

Client Name _____ Date _____

RD/DTR _____

Email _____ Phone _____

Gluten-Free Label Reading Tips

To determine if a food is gluten free, look for the following five words on the ingredient list of a food label:

- Wheat
- Rye
- Untested oats
- Barley
- Malt



Understanding Food Labels

The Food Allergen Labeling and Consumer Protection Act (FALCPA), effective January 2006, requires the following:

- Any ingredient made from the top eight food allergens must be declared on the label of foods regulated by the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA)
 - Wheat is one of the top eight allergens
 - Rye, oats and barley are not included in the top eight allergens
- The allergen must be listed by its common name
- The allergen must be declared if used in spices, natural or artificial flavoring, additives, or colorings
- The allergen must be listed next to the ingredient or in a "contains" statement below or next to the ingredient list

The US Department of Agriculture (USDA) regulates meat, poultry, and egg products. Labels for these foods technically do not have to declare allergens under FALCPA. However, the USDA requires proteins to be declared and encourages manufacturers to voluntarily declare all allergens.

Starches such as maltodextrin, dextrin, or modified food starch may contain wheat but this might not be declared. The manufacturing company should be called to verify the source of these ingredients.

Rye and oats are not hidden in other ingredients. Barley is almost always declared as barley, barley malt, or malt.

Advisory Statements

- Advisory statements are a warning that one or more of the top eight allergy-causing foods are in a certain product. The statements are usually under the ingredient list and say something like “Made on machinery or in a facility that processes wheat” or “May contain wheat.”
- A company may choose to use or not use advisory statements.
- Good Manufacturing Practices are required of all companies. These practices include the maintenance and monitoring of machinery, cleansing, and staggering the production time for different types of products.
- FDA-regulated foods: Most companies, whether they use advisory statements or not, have very strict rules to prevent ingredients that should not be in a food product from getting in. It is generally safe to use these foods.
- USDA-regulated foods: Meat, poultry and fish manufacturers only use these statements when the risk of their product coming in contact with one of the top eight allergy-causing ingredients cannot be stopped. This does not happen very often. If there is a warning on meat, poultry or eggs that they may have come in contact with wheat, avoid these foods.

“Gluten Free”

- The term "gluten free" is currently not regulated; however, “gluten free” may mean:
 - Does not contain wheat, barley, or rye
 - Does not contain an ingredient derived from a prohibited grain that has not been processed to remove gluten
 - Contains less than 20 parts per million gluten.

Oats

- Do not eat oats unless the label says “gluten free.”
- Gluten-free oats should be limited to 50 g (dry) of 1 cup cooked per day.

More Tips

- The food ingredient label needs to be checked each time a food is purchased because food manufacturers may change the ingredients.
- If you are ever unsure of an ingredient, call the manufacturer.
- Rye, oats, and barley will not be listed in a “contains” statement because they are not among the top eight allergens.
- Natural and artificial flavoring is gluten free unless wheat, barley, or malt is declared on the label.
- Medication labels are not required to declare allergens.