your home. If you live alone, invite friends over for a food prepping party! If you live with a significant other or have a family member at home, ask them to participate in the process.

**6. Can't cook?** No problem! There are more options than ever for getting healthy options delivered to your door. More and more services are becoming available that deliver healthy meals prepped and ready to cook.

## Gluten-Free “Magic” Snack Ideas Designed to Stabilize Blood Sugar

- 2T almond butter, ½ cup celery—optional: sprinkle 1T chia seeds in almond butter
- ¼ cup black beans, ¼ cup salsa, ½ cup avocado
- ½ cup gluten-free high-fiber crackers, 2T almond butter
- ½ cup squash, 1T butter, 1T ground flax seed sprinkles on top
- ½ cup roasted chickpeas, with cinnamon
- 2T cashew butter, ½ banana, ¼ cup gluten-free dry oatmeal—mix and enjoy
- ½ apple, 2T almond butter, chia seeds sprinkled on top
- ½ cup hummus, ½ cup celery or carrots, a small handful of gluten-free high-fiber crackers
- 2T shredded coconut, ¼ cup dry oats, ½ banana—mix together and enjoy
- 1 pear, 12 almonds
- ½ cup almond milk, 2T seed mix (chia, hemp, flax), ½ cup berries—all mixed in a bowl
- ½ cup roasted green peas with 2T olive oil
- Quinoa tabbouleh (½ cup cooked quinoa, 2T chopped onion, ½ diced tomato, 1 – 2T olive oil, 1/2T fresh squeezed lemon, 1T mint, salt and pepper to taste)
- ½ cup cooked gluten-free pasta of choice (brown rice, red lentil, or quinoa-based) 2T basil pesto, and cheese—mix together and enjoy warm or cold
- ½ cup cooked lentils of choice, ½ of a lemon juiced, tahini, salt, pepper, onion, and garlic powder to taste
- ½ cup homemade trail mix with almonds, cashew, sunflower seeds, raisins, and some dark chocolate nibs
- 1 slice gluten-free toast, ¼ - ½ cup squash on top of toast, sprinkle 1oz feta or goat cheese, top with favorite herb—eat open-faced
- ½ cup raspberries, ½ cup cottage cheese

- 1oz high-quality cheddar cheese, ½ pear, 12 almonds
- ½ cup sweet potato, ¼ cup full-fat plain yogurt or sour cream
- 1 tomato cut into slices, ½ cup mashed avocado layered on top, 1oz high-quality shredded cheese sprinkled as final layer—broil on baking sheet for a couple of minutes
- ½ cup plain yogurt, ½ cup berries of choice, ground flax seeds mixed in
- 1 hard-boiled egg sliced on gluten-free crackers or bread, 1T mayo

## Produce

*To save time, feel free to buy the pre-sliced packages if available.*

- 1 small butternut squash
- 2 avocados
- 1 medium cucumber
- 2 small containers of raspberries (or buy frozen berries)
- 2 medium tomatoes
- 2 pears
- 1 banana
- 1 apple
- 1 bunch celery
- 1 medium carrot
- 1 bell pepper
- 1 small sweet onion
- 1 lemon
- 1 medium sweet potato
- 1 package fresh herbs like sage, mint or basil (optional)

## Bulk Bins

- 24 raw almonds
- Trail mix—mix of your choice of nuts with small amounts of optional raisins or cranberries
- And dark chocolate nibs you can eat in ½ cup servings
- ½ cup flax seeds (whole or ground)
- ½ cup hemp seeds (optional)
- ½ cup chia seeds
- ½ cup dry GF oatmeal
- ¼ cup dry quinoa
- ¼ cup dry pasta of choice
- ½ cup dry lentils
- ¼ cup shredded coconut

## Dairy and Refrigerated Section

- 1LB container organic full-fat yogurt or sour cream
- 1 small stick butter from grass-fed cows
- 1 small container organic cottage cheese
- 1 egg
- 1 32oz container unsweetened, plain almond milk
- 1 small container hummus

**You can purchase these by block, sliced, or shredded. Packages are labeled in ounces:**

- 2 oz feta or goat cheese
- 2 oz high-quality cheddar cheese
- 2 oz mozzarella cheese

## Frozen Section

- 1 small package green peas
- 1 small package edamame beans
- 1 small package organic frozen berries (optional if you can't buy fresh)

## In the Aisles

- Small container peanut butter (with minimal ingredients like only peanuts only)
- Small container almond butter (with minimal ingredients like almonds only)
- 1 small can black beans
- 1 small jar salsa
- 1 small jar basil pesto (with minimal ingredients or preservatives)
- 1 small jar olive oil-based mayo
- 1 small loaf of gluten-free bread
- 1 small box gluten-free crackers
- 1 bottle of extra virgin olive oil
- Organic ground cinnamon (optional)

# Step #7: Proceed Gradually

Depending on the severity of your gluten intolerance, a tiered-down approach to slowly remove gluten from your diet is a simple and seamless way to make this transition. If it is medically necessary, or recommended by your preferred medical provider, then a faster transition may be required so be sure to ask for additional support to account for a more abrupt transition if need be. However, if you want to begin transitioning off gluten using a tiered-down approach then you can do so in the following way:

Commit to having one gluten-free meal a day and slowly increase it until all your meals are free of gluten. For example:

**1. Week 1 - Make or purchase a gluten-free breakfast each day**

- If you are able to do this with ease, then proceed to the next step. Otherwise, continue with breakfast for one more week

**2. Week 2 - Make or purchase a gluten-free breakfast and lunch**

- Do this step for two weeks. Check-in with yourself each week and notice if you can progress faster or if you need to extend this step

**3. Week 3 or 4 - Make or purchase a gluten-free breakfast, lunch, and dinner**

- Continue this step as long as you choose
- There will be times when gluten accidentally sneaks into a meal or you intentionally choose to have it. Either way, be curious and gentle with yourself. Know that with each meal you have the chance to choose gluten-free and start over again.

**4. Upgrade your snacks.** When you are ready, upgrade any snacks you are accustomed to having throughout the day to gluten-free alternatives

**5. Swap out personal care products.** The first place to get comfortable with and confident removing gluten is in your diet since that is where it can be found in abundance. However, gluten is a thickening agent that can also be found in shampoos, lotions, shaving gel, lipstick, mascara, and hairspray. Look for sneaky words such as wheat germ, hydrolyzed wheat protein, and hydrolyzed vegetable protein to spot terms that contain gluten.

**6. Check your medications.** Lastly, if you are on medication, check with your medical provider to see if your prescriptions contain gluten and whether there is a gluten-free alternative you can take instead.

# Step #8: Create Success While Dining Out

Use Yelp or Google - Search “gluten-free” restaurants in your area and read the reviews to gauge if you want to try a new restaurant in your area or not.

Download Apps - Try apps such as: [scanglutenfree.com](http://scanglutenfree.com), [allergyeats.com](http://allergyeats.com), [glutenfreetravel.com](http://glutenfreetravel.com), [findmeglutenfree.com](http://findmeglutenfree.com), and [glutenfreepassport.com](http://glutenfreepassport.com).

Check the Menu Codes - Many restaurants include a key of common food sensitivities or preferences to help make navigating easy for patrons. Look for tiny icons like a GF to designate dishes as gluten-free. If you are not seeing these on the menu, ask your server to point them out to see if they have specific gluten-free options that are not listed.

## Questions to Ask Your Server:

- Was there flour used to thicken the soup/sauce/dressing?
- What type of noodles do you have? Do you have anything gluten-free?
- Can I have a side of ...? (name the gluten-free grain or vegetable that you would like to eat instead such as quinoa, beans, or lentils)
- Are the fried coated in flour or fried in the same oil as other foods containing gluten?