

Wheat Free Living
Made Simple



Wheat-Free Living

There's a movement going on in the food world. People are changing to a more healthy way of eating. Whether they want to lose a few pounds or for health reasons or because of food allergies, many people are discovering wheat-free living.

Wheat has traditionally been a staple grain throughout history. It originated in southwest Asia and has been consumed for more than 10,000 years. It's not native to the Western Hemisphere, having only been introduced after Columbus came to the New World. Wheat is one of the largest crops of all foods and is one of the most common cereals. It's ground into flour for breads and baked goods as well as many other foods.

So why, then, are people doing away with it in their diet?

There are various reasons that include dietary and health reasons. We will take a look at these within this report.

Wheat contains gluten, which is what gives wheat flour elasticity and strength and allows bread to rise. Gluten is found in other grains, too, but in a lesser amount. That's why wheat free doesn't necessarily mean that it you will be eating a totally gluten-free diet. There are differences to these two types of eating, which we'll discuss later.

Some sources believe that wheat is good for the body. After all, we need to get nutrients from grain. In fact, wheat as a raw material is nutritious. It's when it becomes processed into products like pasta, noodles, breads and cookies using white flour that it becomes less healthy. The wheat grain is removed, resulting in more than half of the B vitamins, folic acid, zinc, copper and other minerals being eliminated.

Other sources believe that wheat in any form can cause problems, especially for those who have wheat allergies or are gluten intolerant.

Going without wheat means finding suitable alternative grains and recipes that suit your palate and budget. This report will discuss these options as well.



Why Wheat Free?

As mentioned above, there are numerous reasons to go wheat free. Wheat allergies and wheat sensitivity are a couple of the health reasons someone might change to a wheat-free lifestyle. Another factor could be someone who wants to lose weight by reducing the carbohydrates in

their diet. Or there are those who are looking to go for a more all-natural diet like the Paleo lifestyle.

Let's take a closer look at some of the reasons here.

Wheat Allergies

A wheat allergy can occur in children and adults. It is the immune system's response to a protein in wheat, where the body mistakenly thinks this protein is dangerous. Although many don't realize it, wheat is a common food allergy, especially among children. The symptoms include chronic gastrointestinal troubles, asthma, eczema, infections, acne, fatigue, joint pain, and migraine. In rare case an allergic reaction to wheat can cause anaphylactic shock.



Wheat Intolerance

A wheat intolerance and sensitivity, on the other hand, occurs when your body has difficulty digesting wheat. Symptoms can take several days to appear. You could get poor digestion, bloating and wind. You might experience fatigue, headaches and joint pains as well.

Those sensitive to wheat can sometimes tolerate the gluten found in other grains such as oats, rye and barley. This is where wheat intolerance differs from those with Celiac disease. These people are allergic to all gluten and must avoid it forever.

Carb Reduction

Carb reduction and reducing empty calories is another reason to go wheat free. Wheat can cause a high glycemic index, or "high GI," shown to be linked to obesity and diabetes. Wheat contains a unique carbohydrate that is responsible for the high glycemic index. For those wanting or needing to lose weight, cutting out those empty calories and reducing the amount of carbohydrates ingested daily begins with

removing the wheat in your diet.

Eco Impact

Many people have become more conscious of what goes into the foods we eat. People are concerned about the GMOs used in making grains and animals sturdier and genetically modified to withstand herbicide applications.

These are just a few of the reasons why a wheat-free lifestyle might be considered. How you feel and the recommendations of your doctor should be an indication of a move toward this type of lifestyle.

Health Benefits

There are some benefits of living wheat free. According to Dr. William Davis, author of the Wheat-Belly Diet, (Wheat Belly: Lose the Wheat, Lose the Weight, and Find Your Path Back to Health, available on Amazon.com), removing wheat from the diet can reduce the risk of the following health problems:

| | | | | | |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------|-------------|--|
| acid reflux | acne | ADHD | alopecia areata | asthma | atherosclerosis |
| autism | bloating | brain fog | breast cancer | cancer | celiac disease |
| cramps | dementia | dermatitis herpetiformis (DH) | diabetes | diarrhea | elevated estrogen levels |
| erectile dysfunction | food addiction | gangrene | gas | glycation | gynecomastia |
| heart disease | incontinence | irritable bowel syndrome | kidney disease | mouth sores | obesity/overweight |
| osteoporosis | peripheral neuropathy | pH imbalances | psoriasis | rashes | rheumatoid arthritis |
| schizophrenia | seizures | ulcerative colitis | ulcers | vitiligo | wheat-dependent exercise-induced anaphylaxis (WDEIA) |
| wheat-induced cerebellar ataxia | wrinkles | | | | |

This is not intended to be a replacement for professional diagnosis or treatments. Please consult a professional medical doctor before starting a new diet.

Other health benefits you can get from a wheat-free diet might include:

- Removing wheat from your diet is a great chance to add more whole foods. Processed foods found in packets are made with over-processed and added ingredients not normally found in whole foods. Whole fruits, vegetables, grains other than wheat, beans, nuts, lean meats, low-fat dairy and seeds all contain vitamins and minerals and more nutritional value than refined products.
- Eating healthier actually costs less if using in-season vegetables and fruits.



- Cravings disappear and other symptoms can be alleviated.

Removing wheat from the diet can help you alleviate health problems like rashes, skin irritation, nasal congestion and digestive tract issues. Living a wheat-free lifestyle can lead to an overall healthier weight because of the whole foods you will be adding to your diet.

Wheat Free Resources

- As mentioned above, the Wheat Belly diet was founded by cardiologist William Davis, MD. His blog, WheatBellyblog.com (<http://www.wheatbellyblog.com/>) and his book, Wheat Belly, maintain that today's wheat is both addictive and toxic.

The Wheat Belly diet is about eliminating wheat from our diets rather than a strict “do this or do that” type of diet. According to Dr. Davis, it's a lifestyle choice. It's not about calorie restrictions or exercise. His book, cookbooks and blog all promote preparing your food in a delicious, alternative way that can help the body overcome the effects from too much wheat.

- Many online websites, including Amazon, carry a wide assortment of gluten-free and wheat-free products - including specialty flours and baking mixes.

- When substituting flour, you may need to add protein ingredients or other types of ingredients to make the flours more like wheat flour. Guar gum and xanthan gum are substitutes for gluten. They can be found online and in health food stores.

- Other additives like eggs, milk, soymilk or non-dairy milk alternatives are readily available.



- Egg replacer is a leavening agent that adds protein to wheat-free baked goods and can be found at health food stores.
- Nut meal is dense and protein rich. Do not use if you have tree nut allergies, though. Find it in health food stores or online.
- Powdered dry milk is available in most supermarkets, usually in the baking aisle.

Effectiveness of Wheat-Free Diets

When changing your way of eating and your lifestyle, you want to feel fairly confident the things you are changing are effective. Have others seen results? Is it a healthy choice? How does it compare to other types of diets? These are all valid questions.

The Wheat Belly Diet

The Wheat Belly diet is often compared to the Atkins diet. There are several differences, though. Atkins allows some low-carb options. Wheat Belly encourages removing all carbs from the diet.

The Wheat Belly diet puts a greater emphasis on fresh ingredients. This makes it more like the Paleo (or caveman) diet that focuses on fish, grass-fed meats, nuts and produce. On the Paleo diet, grains, legumes and dairy are eliminated.

On the Wheat Belly diet, unlimited cheese, meats, fish, eggs, most vegetables except potatoes and corn, raw seeds and nuts and most oils are allowed. Most condiments can be eaten as well.

Milk, yogurt, berries, fruit juice and legumes are recommended in limited quantities on the Wheat Belly diet. The one thing you should never eat is wheat products and sugary snacks like ice cream or candy.

On the Wheat Belly diet, many people have seen results through weight loss and in improved health.

Switching to Wheat Free

Some sources say that people who switch to a wheat-free diet will lose a pound a day the first 10 days and then up to 30 pounds during the next 6 months. Of course, this depends on body size, gender and a many other factors.



The effectiveness of weight loss all depends on how you go wheat free.

Getting rid of refined carbs like those found in bagels, pasta and crackers in favor of those made from other types of whole grains and ditching processed, packaged foods that cut out empty carbs and calories, will up your fiber and nutrients and result in weight loss and energy gain.

But if you simply replace the gluten products with gluten-free processed products found in the grocery aisles, you are most likely going to be consuming more sugar and fat and calories.

Many of these gluten-free packaged foods contain cornstarch, rice starch, potato starch and tapioca starch

that cause blood sugar to rise.

Changing to a wheat-free diet can benefit those who have to remove wheat from their diets due to allergies or wheat intolerances. It can be an effective way for those who want to lose weight if they also remove processed foods.

How to Make the Switch

Wheat is hidden in many common foods. Bread, pasta, salad dressing, condiments, canned soup, sweets, and beer are just a small sampling of where wheat has been added or is a main ingredient.

Use this information to help you make the switch:

- Be a label detective. Read labels of products before you purchase. Read ingredient labels carefully since some products that you wouldn't expect to contain wheat. For example, wheat is found in some brands of ice cream, potato chips, rice cakes, turkey patties and even hot dogs.



- Be careful of your drinks. Wheat is found in ale, root beer, fruit drink mixes, and some sports drinks.
- Some types of imitation crabmeat contain wheat.
- Reduce packaged products as much as possible. Go with whole foods.
- Introduce one new ingredient or recipe into your diet gradually.
- Make large batches of foods that freeze well like hummus dips, soups and meals. Freeze in portion sizes.
- Pre-soak breakfast grains like quinoa the night before you want to use them. Put it in a pot to boil when you are ready to eat it.
- Canned salmon or tuna with avocado on a green salad is a great lunch.
- Keep snack foods handy when you want something quick. Boiled eggs, containers of hummus, fresh veggies and frozen chocolate-covered banana bites are just a few ideas.

- Keep gluten-free bread sliced and ready to toast in your freezer.
- Experiment with different types of flour in recipes to replace whole wheat flour.
- Prepare foods in advance to make things easier.

Going wheat free is easier than ever with the availability of gluten-free flours and other products on the market. Take advantage of the vast variety of cookbooks to try new recipes for baking and cooking meals.

Alternative Grains

Whole grains are a big part of a healthy diet. They make up a large part of the bottom of the food pyramid. But it's not just whole wheat and brown rice. As you take on the wheat-free lifestyle, you soon discover the wide variety of grains to choose from.

In recent years there has been a frenzy of interest around quinoa. It's just one of the grain alternatives you can choose from. All of these are healthy swaps in your favorite breads, pastas and side dishes.

1. **Quinoa** (pronounced KEEN-wah) is a nutritious super-food that's actually a nut of Peru. Quinoa has a slightly nutty flavor. It cooks faster than rice, in about 15 minutes. It's a versatile ingredient that's good as a hot cereal or ground into flour. It adds moisture to baked goods. Try it in a dish like [Autumn Root Vegetables with Quinoa](#).



2. **Flax or flaxseed** is a seed with a nutty flavor. They need to be ground to get the most nutritional fiber value, although they can be toasted whole. Grind them to add to salads, cereal and bread dough. Liquid flaxseed oil is also available. Try [Buttermilk Marinated Chicken Breast with Flax and Wheat Germ Breading](#).

3. **Buckwheat** isn't a member of the wheat family and it isn't technically a grain, but it's often used in place of grains. It's a good alternative for those with wheat allergies. Diets rich in buckwheat seem to promote lower cholesterol and lower blood pressure numbers. Buckwheat is sold both roasted and raw and used whole, cracked or ground into flour. Use as a flour in pancakes or gnocchi with fresh vegetables.

4. **Amaranth** is a leafy green vegetable, also known as pig weed. It's related to spinach and beets. It can be used as a side dish or the seeds can be ground into a light brown flour with a nutty flavor. The leaves are edible. Try it stir-fried with garlic.

5. **Rice flour** is used to enhance other grains. Available in both white and whole grain brown, rice flour is finer than wheat.

6. **Millet** is a drought-tolerant grass. The seeds can be used as a sorghum substitute. It can be used like rice, served creamy or fluffy.

7. **Oats** are another alternative. When using oats you should select gluten-free oats. These are specially-selected varieties that have eliminated the cross-contamination with wheat, barley and rye.

These are the most popular whole grains you can find to substitute for wheat. Each has its own unique flavor and can be used in many different ways to add variety to your meals.

Substituting Flour in Recipes

Going wheat free doesn't mean you have to give up breads, cookies and pizza. There are many flours you can use to substitute in recipes that have delicious results. Here is a general guide to substituting flour in recipes.



There are a variety of different formulas you can try when substituting wheat flour. Experiment to see what works and tastes best for you. One thing to note, though, is that alternative flours don't produce the same texture or consistency as regular wheat flour will.

Single-Ingredient Substitutes for Wheat Flour

Most of the time it's best to use multi-ingredient substitutes for better results, but you can use a single ingredient. Here is a list

of possible flours to use for 1 cup of wheat flour:

7/8 cup rice flour

7/8 cup garbanzo bean (chickpea) flour

3/4 cup potato starch

1-1/3 cups ground rolled oats

1 cup tapioca flour

Multi-Ingredient Substitutes for Wheat Flour

4 cups oat flour + 2 cups barley flour + 1 cup rice flour

1 cup rye flour + 1 cup potato flour

1 cup cornstarch + 2 cups rice flour + 2 cups soy flour + 3 cups potato starch flour

2 cups sweet rice flour + 2/3 cup potato flour + 1/3 cup tapioca flour (this combination often works very well)

General baking mixes using substitute flour

General Baking Mix #1

Makes 2 cups mix:

1 cup rice flour

1/2 - 3/4 cup potato starch

1/4 cup tapioca starch/flour

General Baking Mix #2

Makes 9 cups mix:

3 cups garfava bean flour

2 cups potato starch

2 cups cornstarch

1 cup tapioca flour

1 cup sorghum flour

Specialty Mixes

Pastry mix

Makes 1 cup:

1/8 cup potato flour

7/8 cup rice flour

Cookie mix

Makes about 2 cups:

1/4 cup chickpea flour

1 3/4 cup sorghum flour

1/4 cup rice flour

Bread mix

Makes 2 cups:

1 cup brown rice flour

1/2 cup potato starch

1/2 cup sweet rice flour

1 tbsp unflavored gelatin

You can still have baked goods such as bread, cookies and pizza crust using flour substitutions. Experiment with different flours to get the texture and taste you like.

Flours that have less Carbohydrates

There are other flours that you can use that are not so high in carbs as the ones listed above.

Number one almond flour it's very low in carbs and you can use it cup for cup as you would wheat flour.

You can also use sunflower seeds raw sunflower seeds and grind them up and make your own flour. You can use a food processor to get the consistency you like. Raw sunflower seed flour makes excellent biscuits pancakes and more. I use it often and I never have to worry about the carb count.

Another flour is coconut flour it naturally does not have carbs. Whatever the carbs are minus the fiber, gives the When you use this flour you have to use a lot of eggs. net carbs. You can find recipes on <http://Paleosecret.com>

Google or Bing "Paleo bread" or whatever it is that you want to make because the Paleo lifestyle is grain free.

What to Do Next

Making the choice to begin a wheat-free lifestyle can be done for a variety of reasons. Maybe you or a loved one has a wheat allergy or intolerance. It could be that you want to live a more natural way of life that doesn't include genetically modified foods. Or it could be a way for you to overcome bothersome health issues such as digestion issues or weight gain. Whatever the reason, learning to use the different alternative flours and grains, reading labels and cutting out processed foods is where you should start.

Look for recipes that cater to wheat-free living. Do your research and become informed about what the lifestyle means and the changes you need to make. After all, it's your health.

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Gluten-Free Recipes for Kids on Facebook

<http://glendathegoodfoodie.wordpress.com>