

Children's Section: Dietary Information During Investigations for Coeliac Disease (in Childhood)

This dietary advice sheet provides general information to help you change your diet. If you want more detailed advice, or are following other dietary restrictions and need guidance, please ask your doctor to refer you to a registered dietitian

Your child is undergoing investigations for coeliac disease. This is a condition where the body is intolerant to the protein **gluten** which is found naturally in wheat, rye, and barley products.

The investigations for coeliac disease can take several weeks to complete and the results are only valid if your child is taking sufficient amounts of gluten in their diet. This can be difficult to manage if your child is currently unwell and has a poor appetite. However, to obtain an accurate result, it is vital they **continue to take a normal gluten containing diet.**

We recommend that your child takes a minimum of two meals and one snack per day that contain a normal amount of gluten. For example, 1-2 slices of bread in a sandwich (depending on age) or a normal size bowl of wheat-based cereal. This should have been taken for at least 4 – 6 weeks (ideally 3 months) prior to the blood test.

If the blood tests are positive or there is a strong clinical suspicion of coeliac disease, your child may need a biopsy of the bowel or further blood tests. They will need to continue on gluten in their diet until this is done.

Common foods that contain gluten:

- Wheat-based breakfast cereals e.g., Weetabix, Cheerios, Shreddies, Honey Loops, Shredded Wheat
- Bread and bread products e.g., crumpets, muffins, croissants, breadsticks etc
- Foods coated in breadcrumbs e.g., fish fingers, chicken nuggets
- Pizza bases
- Rye bread/Ryvita
- Pasta
- Couscous
- Cakes
- Biscuits and crackers
- Pies and pastries

If you require support or advice during this period, please ask your GP or Consultant to refer you to a Paediatric Dietitian.