

Gluten Sensitivity and Yeast Allergy

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Gluten and yeast intolerance can cause a range of symptoms, but simple management can help.

Do you feel ill after eating a slice of bread? Have multiple doctors insisted you don't have celiac disease? You are not alone. Many people who test negative for celiac disease experience symptoms similar to people diagnosed with it. If your symptoms improve after removing bread from your diet, you may in fact have non-celiac gluten sensitivity or a yeast allergy.

Gluten Sensitivity and Yeast Allergies

Gluten sensitivity and a yeast allergy may be confused for one another because they trigger similar symptoms, and because gluten and yeast are found in similar foods. However, while allergies to ingested yeast are relatively uncommon, non-celiac gluten sensitivity seems to be affecting more and more people because of increased consumption of gluten-containing foods (wheat products and processed foods). There has also been increased awareness, screening, and research on gluten intolerance (NCGS). Gluten sensitivity now affects an estimated 18 million people.

You are likely to have non-celiac gluten sensitivity if a diagnosis of celiac disease cannot be made, but your symptoms improve on a gluten-free diet. Symptoms of non-celiac gluten sensitivity include GI-related symptoms, joint pain, numbness in the legs, arms, or fingers, and headaches. Minimal intestinal damage occurs, but damage resolves when you eliminate gluten from your diet.

Gluten-Free Diet

Following a gluten-free diet involves avoiding the protein gluten, which is found in wheat, barley, and rye. Many starchy foods, such as breads, pastas, and baked goods, must be avoided. There are also many not-so-obvious foods that may contain gluten, including french fries, soy sauce, and broth. If you see malt on a food label, the item contains barley and should be avoided.

Be cautious about gluten-free oats because their safety is somewhat controversial. It's important to focus on maintaining a healthy diet of fresh fruits, vegetables, fish, meats, nuts, seeds, and dairy products. Get your fiber and B vitamins from gluten-free whole grains such as brown rice and quinoa.

Yeast Allergy Symptoms and Treatment

On the other hand, a yeast allergy is the hypersensitivity to a protein found in yeast. Your immune system produces antibodies against what it believes to be a harmful substance and triggers allergy symptoms. Common symptoms include fatigue, joint pain, mood swings, wheezing, and digestive problems with vomiting and diarrhea.

You can safely eat most foods if you're diagnosed with a yeast allergy. Unless they spoil or become rotten, meats, fish, and vegetables are yeast-free. Mushrooms are usually thought of as a vegetable, but they are actually a fungus and should be avoided.

Because of their high sugar content, fruits are more susceptible to yeast development. Obviously, breads, bagels, and rolls contain yeast, but you should also be wary of cider, beer, fruit skins, grape juice, soy sauce, and malt beverages.