

# Dietary advice for children who need to follow a wheat-free diet

Nutrition and Dietetics

Information for Patients

Produced: February 2023

Review: February 2026

Leaflet number: 1366 Version: 2

## What is wheat?

Wheat is grain. It is a main ingredient of many foods such as:

- breads,
- breakfast cereals,
- biscuits,
- cakes,
- pizza,
- pasta,
- pastries
- Yorkshire puddings

Wheat is not the same as gluten, which is a type of protein found in cereals, including **wheat**, rye, and barley. Oats are usually okay. Gluten free foods are not always wheat free. You should always check the label.

## What is a wheat free diet?

You may have been asked to follow a wheat free diet by your dietitian or doctor. This could have been after an allergic-type reaction to wheat-containing foods. Or it could be as a trial to see if your symptoms are being caused by wheat.

This means you may eat a normal diet but without **wheat** (and any product **containing wheat**).

There are many foods which are based on other grains such as rice or corn and are naturally wheat free. There is also a range of 'free from' products which have been specially produced as wheat free alternatives. These are available in supermarkets or online, such as bread and pasta.

Health information and support is available at [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)  
or call 111 for non-emergency medical advice

Visit [www.leicestershospitals.nhs.uk](http://www.leicestershospitals.nhs.uk) for maps and information about visiting Leicester's Hospitals  
To give feedback about this information sheet, contact [InformationForPatients@uhl-tr.nhs.uk](mailto:InformationForPatients@uhl-tr.nhs.uk)

Obvious sources of wheat	Hidden sources of wheat
<p>Wheat is most often used in the form of wheat flour. This is an ingredient in many foods.</p> <p>The most common wheat-containing foods include:</p> <p>bread, breadcrumbs, chapattis, naan breads, breakfast cereals, biscuits, crackers, crumpets, scones, pancakes, wafers, cakes, pizza, pasta, noodles, pastries and Yorkshire puddings.</p> <p>There are many wheat free alternatives to these foods.</p>	<p>Wheat is also found in many manufactured and processed convenience foods. Wheat flour is often used as binder, filler, thickening agent, or as a carrier for flavourings or spices.</p> <p>Foods which may include wheat are sauces, soups, spices, ready-meals, battered/breaded meat and fish, processed meats, malted drinks.</p> <p>Wheat will always be clearly highlighted on ingredients lists for these products with the word <b>WHEAT</b> in bold.</p>

## Looking at labels

As many foods contain wheat, it is important to check all food labels. In the UK, if a food contains wheat, the word **wheat** will be clearly listed in **bold**, *italics* or underlined in the ingredients list . They may also state “**contains wheat**” underneath the ingredients list. Foods which contain the statement “**may contain wheat**” suggests the food may be made in a factory handling wheat and only needs to be avoided if you have symptoms after eating that item. For foods sold without packaging, such as in restaurants, cafes or delicatessens, allergen information must be provided in writing or verbally. Take care with foods where there is no visible label, for example, market stalls.

Example ingredients label:

### Breaded Cooked Ham Slices

Ingredients: Pork, Salt, Breadcrumbs (Fortified **Wheat** Flour (**Wheat** Flour, Calcium Carbonate, Iron, Niacin, Thiamin), Yeast, Salt, Colours: Paprika Extract, Curcumin)), Sugar, Stabilisers: Triphosphates; Pork Gelatine, Antioxidant: Sodium Ascorbate; Preservative: Sodium Nitrite

For allergens, including cereals containing gluten, see ingredients in bold.

## Brands offering wheat free alternatives

Below are some examples of brands that make wheat free foods as alternatives to commonly eaten wheat-containing foods. This is not an complete list and you may find many other brands/ own-brand options available in your local stores or online. Always check the label as ingredients may change.

## Breads

- Genius – Loaves/Bagels/Rolls/Wraps/Pizza Base
- Schar – Loaves/Rolls/Baguettes/Panini rolls/Pizza Base
- BFree – Brown Seeded Loaf/Panini rolls/Pitta breads/Wraps
- Supermarket own-brand “Free From” (wheat/gluten) breads and wraps
- Warburtons – wheat free bread, crumpets, brioche, rolls and wraps

## Pastas – (see also bread brands above)

- Napolina Gluten Free (penne and fusilli) – *note Napolina is not a gluten/wheat free brand, other pastas may contain wheat*
- Barilla Gluten Free (penne, fusilli, spaghetti) - *note Barilla is not a gluten/wheat free brand, other pastas may contain wheat*
- Supermarket own-brand “Free From” (wheat/gluten) pastas

## Biscuits

- Mrs Crimble’s Coconut Macaroons and Coconut Rings
- Nairns gluten freee biscuit breaks, chunky oat biscuit breaks, oaties - *note Nairns is not a fully gluten/wheat free brand, other biscuits may contain wheat*
- McVitie's Gluten Free Hobnobs (milk chocolate and original) - *note McVitie's is not a fully gluten/wheat free brand, other biscuits may contain wheat – including ordinary hobnobs*
- Supermarket own-brand “Free From” (wheat/gluten) biscuits – digestives, cookies & cream, shortbread, ginger biscuits, custard cream etc.

## Gravy and stock cubes

- Knorr Gluten Free Instant Gravy and Stock Cubes
- Bisto Gluten Free Instant Gravy
- Marigold Health Foods Instant Gravy and Organic Gravy
- Supermarket own-brand “Free From” (wheat/gluten) gravy
- Beef Bovril stock cubes

## Baking without wheat

Most baking powders contain wheat flour. There are some that are wheat free;

- Barkat Gluten Free Baking Powder (the filler is rice flour) - Gluten Free Foods Ltd
- Dr. Oetker also makes a gluten free baking powder which is available in many supermarkets. Check the label before you buy. (The filler is maize)
- Royal Baking Powder can be found in many supermarkets. (The filler is maize)
- Doves Farm Baking Powder (the filler is corn starch)

Recipes made without wheat flour are often very crumbly. Xanthan gum can be added to wheat free recipes, especially bread to help make it better.

Try adding ½ teaspoon per 180g special flour for cakes and 1 teaspoon per 180g special flour for bread. It is available from: Doves Farm 01488 684 880 [www.freee-foods.co.uk/](http://www.freee-foods.co.uk/)

Many recipes are also improved by mixing flours for example, soya flour mixed with potato flour.

Gram flour (made from chickpea) is usually wheat free and can be used for many Asian and non-Asian recipes for example, chapattis

## Wheat free ready-made meals

Foods such as wheat free fish fingers, nuggets, pizza, pasta meals, Yorkshire pudding, pies etc are available in the free from freezer and chilled sections of supermarkets.

Please ask your dietitian for further recipe ideas and supermarket contact list, and a list of supermarket special products (Asian recipes are also available).

## Suggested main meal ideas

- Pasta Bolognese with wheat free pasta. Check stock cube/sauce for wheat
- Chicken or vegetable curry with rice or wheat free chapati. Check spice mixes/sauces for wheat
- Chicken casserole. Check stock cube for wheat and ensure dumplings are made wheat free
- Jacket potato with cheese and beans / tuna / vegetable chilli. Check baked beans for wheat
- Stir fry with rice noodles – avoid soy sauce – check stir fry sauces for wheat
- Shepherd's/Cottage pie – check stock cube for wheat
- Wheat free fish fingers, oven chips and mushy peas –check chips and peas for wheat

## Meal ideas:

Breakfast	Snack	Lunch	Snack	Dinner	Pudding
Wheat free Rice Krispies or Cornflakes or porridge with milk	Fruit for example banana/apple or dried fruit (or handful of nuts over 5 years old)	Sandwich on wheat free bread (make sure ham is not bread-crumbed/ coated with anything containing wheat) or filled wheat free wrap  Yoghurt and fruit	Fresh vegetable sticks with hummus (check hummus does not contain wheat)	Sausage, mashed potatoes and peas (check sausage is wheat free) OR Dahl made with potato and pulses + rice (use cornflour to thicken)	Greek yoghurt or ice cream and berries (check yoghurt is not thickened with wheat flour)
Wheat free toast with margarine and jam	Wheat free biscuit or crumpet / pikelet with low fat spread	Beans on wheat free toast with cheese (check beans and grated cheese for wheat)	Homemade wheat free cake	Tuna pasta bake with sweetcorn and broccoli (use wheat free pasta)	Wheat free fruit crumble and custard, or rice pudding
Wheat free pancakes with berries	Ricecake with peanut butter / almond butter	Vegetable omelette with tomatoes and cucumber  Fruit Salad	Wheat free crackers with cheese or low fat crisps (check crisps for wheat in flavourings)	Roast dinner (make/buy wheat free Yorkshire Puddings, stuffing)	Ice cream with meringue, strawberries (check ice cream is wheat free)

## Contact details

Nutrition and Dietetics Department: 0116 258 5400

اگر آپ کو یہ معلومات کسی اور زبان میں درکار ہیں، تو براہ کرم مندرجہ ذیل نمبر پر ٹیلی فون کریں۔  
على هذه المعلومات بلغة أخرى، الرجاء الاتصال على رقم الهاتف الذي يظهر في الأسفل  
જો તમને અન્ય ભાષામાં આ માહિતી જોઈતી હોય, તો નીચે આપેલ નંબર પર કૃપા કરી ટેલિફોન કરો

ਜੇ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਇਹ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਕਿਸੇ ਹੋਰ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਵਿਚ ਚਾਹੁੰਦੇ ਹੋ, ਤਾਂ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਹੇਠਾਂ ਦਿੱਤੇ ਗਏ ਨੰਬਰ 'ਤੇ ਟੈਲੀਫੋਨ ਕਰੋ।  
Aby uzyskać informacje w innym języku, proszę zadzwonić pod podany nizej numer telefonu

If you would like this information in another language or format such as EasyRead or Braille, please telephone 0116 250 2959 or email [equality@uhl-tr.nhs.uk](mailto:equality@uhl-tr.nhs.uk)