

What are the best sources of carbohydrates for someone with gluten intolerance?

With the rise of gluten intolerance and Celiac disease in our society today, those with the dilemma may be unsure of which carbohydrate sources are suitable for their diet. Learning about gluten-free carbohydrate alternatives will make living gluten-free an ease.

For someone with gluten intolerance, it is fundamental to know what gluten is and where it is found. Gluten refers to specific proteins that are found in wheat, barley, and rye. When gluten proteins are ingested, they can trigger an autoimmune reaction, which causes your body to mistakenly attack its own cells rather than harmful cells. This eventually leads to damage of an essential area in the small intestine where nutrient absorption occurs. To prevent this autoimmune response from happening, gluten must be completely avoided.

Gluten-free carbohydrate sources are widely available in supermarkets. Beans and legumes, fruits and vegetables (potatoes, sweet potatoes, yams, butternut squash, and beets, etc.) are all great carbohydrate sources. Grains, such as rice, corn, buckwheat, amaranth, quinoa, sorghum, tapioca, teff, and certified gluten-free oats are also great alternatives. Additionally, rice and buckwheat pasta, corn tortillas, gluten-free breads (rice or mixed grain), hot cereals (cream of rice or buckwheat), and dry cereals (rice, corn, or gluten-free mixed grains) are good carbohydrate sources.

Here are some ways to incorporate gluten-free carbohydrates into your diet:

- Use buckwheat noodles to make spaghetti and meatballs
- Use sorghum flour in your banana bread recipe instead of white flour
- Have a fiesta and make fajitas using corn tortillas instead of flour tortillas
- Have puffed rice cereal instead of wheat cereal for breakfast
- Make a peanut butter sandwich with the gluten-free bread of your choice

Experimenting with different types of carbohydrate sources will ensure that you find the types most suitable to your diet and taste buds.

Reference:

Mahan KL, Escott-Stump S, Raymond JL. *Krause's Food & the Nutrition Care Process*. 13th ed. St. Louis, MO: Elsevier/Saunders; 2012.

By Jenna Esoo