

Gluten-Free in College Toolkit



Your Guide to Eating Gluten-Free on Campus



This resource was made possible with support from Blue Diamond.



www.BeyondCeliac.org



Table of Contents

Section 1: Introduction

A Message from Beyond Celiac President Alice Bast Page 3

Section 2: Policies and Procedures

Finding Support on Campus Page 4

Know Your Rights:
The Americans with Disabilities Act and Lesley University Settlement Page 6

Registering with the Office of Disability Services Page 7

Section 3: Dorm Room Considerations

Dorm-Friendly Gluten-Free Foods Page 9

When Your Roommate Isn't Gluten-Free Page 10

Section 4: Gluten-Free Shopping Tips

Label Reading Page 11

Eating Gluten-Free on a Budget Page 11

Easy Gluten-Free Recipes – *Courtesy of Blue Diamond* Page 12

Section 5: For More Information

Additional Resources Page 13



A Message from Alice Bast

There are times when having celiac disease or gluten sensitivity is particularly annoying. College is one of those times. Let's admit that. Let's accept that. And now, let's do something about it.

The fact is, living gluten-free on campus means you're going to face some challenges. Many of these challenges will be out of your control. But you're here, and you're not going anywhere until you get that degree, so what you can control is how you respond.

Welcome to our Gluten-Free College Student Toolkit. This packet offers important background information and actionable advice to help you feel more comfortable and confident about eating gluten-free food on campus – whether it's at the dining hall or in your dorm room. By the time you finish reading this toolkit, you'll know **who to contact** on campus, **what rights you have** in requesting gluten-free meals, and **how to protect your gluten-free stash** from hungry roommates.

This toolkit is just one of the many free resources that the Beyond Celiac offers to gluten-free college students. We know that the challenges go beyond the actual food – that you also worry about explaining why you can't have beer at a party or how to study abroad when you're not familiar with the cuisine. We're tackling those issues, too – with input from students like you.

Many college students share the same concerns when it comes to living gluten-free on campus.

Read stories from other students at www.BeyondCeliac.org/college

Find more resources, including a blog series written by current college students and a webinar on the social challenges of living gluten-free at college, at www.BeyondCeliac.org/college.

If you have suggestions for a resource or topic that you'd like us to cover related to life as a gluten-free college student, let us know! You can email Beyond Celiac at info@BeyondCeliac.org or tweet Beyond Celiac at @BeyondCeliac.

To your GREAT college experience,

Alice Bast
President, Beyond Celiac

www.BeyondCeliac.org



About Beyond Celiac

Beyond Celiac advances widespread understanding of celiac disease as a serious genetic autoimmune condition and works to secure its early diagnosis and effective management. We empower our community to live life to the fullest, and serve as a leading and trusted resource that inspires hope, accelerates innovation and forges pathways to a cure.

Finding Help on Campus: Who Should I Talk To?

You are not alone. That's the first and most important thing to know about living gluten-free at college. Even at a small school where you may be one of a few students with celiac disease or non-celiac gluten sensitivity ('gluten sensitivity'), there are people ready and eager to help you fully enjoy your time on campus. While every school is different, here are a few people to contact:

Foodservice Director

A great place to start is your school's foodservice director. He or she is your best link to the gluten-free options that are currently available on campus and which options *could* be made available. By meeting, you'll also get a sense of how well the dining services team understands gluten-free needs. Some questions to consider asking your foodservice director include:

- Where is the best place to go for gluten-free food? Do any of the dining halls have a gluten-free section for students?
- Are there other students eating gluten-free on campus?
- Are you able to share the ingredients of dishes served so I can ensure they are gluten-free?
- Do the kitchens have a dedicated section for gluten-free food preparation?
- How else do you prevent cross-contact in your kitchen?
- Do you use any symbols to indicate which dishes are gluten-free or can be made gluten-free?

Once you're in the dining hall, here are some questions to ask the staff. Tell them that you have a medical condition that requires you to eat gluten-free food, so they'll take your concerns seriously.

Did you know?

61% of gluten-free college students surveyed by Beyond Celiac said their Dining Services Director was not aware or only somewhat aware of the gluten-free diet.

www.BeyondCeliac.org



- 🌱 Do you mind changing your gloves before you prepare my gluten-free sandwich?
- 🌱 Can you place my burger on a piece of aluminum foil before you put it on the grill top? I know you toast the buns on the grill, so this way my food will be protected.
- 🌱 This sauce looks great – Can you tell me the ingredients in it?
- 🌱 Do you know if these French fries were cooked with the onion rings or chicken fingers?
- 🌱 It looks like some pasta fell into the brown rice. Would you be able to serve me a spoonful of rice from a fresh batch?

Office of Disability Services

Many schools require that you register through the Office of Disability Services before you can be eligible for special dietary accommodations. Each school is different, but you will most likely need a note from your physician indicating that you have celiac disease or gluten sensitivity and require a gluten-free diet. (See page 7 for specific information on registering with your disability office.)

On-Campus Dietitian

Your school may or may not have a registered dietitian on campus. If you do have access to a dietitian, certainly take advantage. A dietitian will be able to recommend safe options on (and possibly off) campus and offer strategies to help you maintain a well-balanced gluten-free diet. Campus dietitians may also be able to put you in touch with other gluten-free students, so you can speak with them about their experiences on campus.

Health Center

The Student Health Center can be a source of support, especially if there is no registered dietitian on campus. Health Center staff can help you find specialists in your area and may have their own resources and tip sheets about the gluten-free diet. If you fall ill, they can offer a place to rest and recoup away from the constant noise and activity you'll find in the dorms.

www.BeyondCeliac.org



Residence Life

It's a good idea to get in touch with the Office of Residence Life, especially if you are looking for information on what you can and cannot bring to your dorm or if you would like to request a specific type of housing. For example, if your campus has dormitories with personal kitchenettes, you may want to be placed there.

The Residence Life Office can also put you in touch with your Resident Advisor (RA). This is a student who lives on the dorm floor and is available to help students with any issues or concerns that may arise while living on campus. Your RA can keep an eye out for you, especially in the event that you get sick. It also helps if your RA understands your dietary needs so he or she can supply gluten-free food at dorm meetings and events.

Gluten-Free Club

Your campus may or may not have an organization dedicated to gluten-free advocacy. If it does, however, it's a great idea to get involved. Not only will you be able to meet new people and make friends, but you can also pick up new tips and recommendations for where to eat on and off campus.

Your Professors

It can help to let your professors know that you have celiac disease or gluten sensitivity. Assure them that you don't think it will cause a problem with class attendance; they likely will appreciate the "heads up" and will be understanding if you do happen to get sick and miss a class.

The Lesley University Settlement Agreement: What It Means (And What It Doesn't Mean)

In December 2012, the US Department of Justice announced a settlement agreement with Lesley University in response to a complaint that the school required students to be on a mandatory meal plan but did not provide sufficient options for students with celiac disease and food allergies.

The complaint suggested this violated the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), as it prevented students with special dietary needs from "fully and equally" enjoying services provided by the university. In the end, the US Department of Justice (DOJ) deemed the

www.BeyondCeliac.org



school was in violation of ADA and mandated that the university change its policies to accommodate students on special diets.

While this is a major step forward in special diet awareness and accommodation, the ruling *only* applies to students at Lesley University. Despite this, the ruling may have implications for **you** as a gluten-free college student.

True or False? What the Settlement Agreement Means for You

A food allergy or celiac disease may be considered a disability as defined by the ADA.

True.

In a Q&A following the Lesley University settlement agreement, the DOJ clarified that, under the ADA, a disability can be a “mental or physical impairment that substantially limits a major life activity, such as eating.” Therefore, students with celiac disease or severe food allergies who experience significant or life-threatening reactions to eating a specific food, can be classified as having a disability.

The ADA requires that all restaurants and cafeterias provide gluten-free and allergy-friendly meals.

False.

Based on the DOJ’s interpretation of the ADA, colleges and universities must offer “reasonable accommodation” of disabilities. In the case of celiac disease and food allergies, this “accommodation” can be achieved in a number of ways, such as allowing students with special dietary needs to opt out of the meal plan or live in a dorm with a private kitchenette. Therefore, a college or university does not have to offer gluten-free or allergen-free options as long as it provides other means to accommodate your diet.

At Lesley University, students with celiac disease and food allergies didn’t have access to enough gluten-free and allergen-free food options. But the bigger problem was that these students were required to enroll in and pay for a mandatory meal plan. This, coupled with the lack of sufficient food options, is how the DOJ deemed that the school did not offer “reasonable accommodation.”

Fortunately, many colleges and universities are taking a proactive stance in responding to the Lesley University agreement and are implementing gluten-free and allergen-free

www.BeyondCeliac.org



protocols so students with celiac disease and food allergies can eat comfortably and confidently in the dining halls.

Since the settlement agreement only applies to Lesley University, this doesn't benefit me.

False.




This settlement agreement has big implications for other schools and institutions. The agreement set a legal precedent in favor of students living with celiac disease and food allergies. It also serves as a guideline for other schools to follow. In addition to mandating that the school release students from the mandatory meal plan, the agreement also required the cafeterias to put up signs identifying options that contained specific food allergens or gluten and provide a dedicated space for food preparation for students dealing with cross-contact concerns. These and the other [mandates outlined in the settlement agreement](#) can be shared with your college or university to serve as a guide for ways they can better accommodate special dietary needs. You can also direct them to Beyond Celiac's GREAT Schools, Colleges and Camps program (www.greatGFkitchens.org), which teaches how to implement gluten-free protocols that fulfill many of these mandates.

I can contact the DOJ if I have questions about the Lesley University settlement agreement and its implications.

True.

Information on the settlement agreement can be found at www.ADA.gov. You can also call the toll-free ADA Information Line at 1-800-514-0301 or 1-800-514-0383.

Learn More about the Lesley University Settlement Agreement

-  [University Settlement Agreement Puts Gluten-Free Needs on National Stage](#)
-  [US Department of Justice Posts Q&A about ADA and Gluten-Free Meals](#)
-  [Beyond Celiac Prepares Colleges and Universities for Gluten-Free Requests](#)

Registering with Your School's Office of Disability Services

Each school has a different policy and procedure for registering with the Office of Disability Services. Generally speaking, these steps will help guide you through the registration process.

www.BeyondCeliac.org



Step 1: Call your school's Office of Disability Services.

You can easily find the phone number to your school's disability office through the school website. Much of the information you are looking for regarding registration may already be available on the website.

The office staff will best be able to guide you through the registration process. Don't be afraid to make the call and explain your needs! That's what they are there for.

Step 2: Obtain a note from your primary care doctor or gastroenterologist indicating that you have celiac disease or gluten sensitivity.

Most likely, your school will require some form of written evidence of a diagnosis in order to process your registration request. If you received gluten-free school lunches in high school, this will be similar to the diet prescription needed for your 504 Plan. The staff at your Office of Disability Services will be able to tell you exactly which information you'll need to provide.

Step 3: Fill out all necessary forms and pay attention to deadlines.

Along with medical records or a note from your doctor, you will most likely need to fill out required paperwork. There may or may not be deadlines for completing these forms, so be sure to ask the staff or read all the paperwork to ensure you are finishing the forms on time. If it seems like a lot to do, don't be discouraged! Ask for help and stick with it. You'll not only be helping yourself; you'll also add to the collective voice of other gluten-free students living on campus.

A Word about the Word: "Disability"

You may be hesitant to register with the Office of Disability Services because you don't view having celiac disease or gluten sensitivity as a disability. We embrace that positivity, but it's important to know that the Office of Disability Services is there to help. By registering with the Disability Office, you're simply opening the door to having legal rights to the accommodations you need to maintain your lifestyle (that goes for any student registering with the Disability Office, for whatever reason). So, don't feel embarrassed or ashamed. Look at it as being proactive in managing your health so you can have the best possible college experience.

Dorm-Friendly Gluten-Free Foods

With all your studying, extracurricular activities and social events, you're going to need a lot of fuel to keep you going. Having snacks in your dorm are great for keeping you satisfied in between meals and for "emergencies" if you're having trouble finding gluten-free options on campus. Here are some dorm-friendly foods to keep on hand:

Gluten-Free Dorm-Friendly Foods

-  Gluten-free pretzels
-  Gluten-free crackers
-  Hummus
-  Fresh fruit
-  Fruit cups
-  Fruit snacks
-  Fresh veggies
-  Potato chips
-  Corn chips
-  Salsa
-  Nuts
-  Seeds
-  Popcorn
-  Gluten-free mac & cheese
-  Gluten-free frozen pizza
-  Peanut butter
-  Almond butter
-  Jelly/jam
-  Yogurt
-  Gluten-free cookies
-  Gluten-free ready-made soups
-  Rice cakes
-  Gluten-free cereal
-  Gluten-free instant oatmeal
-  Cheese sticks
-  Gluten-free muffins
-  Pepperoni slices
-  Gluten-free candy
-  Gluten-free snack bars
-  Gluten-free muffins
-  Gluten-free bread
-  Gluten-free tortilla wraps
-  Granola
-  Lunch/deli meat
-  Instant/microwaveable rice
-  Tuna fish

Cut this out to keep on hand for grocery store trips!

Be sure to double check all ingredient labels to ensure each product is gluten-free!

www.BeyondCeliac.org



When Your Roommate Isn't Gluten-Free

Chances are, your roommate won't be gluten-free like you, but that's ok! With a few pointers, you can manage to keep cross-contact risks to a minimum.



Talk it Out

If you're just starting out your college career, you may have chatted with your new roommate a bit online before heading off to school. This is a good time to start a conversation about the gluten-free diet. You don't have to go into too many details right away, but slowly bring up a few points. Odds are, your roommate has already heard about the diet. Now you can teach him or her why it's a need, not a fad!



Food Labeling

You will need to clearly communicate which foods and utensils need to stay gluten-free, and the best way to do that is by labeling each item. This can be done with something as simple as a marker, or you may be interested in something like Gluten-Free Labels, which can be used on bowls, spoons, pot handles – basically anything! Teach your roommate about cross-contact so he or she doesn't put your food at risk.



Food Storage

Ask your roommate to keep all of their food on the bottom shelf of the refrigerator or cabinet. This way, if something containing gluten leaks or spills, it won't land on your food. Consider keeping a separate, plastic bin with a cover to store your dry gluten-free goods. This can be helpful in preventing cross-contact, but is also a good alternative for those who may be hesitant to label their individual boxes of food.



Sharing the Appliances

Be aware of the risk of cross-contact with sharing a microwave – and make sure your roommate understands the risks for you as well. Politely ask him or her to thoroughly clean up all spills, and consider wiping down the inside of the microwave before you use it each time. Many stores sell large plastic covers that can easily cover an entire plate in the microwave. This, or even plastic wrap, can reduce the cross-contact risk.

If you have a toaster, Beyond Celiac strongly recommends you do **not** share it. It's impossible to remove all of the crumb residue inside a toaster, so buy a dedicated gluten-free toaster if you can.

www.BeyondCeliac.org



Label Reading: What to Look For

The word “gluten” most likely won’t appear on ingredient labels. Look for these words, which indicate gluten **is** present:













- | | |
|--|--|
|  Barley |  Malt vinegar |
|  Bran |  Matzo meal |
|  Bulgur |  Mir |
|  Couscous |  Orzo |
|  Durum |  Panko |
|  Einkorn |  Rye |
|  Emmer |  Spelt |
|  Farina |  Triticale |
|  Farro |  Udon |
|  Graham |  Wheat |
|  Kamut |  Wheat germ |
|  Malt |  Wheat starch |

Gluten “hot spots” are where cross-contamination is likely to occur:



Eating Gluten-Free on a Budget

Like most students, you’re probably concerned about stocking up on food without breaking the bank. Consider these cost-saving tips:

-  Sign up for the grocery store savings card.
-  Buy fresh food as you need it so it doesn’t go to waste.
-  Freeze whatever you can to make it last longer.
-  Clip and use coupons.
-  Sign up to receive coupons from your favorite gluten-free food manufacturers’ websites.
-  Shop online and compare prices with your local store. Some online options for buying gluten-free food include [Amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com), [Vitacost.com](https://www.vitacost.com) and [GlutenFreeMall.com](https://www.glutenfreemall.com).
-  Buy your food in bulk (if it makes sense economically to do so).
-  Set up a weekly food budget for yourself and stick to it! Your parents/guardians can help you determine a budget that makes sense for you.
-  If your meal plan includes some sort of flex spending, find out if your card can be used off campus as well.
-  Avoid small convenient stores as prices are usually higher.
-  Work with your roommate to split the cost of foods you both enjoy.
-  Save money on bottled water by purchasing a water pitcher and reusable water bottle.



Easy Gluten-Free Recipes

Courtesy of Blue Diamond

Nutty Tapenade

If you can't have a blender in your dorm, make this at home and freeze or enjoy with your friends when you return to campus.

Prep Time: 10 minutes

Ingredients:

- 2 cloves garlic
- 1 cup pitted mixed olive, well drained
- 1/3 cup Blue Diamond Roasted Salted Almonds
- 2 Tbsp. torn fresh basil leaves
- 1 Tbsp. capers
- Blue Diamond Almond Nut Thins



More ideas:

Directions:

1. With blender or food processor running, drop in garlic cloves to finely chop. Add remaining ingredients, except Nut Thins, and pulse on and off until all ingredients are finely chopped. You can serve this right away, but is best if allowed to chill for at least 1 hour for flavors to blend.
2. Serve with Nut Thins.

Chocolate Nut Clusters

Your hallmates will never guess this is gluten-free – or made in a microwave!

Ingredients:

- 12 oz. gluten-free dark chocolate or semi-sweet chocolate chips
- ½ tsp. gluten-free vanilla extract
- ½ cup crushed Blue Diamond Nut Thins (try Almond, Pecan or Sea Salt)
- ½ cup sliced Blue Diamond Almonds
- ¼ cup chopped walnuts
- Sea salt



More ideas:

Directions:

1. Melt chocolate in microwave on medium in 2-3 minute segments, stirring in between, until chocolate is melted. Once melted, add vanilla and stir to combine.
2. Add crushed Nut Thins, almonds and walnuts. Mix until ingredients are well incorporated.
3. Scoop mixture into 1 tablespoon-sized clusters and drop onto waxed paper. Let cool. As chocolate begins to set, sprinkle a few grains of sea salt on top to enhance the sweet and salty combination.





www.BeyondCeliac.org



Additional Resources

If you are...

Newly Diagnosed

-  [Getting Started Guide](#)
-  [The Gluten-Free Diet: An Overview](#)
-  [Gluten-Free Dining Tips Sheet](#)
-  [Gluten in Medications](#)

Starting Your School Search

-  [Gluten-Free Travel Site: Gluten-Free College Reviews](#)
-  [GREAT U](#): A special publication designed for current and prospective college students

Interested in Hearing from Other Gluten-Free College Students

-  [Gluten-Free in College Blog Series](#)

Working to Improve Gluten-Free Options On and Off Campus

-  [GREAT Kitchens](#) (Gluten-free training for restaurants)
-  [GREAT Schools, Colleges and Camps](#) (Gluten-free training for dining halls)

Looking for Additional FREE Resources

-  [Free Webinar: GREAT U Special: Navigating the Gluten-Free Social Scene at College](#)
-  [Beyond Celiac's free monthly eNewsletter](#)

In Search of New Gluten-Free Products and Recipes

-  [Gluten-Free Recipe of the Week](#)
-  [Be Free for Me](#) (blog for budget-friendly tips)
-  [Gluten-Free Hot Products](#)
-  [Gluten-Free Food Manufacturers](#)
 - o For online shopping: www.Vitacost.com | www.Amazon.com | www.GlutenFreeMall.com

www.BeyondCeliac.org

