

Dear Cafeteria Staff,

A student in your school has been diagnosed with an autoimmune disorder called celiac disease (CD). While this will affect some aspects of school management, including food preparation, patience and understanding can bring about the necessary changes that will quickly become a natural part of the school experience for all involved.

What is celiac disease?

Also known as celiac sprue or gluten-sensitive enteropathy, CD is a genetic disorder that can affect both children and adults. In people with CD, eating certain types of grain-based proteins sets off an autoimmune response that causes damage to the small intestine. This, in turn, interferes with the small intestine's ability to absorb the nutrients found in food, leading to malnutrition and a variety of other complications. For some, the disease manifests itself in small itchy blisters on the skin, called dermatitis herpetiformis (DH). The proteins that cause these difficulties are collectively called gluten and are found in wheat, barley, rye and oats* (WBRO), as well as all of their derivatives. At this time, the only known treatment for the disease is a life-long avoidance of WBRO.

How will this affect your job?

Even the tiniest amount of WBRO is toxic to a person with CD, which can make food preparation, especially in a commercial-type kitchen, a challenge. It is not impossible, however, and by learning these simple ABC's you will be able to provide safe and enjoyable meals for the student with CD.

- Always offer foods that are free of WBRO.
- Be aware of hidden WBRO in processed foods.
- Clean utensils and work surfaces are necessary.

A poster with more information on these ABC's is available for your convenience. Contact the parent/guardian or CSA if you have questions or concerns.

The information contained in this material is not intended to be all-inclusive. It is provided to help you understand the importance of caution and preparation when working with a person with CD.

The goal is to provide an environment where the child with CD can learn self-management skills without being consumed by the illness. An atmosphere designed to foster responsible decision making will ultimately help the child perform well both in and out of the classroom.

Thank you for your help and support.

Helpful Resources

Student: _____

Symptoms most often exhibited upon exposure to WBRO: _____

Parent/Guardian(s): _____

Phone: _____ Work: _____ Cell: _____

Pediatrician: _____ Phone: _____

Dietitian: _____ Phone: _____

Additional notes: _____

For more information on celiac disease or its implications in the areas of insurance and The Americans with Disabilities Act contact:



P.O. Box 13700
Omaha, NE 68131-0700
1-877-CSA-4-CSA
www.csaceliacs.org

The Celiac Sprue Association (CSA) is the nation's largest non-profit organization dedicated to helping people with celiac disease (CD) and the related skin response dermatitis herpetiformis (DH). With local chapters and resource units across the United States, CSA serves nearly 9,000 members worldwide through information, education, and research.

This material is provided through:



CSA's *Cel-Kids Network* is specifically designed for children with CD/DH and the adults who work with them.
www.csaceliacs.org/CelKidsNetwork.php