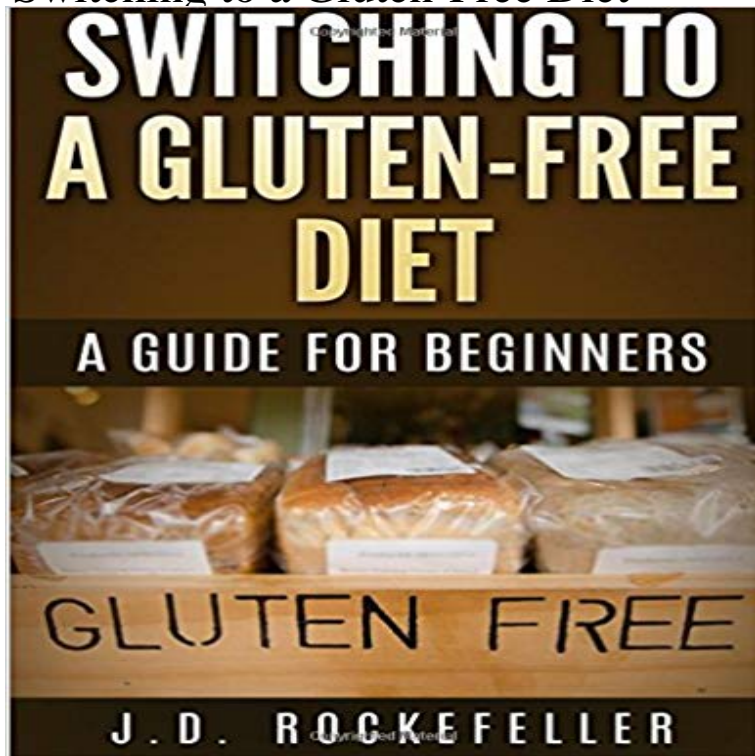


## Switching to a Gluten-Free Diet



If you have been diagnosed with celiac disease, you will be asked to go completely gluten-free. Gluten is a protein found in various grains. In celiac disease, the small intestine is hypersensitive to this protein making it difficult to digest it. People with celiac disease experience digestive problems such as bloating, diarrhea, pale stools, weight loss, flatulence and abdominal pain. They may develop a severe skin rash and musculoskeletal problems. Iron-deficiency anemia, seizures, ulcers in the mouth, and nerve damage may occur. Growth problems in children and missed menstrual periods in women may also be seen. Celiac disease may also put you at risk to other health conditions such as osteoporosis, miscarriage, and infertility.

A gluten-free diet means throwing out the offending protein completely from your diet and life. But a gluten-free diet is not just used by people who have celiac disease. It has become quite popular as a diet for many people who suspect that they have wheat allergy or gluten hypersensitivity. Wheat is a common allergen and many people around the world are allergic to it. Whatever the reason, a gluten-free diet doesn't mean just cutting out all grains from your life. There are a lot of things involved here to ensure that you do remove gluten completely from your diet. Furthermore, removing foods containing gluten also means that you will be cutting down on many nutrients found in these foods. So, you will need to know how you can ensure that you are getting the required amounts of vitamins and minerals once you have removed this protein from your diet. This simple guide will give you pointers about the foods that may contain gluten. It also gives you advice about foods to include, and how to make your house free of gluten products.

Pasta, bread and crackers all contain gluten, but that doesn't mean you can't still enjoy these foods in your diet. Instead, switch to gluten-free alternatives of yours. Switching to a 100% gluten free lifestyle can be difficult because of the vast amounts of foods that you can try adding sources of fiber to your diet. For example, you can look specifically for whole-grain gluten-free bread, and consider adding more beans and legumes, plus fresh fruits and vegetables, to your plate. Nuts and seeds also are high in fiber and make easy take-along gluten-free snacks. But others say that switching to a gluten-free diet changed their child's behavior and quality of life for the better, even dramatically improving the symptoms of autism. Based on little or no evidence other than testimonials in the media, people have been switching to gluten-free diets to lose weight, boost energy, and improve overall health. Fill up your plate with naturally wholesome gluten-free foods, such as vegetables, fruits, beans, nuts, seeds, fish and lean meat, says Begun. This is what dietitians recommend makes up the majority of your diet whether you're gluten-free or not, she says. And if you love your grains, you can still eat them. Cutting out gluten from your diet may seem like a difficult and limiting task. Fortunately, there are many healthy and delicious foods that are naturally gluten-free! Following a diet that includes gluten can lead to severe illness. Going gluten-free can save the life of a person with celiac disease. However, a few people are aware of the health risks that are hidden behind the hype surrounding the gluten-free diet. This is a regimen that has numerous health benefits. The bottom line: switching to a gluten-free diet should not be taken lightly. It's absolutely necessary for some individuals, but for others it will only result in a diet that is less nutritious. It's no surprise then that gluten-free foods are a nearly \$1-billion industry (and growing). Alessio Fasano, MD, founder and director of the Center for Celiac Research and Treatment at Boston Children's Hospital. If you're considering going on a gluten-free diet in 2016, you may want to reconsider. Gluten-free eating isn't necessarily healthier, and it probably won't help you have switched to a gluten-free diet won't reveal a sensitivity.