

# IBS Treatment Center Newsletter

1229 Madison Street, Suite 1220, Seattle, Washington 98104 (206) 264-1111 [www.IBSTreatmentCenter.com](http://www.IBSTreatmentCenter.com)

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## Food and Health Concerns at the Holidays

The holiday season is upon us and with it comes the associated communal events and activities with family, friends and co-workers. So many of the fun times of the holidays revolve around food. And that is where the challenge comes for those of us who have health concerns related to food.

Holiday parties and meals are a great opportunity to meet with family and share the spirit of the season, but it can be a bit complicated, not just for those with health concerns related to foods, but for those hosting gatherings, preparing food, and trying to bring everyone together. If there are people attending your get-togethers that have health concerns related to foods, it can be difficult to know what to do. Let's look at the issue from both sides.

People with celiac disease, a gluten intolerance, have an immune system that was genetically designed to not tolerate the glutes in wheat, barely, rye, and other related grains. People with other food allergies have immune system responses to other proteins. For these people, eating products containing the foods to which they are allergic or products made with these foods is like ingesting poison. The symptoms vary a lot, but often include horrible abdominal pain, gas, bloating, diarrhea, constipation, and other digestive difficulties. Even if they eat only a small amount, damage is done to their intestines, whether they have noticeable symptoms or not. If you have one of these people as a guest, here are some guidelines:

- Don't take it personally. If someone needs to pass on a dish you made because it contains allergens, it is not a reflection on your cooking. They are not rejecting your gift of food. It is not about you at all.
- Don't push. When a guest or family member passes on something, resist the temptation to encourage them. It is natural to want to do so, and it is natural for them to be tempted to give in. But neither of you wants them to be sick, or to feel that you pressured them to do what made them sick.
- Share the recipes. You don't need to try to remember

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everything that might be a problem for your guests. Just share the ingredients and let them decide. For things you buy, you can keep the ingredient lists so you can discreetly share them with anyone who asks. But if you don't know, that is okay as well.

- Provide a few alternatives. If you can, it is a great gesture to provide your guests an opportunity to suggest something that will work for them and for you, or invite them to bring something for the whole group.

You don't need to take on the responsibility of controlling the diets of your guests, but you need to accommodate them. Balancing your needs and theirs is the foundation of hospitality. That means enabling them to make the choices they need to make to protect their health.

If you have celiac disease or other food allergies you already know the challenges. You know that even tiny amounts of your allergen damage your body. But you also don't want your entire holiday to consist of trying to explain to people what you need, what you must avoid, or just going hungry. These guidelines might help you:

- Contact the host. Find out what is being served and politely mention that you have a food/health issue. If the host is willing, you may be able to suggest something that they are happy to provide to help you enjoy the event. You might even be able to bring something to share with the entire group.
- Make allowances. Don't press the issue if the host isn't willing to share ingredients. Just avoid those foods you don't know are safe.

- Don't submit to temptation. People will often insist that you try something. "Just a little won't hurt" and "You used to eat that all the time" are hard things to hear. And you may even love the food they are offering. Be as polite and firm as you can. "I love Aunt Mary's Christmas cookies, but since I have been diagnosed, I now know that I can't eat it without damaging my health."
- Have a backup plan. If you don't know that food you can eat will be available, plan ahead and either eat before you go, or make sure you can leave and get something after.

Food carries a lot of emotional power. We associate food with family, love, community, and other strongly emotional aspects of our lives. During the holidays, these emotions can be especially high. So take your time and think a little about how you can have a great time and help everyone else to do so as well. The holidays are a time of sharing. Enjoy them by working with those around you to ensure that everyone shares in the spirit of the season.



### **Resources for People with Food Allergies**

It is becoming more common for restaurants and food product manufacturers to recognize a need to help people with celiac and other food allergies identify potential issues. The ingredients on labels of packaged foods now often contain special bold text to alert you to the presence of some of the most common allergens. Some restaurants are making their ingredients lists available to patrons and are even providing menu cues to convey which items are, for example, gluten free.

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The IBS Treatment Center and Center For Food Allergies both strive to help those with food allergies find what they need to continue to enjoy eating both at home and out in restaurants. To that end we provide a restaurant guide and a link page with book recommendations for those with food allergies. The restaurant guide can be found at [http://www.centerforfoodallergies.com/5\\_a.htm](http://www.centerforfoodallergies.com/5_a.htm) and the books are at <http://www.centerforfoodallergies.com/5.htm>.

*If you have a recommendation for a restaurant or book, let us know so we can share it with everyone.*

## **New Product for those with Gluten Intolerance/Celiac Disease!**

### **Glutenzyme**



Glutenzyme is a digestive enzyme specifically designed to aid in the digestion of gluten. Glutenzyme may be especially helpful for those who suffer from gluten intolerance or celiac disease when they have an accidental ingestion of gluten or otherwise eat something that was unknowingly contaminated with gluten. It is not intended to be a substitute for the avoidance of gluten nor is it a cure for gluten intolerance.

*For more details or to order this product and other quality supplements, see our website at [www.IBSTreatmentCenter.com](http://www.IBSTreatmentCenter.com) or call our office at (206)264-1111.*



## **I Want Your Feedback for My Next Book**

I have begun writing my next book, "Understanding Celiac Disease and Other Forms of Gluten Intolerance: How To Tell if Wheat is Making You Sick."

This book will be about the various forms of gluten intolerance and the various ways of testing for this common problem. I'd like your feedback on what you would like to see in this book. For example:

*-What kinds of questions would you like answered?*

*-What issues or concepts have been important to your understanding of gluten intolerance?*

*-What still confuses you?*

*-What did your doctor forget or neglect to tell you?*

*-What have you learned that you would like to share with others?*

Would you like to share the entire story of your adventure suffering from gluten intolerance, getting diagnosed (whether by a doctor or yourself) and finally starting to feel better? If so, please send it. It can be anonymous (I'll change the name) or we can use your first name. Please send your suggestions and stories to [info@ibstreatmentcenter.com](mailto:info@ibstreatmentcenter.com). I will send a free autographed copy to those whose stories I use.

This book will focus on understanding and diagnosing all forms of gluten intolerance, including celiac disease, non-celiac gluten intolerance, gluten allergies, and wheat allergies. I don't plan on addressing the topics of living with gluten intolerance and eating gluten-free because there are already many fine books on these issues.

If all goes well, the book should be out sometime next summer. I'll be sure to let you know.

Thank you for your help. I greatly appreciate it.

***Dr. Stephen Wangen***

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## A Quick Technical Note

It has recently come to our attention that many users of Microsoft Internet Explorer who have visited our website in the past have never seen any of the changes we have made. This is because Microsoft IE is automatically set to 'cache' a copy of the page and display the copy, rather than actually getting the current version of the page from the internet.

To change this setting you can go to the Tools menu and click on 'Internet Options'. The 'General' tab should be displayed. In the middle of that tab is a section called Temporary Internet Files. If you click on the 'Settings' button you will see options for how often IE checks for a new version of the page. If you set it to 'Every Visit to the page' you will get the actual page and not a copy IE stored for you at some time in the past.

You can also hit the 'refresh' button (green recycle arrows, just below 'Favorites' on the IE menu) to get a fresh copy of the page. Happy web browsing!

## December 5th:

### GIG and IBS Support Group

Our chapter of the Gluten Intolerance Group is meeting on a new night! Along with the IBS Support Group, GIG will meet on the **first Tuesday of each month at the IBS Treatment Center.** [Click here for details.](#)

Come to our support group and get the latest on Gluten Intolerance and IBS! Make friends who know what you've been through and share what you've learned too!

Most meetings attended by Dr. Stephen Wangen, founder of the IBS Treatment Center and author of *The Irritable Bowel Syndrome Solution*.



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