

Number of units represented by the prescribable gluten-free food item

Prescribable food item	No. of units
400g bread	1
400g rolls/baguettes	1
500g bread mix/flour mix/pastry mix/cake mix	2
100g sweet/savoury biscuits/crackers	1/2
150g sweet/savoury biscuits/crackers	3/4
200g sweet/savoury biscuits/crackers/crispbreads	1
250g pasta	1
500g pasta	2
2 x 110g-180g pizza bases	1

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Gluten-free foods: a prescribing guide

Introduction

Coeliac disease is unique among gastrointestinal disorders in that an effective dietary treatment is available that will restore almost all patients to full health, and help to protect against the development of complications.

The best way to ensure good health is for patients to adhere to a strict gluten-free diet for life. Adherence to the diet however, is often perceived to be irksome and restricting and many patients find strict compliance difficult. Difficulties however, can mostly be overcome by skilled, sympathetic and well-informed GPs, consultant gastroenterologists, consultant paediatric gastroenterologists, paediatricians, dietitians (and paediatric dietitians), nurses and pharmacists who can provide patients with good, sensible, and appropriate practical advice.

It has been clearly shown that good dietary compliance is aided by the ease with which patients can obtain suitable amounts of gluten-free products on prescription. Coeliac disease is a disorder readily treated by diet and every effort should be made to ensure that patients understand this and have easy access to gluten-free products suitable for their needs and so reap the benefits of good health and well-being.

It is also apparent that those patients who are regularly reviewed adhere much better to their gluten-free diet than those who are left to their own devices.

This leaflet provides an indication of the amounts of prescribable gluten-free products that are appropriate for a range of people with coeliac disease. Wide consultation among healthcare professionals and patients has been undertaken in their formulation. It is hoped that it will be of value to all those who offer medical and dietetic support to patients with coeliac disease.

People with coeliac disease: **minimum** monthly gluten-free food prescription requirements

Age group	Suggested no. units per month*	Example minimum monthly prescription (items can be interchanged e.g. bread mixes can be interchanged with rolls or loaves)	
Child 1-3 years	10	4 x 400g loaves of bread (or 2 x 500g mix suitable for making bread) 1 x 500g pasta	2 x 200g biscuits 1 x 500g flour mix
Child 4-6 years	11	4 x 400g loaves of bread (or 2 x 500g mix suitable for making bread) 2 x (2 x 110/180g) pizza bases	3 x 200g biscuits 1 x 500g flour mix
Child 7-10 years	13	6 x 400g loaves of bread (or 3 x 500g mix suitable for making bread) 1 x 500g pasta 1 x (2 x 110/180g) pizza bases	2 x 200g biscuits 1 x 500g flour mix
Child 11-14 years	15	6 x 400g loaves of bread (or 3 x 500g mix suitable for making bread) 2 x (2 x 110/180g) pizza bases	3 x 200g biscuits 1 x 500g flour mix 1 x 500g pasta
Child 15-18 years	18	6 x 400g loaves of bread (or 3 x 500g mix suitable for making bread) 2 x (2 x 110/180g) pizza bases	4 x 200g biscuits 2 x 500g flour mix 1 x 500g pasta



People with coeliac disease: **minimum** monthly gluten-free food prescription requirements

Age group	Suggested no. units per month*	Example minimum monthly prescription (items can be interchanged e.g. bread mixes can be interchanged with rolls or loaves)	
Male 19-59 years	18	10 x 400g loaves of bread (or 5 x 500g mix suitable for making bread) 1 x (2 x 110/180g) pizza bases	1 x 500g pasta 2 x 200g crackers/ crispbreads 1 x 200g sweet biscuits 1 x 500g flour mix
Male 60-74 years	16	10 x 400g loaves of bread (or 5 x 500g mix suitable for making bread) 1 x 500g cake mix	1 x 500g pasta 1 x 200g crackers/ crispbreads 1 x 200g sweet biscuits
Male 75+ years	14	8 x 400g loaves of bread (or 4 x 500g mix suitable for making bread) 1 x 500g cake mix	1 x 500g pasta 1 x 200g crackers/ crispbreads 1 x 200g sweet biscuits
Female 19-74 years	14	8 x 400g loaves of bread (or 4 x 500g mix suitable for making bread) 1 x (2 x 110/180g) pizza bases	1 x 500g pasta 2 x 200g crackers/ crispbreads 1 x 200g sweet biscuits
Female 75+ years	12	6 x 400g loaves of bread (or 3 x 500g mix suitable for making bread) 1 x 500g cake mix	1 x 500g pasta 1 x 200g crackers/ crispbreads 1 x 200g sweet biscuits
Breastfeeding	Add 4 units	1 x 500g pasta 1 x 200g crackers/crispbreads	1 x 400g loaf of bread
3rd trimester pregnancy	Add 1 unit	1 x 200g sweet biscuits	
High physical activity level	Add 4 units	1 x 500g pasta 1 x 200g sweet biscuits	1 x 200g crackers/ crispbreads

*Gluten-free prescribable items have been allocated a 'unit' value based on their carbohydrate and energy content and their cost (see table overleaf).