

# Free-from advice Ask the experts

Do you need help with your free-from cooking, or do you have a nutritional query? Email your question to [nick.gregory@anthem-publishing.com](mailto:nick.gregory@anthem-publishing.com)



**Q I have just started dating a guy who is gluten intolerant – to what level should we be wary of cross-contamination, for example is kissing okay after I've eaten bread?**

First things first – be sure to clarify whether he is gluten intolerant or has a wheat allergy, the outcomes could vary drastically! A traditional allergy can trigger extreme reactions such as rashes, swelling and breathlessness! In which case, if you've just eaten a sandwich, hold off on the kissing for a couple of hours.

Some people get mixed up between wheat and gluten, but gluten itself is highly unlikely to cause a reaction like this. The main reason to avoid gluten is typically a diagnosis with coeliac disease, where consuming it damages the delicate lining of the intestines. If your boyfriend has coeliac disease watch out for cosmetics containing gluten; it's often an ingredient in lipstick and disguised with vague names like 'hydrolysed vegetable protein' for one, so always do your research!

If your boyfriend does not have a diagnosed disease, but a sensitivity or intolerance, often called non-coeliac gluten sensitivity – a complex immune reaction that can manifest itself in a range of symptoms including digestive discomfort or migraines, that can aggravate arthritis or exacerbate skin conditions like psoriasis – simply coming into contact with gluten through kissing should not pose any immediate danger, so pucker up!

BECKY GRAHAM

**Q Does gluten provide any nutrients I should seek elsewhere?**

Eliminating gluten from your diet puts you at risk of having fewer vitamins, minerals and fibre in your diet, including vitamin B and iron.

To combat this, it's important to get a wide variety of foods such as beans (natural, not baked beans), green leafy vegetables (like broccoli and spinach), red meat, fish and dried fruit.