



## Patient/carer information: Gluten free foods on prescription

### Who can have gluten free food on prescription?

Gluten free foods can only be prescribed for people who have been formally diagnosed with Coeliac disease or Dermatitis Herpetiformis.

**It is very important that people with these conditions do not eat any foods that contain gluten.**

Over the last few years gluten free foods have become easier to find in supermarkets (including smaller stores), broadening the available choices.

### How much gluten free food can GPs prescribe?

These days everyone understands that the NHS can no longer afford to pay for everything that we might want it to. In order to keep our NHS running efficiently, we all need to play our part in keeping costs down.

To help with this Buckinghamshire is following Oxfordshire and East Berkshire in recommending a maximum quantity of gluten free products per patient per month:

- **8 units of gluten free food per patient, per month** - which can be gluten free bread or bread mixes follows

Food group	Quantity	Usual pack size
Bread, rolls, baguettes	1 unit = 400g	Bread and bread rolls come in a variety of pack sizes from 105g (¼ unit) – 612g (1½ units)
Mixes	1 unit = 250g	Most gluten free mixes are available in 500g (2 units) or 1000g (4 units) packs

**For example** each month you could request:

6 loaves of bread (6 units) + 1 bag 500g bread mix (2 units) = 8 units

Some makers of gluten free foods will even send sample packs of gluten free foods for people to try. This can be a good way to find out which products you prefer before they are prescribed.

### What about other gluten free foods?

There are a lot of other gluten free foods which can be prescribed, but many of these are not needed as part of a healthy diet.

If you wish to buy extra gluten free foods, the cost of this extra food should not be more than someone without coeliac disease would pay for one month's supply of gluten containing foods from the same food groups as above.

If you think that you or someone you care for might need more than 8 units of gluten free food prescribed per month, talk to your GP or Dietitian about this.

### Which gluten free foods can GPs prescribe?

A full list of all prescribed gluten free bread and bread mixes can be found on: <http://www.bucksformulary.nhs.uk/chaptersSub.asp?FormularySectionID=25> together with prescribing advice for GPs

### What can be used instead of prescribed gluten free foods?

If you do not wish to buy any extra gluten free foods, there are a number of naturally gluten free starchy foods available, which can be used instead of foods like bread and pasta.

These include:

- Potatoes
- Rice
- Quinoa
- Lentils and chickpeas

There are also a number of ingredients which can be used in recipes instead of wheat flour:

- Rice flour
- Chickpea (gram) flour
- Coconut flour
- Corn flour
- Soya flour
- Millet flour
- Potato flour
- Tapioca flour

### Where can I get more information on a gluten free diet?

Registered Dietitians can help you to choose a healthy, gluten free diet. If you would like to see a Dietitian, ask your GP to refer you.

Coeliac UK is a charity which provides information and support - including access to a comprehensive gluten free food directory for coeliac patients.

Coeliac UK can be contacted via their helpline telephone number on 0845 305 2060 or via their website <https://www.coeliac.org.uk/home/>

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