

To whom it may concern

Re: Coeliac disease – mandatory gluten free food only

The person providing this letter has specific dietary needs as they have coeliac disease - a serious autoimmune condition requiring a strict gluten free diet. When gluten is ingested by a person with coeliac disease it causes damage to their gut, and often results in **nausea and vomiting within a matter of hours**, as well as other unpleasant and painful symptoms such as diarrhoea or stomach pain. You can find a full list of symptoms at www.coeliac.org.uk/symptoms. Even a small crumb of gluten can cause a reaction so strict adherence is important and we ask you to share this information with all members of staff responsible for providing any items to be fed to, or administered to this patient.

Guidelines

- **Dietary needs assessment:** It is advisable to designate a person on ward or a hospital dietitian to carry out an initial assessment of the patient's dietary needs. Gluten found in wheat, barley and rye, is usually the main issue, but some people with coeliac disease also have issues with oats and lactose.
- **Safe gluten free provision protocol:** the hospital will have a protocol for delivery of safe gluten free food – please ensure all staff are aware of this. It should include:
 - Clear labelling on the patient's record and on their hospital bed, allergy alert wrist bands could also be used
 - Staff on the ward responsible for any food or drink to be briefed on the patient's requirements and to be aware of gluten free options and how to avoid cross contamination
 - The staff member responsible for handing over the food to the patient is also required to be fully briefed and is responsible for checking the name of the patient matches the food item; the food is wrapped and could not have been cross contaminated in transit or whilst being served; the food is clearly labelled Gluten Free; all plates, cutlery and sundries to be checked to ensure no cross contamination may have occurred

This letter is accompanied by a reminder of the key points (Kitchen Poster), and if possible it would be useful to display in the food prep and serving stations. If you have any questions on this, or any questions about gluten free and coeliac disease, please contact www.coeliac.org.uk or call our Helpline 0333 332 2033 Mon-Fri 10am-4pm.

Thank you.

Yours faithfully,

Coeliac UK