




Guidance on avoiding wheat



Children and
Young People's
Allergy Network
Scotland



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Introduction

Avoiding Wheat

A wide variety of foods contain wheat including flour, pasta, cakes, biscuits and breakfast cereals. Many manufactured foods contain wheat as an added ingredient. Wheat may also be present in a “hidden” form in a food – for example it may be used as a filler or dusting agent or as a “carrier” for spices. It is therefore important to check food labels carefully.

Gluten free is not the same as a wheat free. Gluten is only one of the proteins in wheat, so gluten-free foods may still contain wheat starch or other wheat proteins.

Reading food labels

In the UK, food manufacturers/businesses must inform you under food law if they use any of the 14 most common allergens, which includes wheat, as an ingredient in the food/drink they provide. If wheat is used as an ingredient, it will be highlighted in **bold**, *italics*, **coloured type** or underlined to make the wheat as an ingredient easier to spot.

Always check the ingredients list each time you buy as manufacturers may change their product ingredients. Choose foods labelled as ‘wheat free’ or ‘free from wheat’.

You should look out for the following terms in ingredient lists:

- Wheat, wheat flour, spelt wheat, durum wheat, whole wheat, wheat germ, wheat germ oil, wheat bran, wheat flakes, wheat binder, wheat gluten, wheat starch, wheat thickener
- Rusk, semolina, durum semolina, breadcrumbs, crumbs
- Hydrolysed wheat protein
- Raising agent containing wheat starch



Food labels

	Foods allowed	Foods to check	Foods to avoid
Flours / Grains (and cereals, pasta, breads and baked goods made using these flours)	Amaranth, arrowroot, barley, pearl barley, buckwheat, chestnut, corn (maize), rice gram (chickpea), hemp, millet, polenta, quinoa, sago, sorghum, potato, rye, soya, tapioca, teff and oats.	Baking powder, modified or hydrolysed starch, binders, thickeners, edible starch, cereal proteins, maltodextrin.	Bulgar wheat, cous cous, durum wheat, malted wheat, semolina, spelt, triticale, whole wheat, wheat bran, wheat germ. einkorn, emmer, Farola™, kamut(khorasan)
Breads Crackers Cakes/Pastries	Breads: Any made with the wheat free flours listed above. Crackers/Crispbreads: Made with rice, corn, buckwheat or tapioca. Rice cakes, corn cakes Readymade wheat free pastry.	Rye bread (some brands contain wheat). Rusks or other baby biscuits/snacks. Oatcakes (some brands contain wheat).	Breads: Wheat breads (e.g. white, wholemeal, granary, soda bread), chapattis, naan, pitta, tortillas, wraps. Yorkshire puddings, stuffing, batter, bread crumbs. Crackers/ Crispbreads: Cream crackers, bread sticks, crispbreads. Cakes / Pastries: Crumpets, pancakes, croissants, brioche, pies, quiche, pasties, sausage rolls.
Breakfast Cereals	Wheat free cereals e.g., Corn Flakes™, 100% porridge oats, Pure oats, Oatibix™, Rice based cereals e.g. Puffed Rice, Rice Krispies™. Other specialist cereals using buckwheat or millet flakes.	Ready made oat cereals, granola, baby cereals.	Wheat-based cereals e.g. Weetabix™, Muesli, All Bran™, Special K™, Shreddies™, Branflakes™, Shredded Wheat™, Weetos™, Cheerios™ and their supermarket versions Wheat bran/germ.
Pasta, pizza, noodles, rice, potato	Wheat free pasta and noodles made from rice, corn, buckwheat or millet Wheat free pizzas/ pizza bases. Plain boiled white/brown rice. Potato flour, fresh baked/boiled/mashed potato.	Instant mashed potato. Egg noodles. Potato products e.g. potato salad and frozen potato wedges, chips, processed shapes and waffles. Savoury rice, ready made rice dishes.	Dried or fresh wheat pasta, tinned spaghetti in tomato sauce, readymade pasta meals. Pizzas, pizza bases, dough balls. Dried, fresh or processed noodles e.g., Pot noodles, super noodles, udon, ramen, chow mein and other noodle dishes.



	Foods allowed	Foods to check	Foods to avoid
Milk and dairy	<p>Cow, goat, sheep milks. Condensed milk, evaporated milk.</p> <p>Milk alternatives e.g. soya, rice, oat, pea, almond, coconut milk.</p> <p>Dried milk powders and coffee whiteners e.g. Coffee mate™, Marvel™.</p> <p>Fresh cream, Dream topping™, buttercream, oat cream.</p> <p>Hard and soft cheese including cheddar, cottage cheese, halloumi, feta.</p>	<p>Milk shakes, flavoured yoghurt, fromage frais, mousse, synthetic cream.</p> <p>Processed cheese and cheese spreads, cheese sauce.</p>	<p>Muesli yogurt.</p>
Margarines and oils	<p>Butter, margarine, ghee, lard, paneer.</p> <p>Oils e.g. sunflower, corn, rapeseed, safflower, olive oil and nut oils.</p>	<p>Some low fat margarines.</p>	<p>Packet shredded suet.</p>
Meat, fish, eggs, beans and nuts	<p>All unprocessed meats (beef, pork, lamb and poultry).</p> <p>Wheat free sausages.</p> <p>Plain fish (tinned, fresh or frozen eg. tuna, mackerel, cod, plaice). Wheat free fish fingers.</p> <p>Plain eggs.</p> <p>Fresh, dried, frozen and tinned beans e.g. butter beans, kidney beans, soya beans, chickpeas, lentils.</p> <p>Textured vegetable protein, hydrolysed vegetable protein, tofu, hummus.</p> <p>Nut butters.</p>	<p>Ready meals or baby foods.</p> <p>Processed meats e.g. sausages, beef/lamb burgers, tinned meat, haggis, black pudding, meat paste, paté.</p> <p>Fish paste, pâté.</p> <p>Vegetarian cutlets, sausages, burgers, mince & ready meals made from Quorn™, soya and other meat substitutes.</p> <p>Pulses in sauces e.g. baked beans. Roasted/flavoured nuts.</p>	<p>Meat in pastry (pasties, pies, sausage rolls).</p> <p>Meat in breadcrumbs or batter; fish in batter or breadcrumbs, e.g. fish fingers, (unless wheat free variety) .</p> <p>Scotch eggs, quiche, French toast.</p>



	Foods allowed	Foods to check	Foods to avoid
Fruit and vegetables	All plain fruit and vegetables; fresh, frozen, dried and tinned. Vegetable crisps.	Fruit pie fillings. Pre-packed vegetables for roasting; roast parsnips/potatoes etc. Vegetables in sauces, mayonnaise, salad creams, vegetable salads, coleslaw.	Fruit crumble, pies, fritters and dried fruit bars. Fresh, frozen and tinned vegetables in batter, breadcrumbs e.g. fried mushrooms, onion rings, cauliflower cheese, stir fried vegetables.
Cakes, Biscuits, Snacks and Desserts	Meringues and flourless cakes. Plain/unflavoured crisps, pop-corn, tortilla chips and other plain wheat free corn or rice-based snacks. Wheat free desserts e.g. jelly, sago, tapioca, rice pudding. Wheat free cereal bars.	Packet custards and dessert mixes, ice creams, coated ice lollies. Prawn crackers, pakoras, Bombay mix and other Indian snacks. Oat based cakes and biscuits e.g. flapjacks, Florentines, macaroons.	Muffins, scones, pastries, pancakes, Chelsea/hot cross buns, doughnuts, all cakes and biscuits made with wheat flour. Flavoured crisps, nuts, pretzels, Japanese rice crackers. Semolina, crumbles, pastries, flans, tarts, cheesecake, sponges, éclairs, steamed/suet puddings, trifle, soufflé, mousse. Ice cream cones and wafers.
Confectionery	Chocolate, boiled sweets, chews, mints, chewing gum, fudge, toffee, seaside rock, marshmallows, chewy sweets.		
Miscellaneous	Pepper, salt, herbs, vinegar. Tamari (Japanese) soy sauce. Wheat free stock cube e.g. Kallo™, Knorr™, Bovril™, Marmite™, Vegemite™. Jam, marmalade, syrup, honey, sugar. Vanilla essence. Wheat free baking powder. Xanthan gum (for baking), bicarbonate of soda, tartaric acid, gelatine, yeast, arrowroot.	Tinned and packet soups, cooking sauces, sauce mixes, chutneys, salad dressings, salad cream, mayonnaise, mustard, ketchup and other sauces, stock cubes, gravy mixes, miso, mixed spices and seasonings. Mincemeat, lemon curd. Marzipan, cake decorations. Play Doh™.	Bread sauce, soy sauce, stuffing mixes, baking powder. Foods containing wheat protein isolates.



Some manufacturers and supermarkets provide allergy information on their websites. It is however important to check ingredient labels on the product in case the website has not been updated with any ingredient change. Checking ingredient labels is especially important if you shop online in case the product you have ordered has been substituted for a similar product which contains wheat.

Wheat-free baking

Different wheat free flours and wheat free baking powders can produce different results. If adapting recipes, a mix of cereal flour often works best. For example, if a recipe requires 8oz (200g) flour, a mix of 4oz (100g) rice flour/4oz (100g) corn flour could be used. When self-raising flour is required, mix 1 teaspoon of wheat free baking powder with 8oz (200g) wheat free flour (extra liquid may be required). Baking may not always go brown during cooking so wheat free baking involves some trial and error. You can improve the texture of baked products by adding xanthan gum which you can get from supermarkets and Health Food Shops.

Wheat-free baking powder

Suitable baking powders include Doves Farm™, Barkat™ and Allergycare™ baking powders are available from supermarkets or Health Food shops.

or

Make your own as follows:-

Recipe 1:

1oz (25g) potato flour
1oz (25g) bicarbonate of soda
2oz (50g) cream of tartar

or

Recipe 2:

4oz (100g) rice flour
2oz (50g) bicarbonate of soda
2oz (50g) tartaric acid

Mix ingredients together and store in an airtight container.



Please Note:

It is essential to check food labels, even if you have bought the product before, as ingredients can change without warning. Remember the following:

- Always ask staff directly when eating food sold in a restaurant or takeaway.
- Names for foods and sauces can be different in different countries, even English-speaking ones e.g. US.
- Also check medicines, toiletries, beauty products and laundry products.
- Beware of handling foods known to cause allergy in their dried form, e.g. for crafts (shakers, collages etc).

There are now Apps available to help you check manufactured foods for suitability.

Food Maestro app: <https://www.foodmaestro.me/consumerapps>

This app is here to help you find products that are suitable for you quickly and easily.



Note: This guideline is not intended to be construed or to serve as a standard of care. Standards of care are determined on the basis of all clinical data available for an individual case and are subject to change as scientific knowledge and technology advance and patterns of care evolve. Adherence to guideline recommendations will not ensure a successful outcome in every case, nor should they be construed as including all proper methods of care or excluding other acceptable methods of care aimed at the same results. The ultimate judgement must be made by the appropriate healthcare professional(s) responsible for clinical decisions regarding a particular clinical procedure or treatment plan. This judgement should only be arrived at following discussion of the options with the patient, covering the diagnostic and treatment choices available. It is advised, however, that significant departures from the national guideline or any local guidelines derived from it should be fully documented in the patient's case notes at the time the relevant decision is taken.

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