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## **Gluten sensitivity**

Gluten sensitivity is a very common problem found in today's society and it can cause a great deal of discomfort, pain and frustration for those individuals who experience symptoms from this disorder. Generally, we relate gluten sensitivity to digestive problems such as abdominal pain, nausea, diarrhoea, constipation, bloating and intestinal distress. However, because we are all unique individuals, for some, gluten consumption may affect their nervous system and contribute to symptoms such as headaches, vertigo, insomnia, nerve damage, muscle tremor, confusion, memory loss, behaviour and concentration disorders in children etc.

What is gluten? It's a sticky protein, "like a glue" this sticky attribute interferes with the breakdown and assimilation of nutrients. Gluten makes our bread, scones, doughnuts etc lovely and soft and fluffy, giving us all quite a rush of pleasure when we eat it, which for some, may have an almost addictive effect. It is found in a variety of grains such as wheat, rye, barley, kamut, bulgur and spelt (although spelt

has a lower content of Gluten compared with other species of wheat), seasonings, some ice creams, soups, sauces, cheese spreads and margarines to maintain their lovely smooth texture. It is also in some personal care products such as volumizing mascaras and hair conditioners that add volume.

Gluten is made up of two main groups of protein, one is the glutenins and the other is the gliadins, individuals may be sensitive to either of these proteins or they may be sensitive to one of the twelve different smaller units of gliadin. A sensitivity to any of these can lead to an inflammatory reaction sending out inflammatory molecules to label the food particles as the enemy. An immune system response may follow which often causes damage to the tissue in our intestine known as leaky gut and eventually this inflammatory cascade may put you at risk for developing an autoimmune disorder.

Celiac disease is one of the most severe reactions an individual can have to gluten, it specifically causes damage to the small intestine. So even if you have tested negative to celiac disease you may still be sensitive to one of the other smaller units of gliadin. Gluten sensitivity or celiac disease may also be genetic, for example you may carry genes coded for celiac disease or a sensitivity to gluten, these genes can be triggered by a virus, poor diet or even stress etc. If you have celiac disease it's generally a lifelong condition which

may eventually affect the skin, it may cause blisters of the mouth or damage to the mucus membranes. I'm often asked by my clients "Why do we have this problem now, when my grandma could eat bread without all these problems?" Well, it appears to be due to the changes in the manufacturing of grains over the last few decades, such as bioengineering, which has enabled the growth of grains with a much higher content of gluten.

So what can you do to help your amazing body? There are fantastic cook books with beautiful gluten free recipes available, you can even buy the book called "An Idiots Guide to Gluten Free Eating" which simplifies some of the more difficult aspects of dieting with gluten intolerance, I brought this book for my daughter years ago to help get her started on a gluten free diet. Also there are a wide range of gluten free products in the supermarkets today, for example San Remo make gluten free pasta, Macro make a beautiful bolognaisse sauce, along with dips, cake mixes, pizza bases etc. Fantastic and Sakata make lovely cracker biscuits to have with dips, Food for Life make gluten free health bars, you can buy gluten free soy sauce, McKenzies Arrowroot is a great product for thickening sauces, the list goes on and on, once you start looking.

You may find you need a little support if you decide to adopt this way of life, it often feels a bit daunting to change your diet, so a good practitioner can help give you some ideas and

guidance along the way. Also, by taking some lovely nourishing herbs to support the body and aid the assimilation of the food you are eating, along with an iridology evaluation to look at your overall general health your quality of life may be greatly improved.

I must say from what I've seen over the years, going onto a gluten free diet can be life changing, individuals often find not only do their initial problems correct themselves, but other nagging problems improve as well.

Lynne Singlewood has taught Iridology and herbal medicine at Endeavour College, she also lectures Emotional Iridology at WEA. She has a passion to help the community with their health and well being. Her deep love of iridology and herbal medicine is infectious.

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