



## **Eating Out Gluten-free and/or Casein-free**

A special report from

# **Living Gluten-free & Casein-free**

By

Lolita Hanks, RN, BSN, MS, FNP-C  
*and*  
Menus4Moms

<http://www.Menus4Moms.com>

© 2009 Menus4Moms.com and Lolita Hanks, RN, BSN, MS, FNP-C

### **All Rights Reserved**

No part of this material may be reproduced or forwarded in any form, digital or otherwise, without the written permission of the publisher.

## Disclaimer

This material is intended for information purposes only and should not be considered medical or nutritional advice. Always check with your medical provider before starting a diet plan, and be aware that the material herein may not be compatible with your medical condition. These downloads are not intended to provide medical advice on the appropriate use of foods or supplements for any particular diet or medical condition. Neither the author, publisher, affiliates, nor partners assume any responsibility for failure to follow these guidelines or other misuse of the material contains herein. While we strive to present accurate information, neither the author, publisher, affiliates, nor partners assume any responsibility for errors or omissions.

## Foreword

Thank you for your interest in Living Gluten-free Casein-free. This special report will help you to plan ahead and enjoy eating out on a restricted diet. A little bit of planning and clear communication can pave the way for an enjoyable dining experience at many restaurants.

In addition to *Eating Out Gluten-free*, I have written a 4 week menu plan to help you in your quest to live gluten-free. Perfect for individuals who are either gluten-free or gluten-free/casein-free, *Living Gluten-free Casein-free* contains valuable resources to help you succeed with your new gluten-free lifestyle. ***Living Gluten-free Casein-free is the only GFCF menu plan written by a practicing nurse practitioner.*** [Find out more about Living Gluten-free Casein-free.](#)

Lolita Hanks, [Family Nurse Practitioner](#)  
Author, [Living Gluten-free Casein-free](#)

## Introduction

When you learn that you need to eat gluten-free in order to stay healthy and realize all the foods that are commonly consumed in the Standard American Diet (SAD) are loaded with gluten, it dawns on you that going out to eat will be daunting. If that is a fear to you, please relax. With increasing education and awareness about food intolerances, many chain and local restaurants are willing to accommodate your dietary needs. And on the bright side, eating gluten-free gets you away from unhealthy fast food!

## The best approach to eating out

Plan ahead! It is good to know which types of cuisine are more likely to be naturally gluten-free. Many ethnic restaurants will have gluten-free options that are easily seen on the menu such as Thai or Vietnamese. Their cultural foods include rice and rice noodles rather than wheat-based products. They do, however, use gluten-laden soy sauce, but I have brought my own gluten-free soy sauce and asked them to cook with it. Some restaurants offer packets of gluten-free soy sauce as well. Indian restaurants have many gluten-free as well as dairy-free options. They also have wonderful chickpea crackers that are nice to have in place of bread while waiting for your meal. Many of these restaurants are knowledgeable about gluten-free needs. Asian cultures are not as apt to use dairy, making their restaurant items friendly for those who are dairy-free/casein-free.

You can also make some of your own substitutions. Ask for lemons or vinegar and olive oil for a fresh salad dressing. This way you avoid additives that may contain gluten ingredients. Maybe the restaurant can make gravy for you using cornstarch instead of flour. Some places will let you bring your own gluten-free bread to make a sandwich and many entrees can be turned into salads such as fajitas (or ask for corn tortillas instead of flour). These substitution techniques work well in restaurants that promote that their foods are made from scratch. This tells you that few if any pre-made foods are employed at that restaurant. This makes substitutions easier to meet your needs.

Some national chain restaurants have gluten-free menus available online. Organic, locally-based and -owned restaurants will be able to assist you with available gluten- and dairy-free items on their menu. Usually they will let you know which items can be made gluten- and dairy-free.

If you own an iPhone, you can download an [application](#) that will help you find gluten-free dining options and travel assistance.

## Tips

- If you ask the waiter what items are gluten-free and they look confused or there is a significant language barrier, ask for a manager or the cook/chef. If you are still not comfortable that they understand your needs, seek another restaurant or order steak, plain grilled poultry or salad.
- It is vital that you know what you can and cannot eat. Also know what ingredients contain gluten and casein; a printed handout to keep in your wallet or purse can help remind you as well. After awhile it will be ingrained!
- Ask to see the ingredient labels if the chef uses premade ingredients. I have been assured something is gluten-free or without flour ingredients only to find out later a premade item was included that did have those ingredients.
- Discuss cross contamination issues. If the fryer fries your plain, uncoated French fries in the same oil that he fries gluten-coated onion rings you are probably going to have a problem (it is questionable how much gluten can survive high heat frying, but it does survive high temperatures in baking). Some people are very sensitive and will need separate clean utensils to be used to prepare gluten-free foods. Ask for salad to be tossed in a separate bowl.
- Many restaurants are trying to help us with our food intolerances/allergies but they are not always educated on what foods contain gluten or casein. For example, I ate with a friend at Famous Dave's and in reviewing the gluten-free sauce list, an ingredient listed was barley which contains gluten indicating that they didn't completely understand what items have gluten.
- Avoid obvious gluten and dairy foods. No cheese, croutons, flour and/or cream based soups, gravies, sauces, marinades or the bread basket. Most fried foods will be fried in a flour batter. Indian restaurants can be an exception to this rule as they use chickpea flour.
- If you are going with friends or family it is best to go to a place that you know can accommodate your needs. If they would like to go to a restaurant that can't accommodate your needs, eat before going or bring yourself a snack. When all else fails you can have a salad and a plain steak or piece of chicken. That way you can be confident that your food is safe for you to eat and your friends won't feel uncomfortable, as is often the case when someone doesn't eat at all while others are eating.

## **Final Thoughts**

Sometimes you may feel like the food police when going out to eat (I especially do because I have more restrictions than just gluten-free/dairy-free) and if you are concerned about that, check out the potential restaurant online or call in advance and find out what is available for you. Then you can order confidently without an abundance of questions when you arrive. You should still remind the restaurant staff of your dietary needs and remember who you spoke with on the phone that assured you that particular menu items would meet your needs. If you can give them clear instructions you will help the staff immensely. Explain how your food needs to be prepared to avoid cross contamination and review labels with them so they can help other people in the future.

Lastly, don't forget many quick food chains like Chipotle/Pei Wei/Sweet Tomatoes have several gluten-free options. (For more restaurant resources, see [Top 5 resources for eating out on a gluten-free diet.](#)) Chipotle is great because the only item that has gluten is the tortilla! Ask the person preparing your food to change their gloves to avoid cross contamination and avoid the cheese, opting for guacamole instead.

Food intolerances do not have to mean the end to socializing or eating out. Planning ahead and knowing how to communicate your needs and restrictions can allow you to enjoy these activities without fear of complications. For more information about gluten-free living, be sure to check out our helpful menu plan with lessons for gluten- and casein-free living at [LivingGlutenFreeCaseinFree.com](http://LivingGlutenFreeCaseinFree.com).

God bless,



Lolita Hanks, Family Nurse Practitioner and  
Author, *Living [Gluten-free Casein-free](#)*

*A sneak peak at Living Gluten-free Casein-free...*

Take a look at a [Sample Menu Plan](#) and see if [Living Gluten-free Casein-free](#) is right for you!