



Feeding the under 3s  
the food they need

# Avoiding wheat

## Guidance & Tips for Parents

[www.littlepeoplesplates.co.uk](http://www.littlepeoplesplates.co.uk)

This information is for the parents of toddlers who have been diagnosed with an allergy or intolerance to wheat. If your toddler is very sensitive to wheat and has an immediate reaction you will have to be very careful with what they eat and ensure they avoid any food with even the smallest amount of wheat present. If they are intolerant of wheat they probably will not react to small amounts and so you do not need to be so careful. Check with your Doctor or Dietitian.

**It is important to check with your GP that your toddler does not have coeliac disease, sensitivity to gluten in wheat and other cereals, before excluding wheat.** A blood test that is required for diagnosis will be inaccurate if taken after wheat is excluded from the diet.

This sheet is intended as a basic guide to help you feed your toddler a wheat free diet. If you require further information or symptoms do not improve, request a referral to a Registered Dietitian.

### Wheat is a main ingredient of many foods such as:

Breads, chapattis and naan breads, breakfast cereals, biscuits, crackers, crumpets, scones, pancakes, wafers, cakes, pizza, pasta, pastries and Yorkshire puddings. It is also found in many convenience foods such as soups, sauces, spices, malted drinks, processed meats and ready-made meals.

### What to look for on food labels

From November 2005, manufactured pre-packaged foods sold within the European Union have been required by Law to list wheat in the ingredients panel if it is present in the product however tiny the amount.

Read labels with every new packet as products are reformulated all the time and ingredients change. Products sold loose where ingredients are unknown and where cross contamination is an issue should be avoided; these include bakery, butchers products and delicatessen items.

Foods sold outside the EU are not bound by these laws so you will still need to check labels for the presence of:

- Breadcrumbs
- Bulgur wheat
- Couscous
- Durum wheat
- Flour or unbleached flour
- Hydrolysed wheat protein
- Rusk
- Semolina
- Types of wheat - Triticale, Kamut, Spelt
- Wheat bran
- Wheat germ
- Wheat germ oil
- Wheat gluten
- Wheat starch
- Whole wheat

There are many foods that can be used as a substitute to wheat that will provide variety to your toddler's meals and help them get all the nutrients they require from their diet.

### Ingredients that can be used in many recipes instead of wheat are:

- Amaranth
- Barley - flakes or flour
- Buckwheat - flakes or flour
- Corn, cornflour, maize, polenta
- Ground nuts *e.g. almonds*
- Lentil, pea, bean, gram flours
- Millet grains - flakes or flour
- Oats
- Potato flour
- Quinoa
- Rice grains - flakes or flour
- Rye
- Sago
- Soy - flakes or flour
- Tapioca

A number of people with a wheat allergy or intolerance may also react to oat, rye and barley as their proteins are very similar to those of wheat, and will need to avoid these as well. A Registered Dietitian will be able to help you to identify all the grains causing your child's symptoms.

### Wheat Free Manufactured Products

Speciality products, for example, flour, bread, biscuits, cakes and gravy mixes are available at some supermarkets, chemists and to buy online. **Products marked gluten free may not be wheat free as some are made from wheat starch.** These are not suitable for wheat free diets. Some cafés or restaurants sell home baked gluten free cakes; check that they are also wheat free.

**REMEMBER: Always check the label!**

### Some useful tips:

**Breads** - may be rye, corn or rice based. Fresh breads *e.g. Terence Stamp or the Village Bakery* are available from some supermarkets. Crackers or crispbreads such as Ryvita, oatcakes, corn cakes and rice cakes can be used in place of bread for meals and snacks.

**Batter and breadcrumbs** - are made from wheat flour. Use a wheat free bread or corn flakes to make bread crumbs instead.

**Sausages** - usually contain wheat rusk but rice rusk is used in some wheat free alternatives that are available in some supermarkets, butchers shops and meat producers at farmers markets.

**Japanese, Chinese and Thai dishes** - containing soy sauce will contain wheat as soy sauce is produced using wheat. At home, try Japanese Tamari soy sauce which is made without wheat.

**Gravy** - if you like to make gravy with meat juices you can continue to use vegetable stock or wheat free stock tablets such as Kallo or Knorr and thicken with corn flour. If a brown gravy is preferred add gravy browning. Or for instant gravy: check the ingredients of available mixes and use a wheat free mix.

**Sauces** - to make a white sauce use corn flour or another wheat free flour to thicken the sauce. To prevent lumps forming: first mix the corn flour with a little cold milk. Heat the remaining milk in a pan. Then add a small amount of the hot milk to the cold mix and stir. Stir whilst adding this mix to the remaining hot milk in the pan and cook through. Then add the flavouring *e.g. grated cheese, parsley.*

**Baking** - wheat free flours have different baking properties to wheat flour but with practice can make tasty biscuits, cakes and pastries. Chestnut flour available in Italian delis or finely ground nuts can also be used as a substitute for wheat. Use a wheat free baking powder such as Supercook Gluten Free Baking Powder (*white lid*) or Allergy Care Gluten Free Baking Powder. When self-raising flour is required for a recipe, mix 1 teaspoon of baking powder with 200g (8oz) wheat free flour. You may need to add slightly more liquid to your recipes. Xanthan gum is a useful ingredient that can be added to improve the texture and help to bind the mixture. It can be bought in health food shops, supermarkets or online.

### Some useful websites for information, purchases and recipes:

- [www.asda.co.uk](http://www.asda.co.uk)
- [www.co-op.co.uk](http://www.co-op.co.uk)
- [www.coeliac.org.uk](http://www.coeliac.org.uk)
- [www.Goodnessdirect.co.uk](http://www.Goodnessdirect.co.uk)
- [www.gfdiet.com](http://www.gfdiet.com)
- [www.GlutaFin.co.uk](http://www.GlutaFin.co.uk)
- [www.glutenfree-foods.co.uk](http://www.glutenfree-foods.co.uk)
- [www.Kallofoods.com](http://www.Kallofoods.com)
- [www.nutritionpoint.co.uk](http://www.nutritionpoint.co.uk)
- [www.organ.com](http://www.organ.com)
- [www.OK-foods.co.uk](http://www.OK-foods.co.uk)
- [www.sainsburys.co.uk](http://www.sainsburys.co.uk)
- [www.village-bakery.com](http://www.village-bakery.com)
- [www.waitrose.com](http://www.waitrose.com)
- [www.zedzfoods.co.uk](http://www.zedzfoods.co.uk)
- [www.specialdietsconsulting.co.uk](http://www.specialdietsconsulting.co.uk)

Some supermarkets provide lists of their own brand wheat free products on their websites or they will send copies if requested.



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