

Cross contamination

People with coeliac disease need to avoid contamination of gluten-free foods. Even tiny amounts of gluten may cause symptoms in the short term and gut damage in the longer term.

@ home

When you are cooking at home, simple steps will help in keeping food preparation safe:

- Wipe down surfaces.
- Clean pots and pans with soap and water.
- You may want to get separate cutting boards for handling gluten-free bread as there are tiny pores in wooden boards where crumbs will remain.
- Use separate toasters or toaster bags.
- Use different butter knives and jam spoons to prevent breadcrumbs from getting in condiments.

@ Restaurants

- There are several things you can do to make eating out a bit easier:
- Call ahead to the restaurant to let the chef know about coeliac disease and the gluten-free diet.
- Look at the menu to see if breaded items such as chicken or fish are offered. These may be sautéed in the same pans as non-breaded dishes.
- Ask the waiting staff or chef about using separate pans to avoid cross contamination.
- Carefully check soups, dishes with sauces or gravies, stock cubes (if used), coatings on chips and sausages.
- Ultimately, it is your choice whether you eat in certain restaurants, all you can do is ask enough questions so that you feel happy that the venue and staff understand your dietary requirements.
- Check out our venue guide for restaurants and other venues which can cater for you.
- Read more about the new law on gluten-free and how we can help you when you are eating out.

@ Bakeries

Cross contamination is likely to occur in bakeries as flour tends to get into the air. We recommend that you do not buy gluten-free bread made in the same environment as conventional bread. Bakery products like meringues or macaroons may be made from gluten-free ingredients but may be contaminated by products that contain gluten used in the same establishments.

@ Fish and chip shops

Chips or fish with a gluten-free batter cooked in the same oil as battered products using gluten are not gluten-free. Even if the chips appear to be cooked separately be aware that the oil is often rotated so the chip oil may have previously been used to cook battered fish. Some shops have designated gluten-free nights or have a dedicated gluten-free fryer so it is worth asking. We have guidance for fish and chip shops attached as a related download.

Grain and flour manufacturing

Although some flours are naturally gluten-free, they can be milled where wheat flour is also milled. Contamination occurs either because wheat flour is in the atmosphere or traces of it remain in storage containers. It is possible that flours made from pulses, such as gram and urad flour, may be contaminated although they are naturally gluten-free. Oats are tolerated by some people with coeliac disease but it is important oats are uncontaminated. Pure oat products are listed in the Oats Chapter of our Food and Drink Directory.