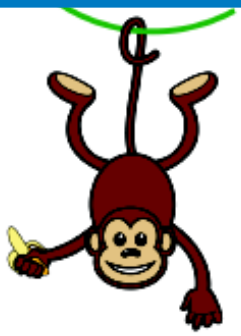
Children's Services

Coeliac Disease
Everything you need to know



What is coeliac disease?

It is a condition which affects the lining of the small intestine (part of the gut). It is an autoimmune disease which means that the immune system of the body (which normally protects the body from infections) mistakenly attacks itself.



The lining of the small intestine contains millions of tiny tube-shaped structures called villi. These help food and nutrients to be digested more effectively into the body.

In coeliac disease, these villi are flattened due to the inflammation of the lining of the gut. This then means that the food and nutrients can not be so readily digested into the body.

What does this mean to me?

This means that your body is sensitive to gluten which is present in common foods such as; wheat, barley and rye and any food made from these products. Hence coeliac disease is also called gluten-sensitive enteropathy.

Who does coeliac disease affect?

It affects about 1 in 100 people in the UK. It can occur at any age.
Coeliac disease often runs in families. If you have a close family member who has coeliac disease (a brother, sister or parent) then you have a 1 in 10 chance of having coeliac disease.

Why was I tested for coeliac disease?

Coeliac disease is very common in people who have other auto-immune conditions like diabetes mellitus, some thyroid diseases and rheumatoid arthritis, hence the test. Or you have symptoms of coeliac disease.

compassionate care

What are the symptoms of coeliac disease?

The inflammation in the lining of the small intestine stops food from being properly absorbed. You then do not absorb nutrients very well into your body. A variety of symptoms may then develop.

In Babies

Symptoms first develop soon after weaning when the baby starts eating solid foods containing gluten. The baby may fail to grow or to gain weight. As food is not being absorbed properly, the faeces (stools) may be pale and bulky. Smelly diarrhoea may occur. The abdomen (tummy) may become swollen. The baby may have repeated vomiting.

In Older children

The symptoms of coeliac disease in older children may be similar to those in babies. Poor absorption of food may cause deficiencies of vitamins, iron, and other nutrients. This may cause anaemia and tiredness. The faeces may be pale, smelly and difficult to flush away. Diarrhoea may develop. Other symptoms include headaches, mouth ulcers and bone or joint pain.
If the gut and bowel symptoms are only mild then the first thing that may be noticed is poor growth.

Occasionally, an itchy skin condition called dermatitis herpetiformis can occur in some people with coeliac disease.

Note: Sometimes there will be no symptoms at all, however if the tests are positive you will have to be treated with a gluten free diet.

How is it diagnosed?

The blood sample your doctor took was tested for an antibody to gluten which was positive.
The diagnosis needs to be confirmed and this is done 1 of 2 ways, which is determined by your doctor, depending on your child's presentation. Some children can be diagnosed by a special gene blood test, unfortunately this not possible for everybody, some children will need a biopsy (taking a small piece of the gut) and looking at it under the microscope. Your doctor will refer you to a specialist doctor in Leeds or locally who will carry out this procedure. The biopsy is done by passing a thin flexible tube (endoscope) down your mouth into the small gut and taking a sample.

It is important that you continue to eat a normal diet while you are awaiting these tests.

Note: It is a lifelong diagnosis

What is the treatment for coeliac disease?

The main treatment is avoiding food containing gluten permanently. The main foods to stop are any that contain wheat, barley, or rye. Many common foods contain these ingredients such as breads, pasta, cakes, pastries and some cereals. Some people with coeliac disease have symptoms if they eat oats. Potatoes, rice, maize, corn, fruits, vegetables, meat and fish are fine. The symptoms usually disappear within a few weeks of commencing a gluten free diet but can recur if re-introduced.

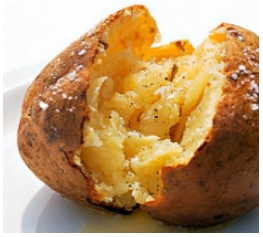
Food you can eat



Fruits, vegetables, fish and cheese



Rice



Potatoes



Some Ice-cream

Food you need to avoid (Gluten free version available)



Bread



Pizza



Pasta



Cake

Note: Always remember to check the label of all food products without fail

Other treatment

You may be advised to take some vitamin, calcium and iron supplements, at least for the first six months following diagnosis.

Having coeliac disease can cause your spleen to work less effectively, making you more vulnerable to infection from certain germs.

It is recommended keeping up with your immunisations.

Where can I get more information about my diet?

You should get advice from your dietician. Coeliac UK also provides advice about which foods are suitable (see address below). You can buy special gluten-free flour, pasta, bread and other foods. These are also available on prescription, from health food shops, by mail order and via the internet. There are many diet sheets with food alternatives and recipes. Unfortunately, many processed foods, ready-made meals, and 'fast-foods' contain gluten.

Food labels will often say whether the food contains gluten or not.

It is recommended that you become a member of coeliac UK at **www.coeliac.org.uk**

If you have any comments about this leaflet or the service you have received you can contact :

Consultant Paediatrician
Paediatric Out Patient Department
Acre Mill
Huddersfield Royal Infirmary

Telephone (01484) 343210

www.cht.nhs.uk

If you would like this information in another format or language contact the above.

Potřebujete-li tyto informace v jiném formátu nebo jazyce, obraťte se prosím na výše uvedené oddělení

Jeżeli są Państwo zainteresowani otrzymaniem tych informacji w innym formacie lub wersji językowej, prosimy skontaktować się z nami, korzystając z ww. danych kontaktowych

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برائے مہرباني مندرجہ بالا شعبے میں ہم سے رابطہ کریں.

"إذا احتجت الحصول على هذه المعلومة بشكل مغاير أو مترجمة إلى لغة مختلفة فيرجى منك الاتصال بالقسم المذكور أعلاه"