

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



Q Is there a connection between coeliac disease and diabetes?

When you're diagnosed with coeliac disease it's tempting to find out lots more about it. One of the first things you may discover is that it's an auto immune disorder, which in turn leads you to research that as well. It's then you may discover this covers diabetes (as well as a range of other conditions).

So what are the facts? According to Coeliac UK, between 4-9% of people with coeliac disease also have diabetes, and the majority are diagnosed with diabetes first. It's worth noting that this is only for Type 1 diabetes and not Type 2, for which coeliacs have no increased risk.

Therefore, not only is there a small chance of coeliacs also having diabetes, but also that you'd probably know about it before your coeliac diagnosis.

Should you find you are in the minority of people who have both diabetes and coeliac disease, the good news according to Coeliac UK is that adhering to a gluten-free diet actually helps control your symptoms and reduce complications, which gives you an added incentive to follow your gluten-free diet.

The best help to keep you healthy is to visit a registered dietitian for advice on how to manage your diet – you should be referred for free by your doctor.

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Q What are the best substitutes for gluten in making bread?

Mine are always just so dense!

Personally I always like to keep my ingredients list as simple as possible. I've found that gluten-free baking powder works better than fresh yeast as well as a combination of mixing flours together. My favourite go-to flours at the moment for making bread are brown rice flour and buckwheat flour and, if you are not a vegan, eggs will give height to your bread.

Sometimes its best to actually make the mixture and, rather than waiting for it to prove and rise, bake it straight away.