



Amy Begley's Gluten Free Guide

I spent 10 years getting misdiagnosed. Finally when I could no longer live like that I found someone who took me seriously. I could not run more than 30 minutes without using the bathroom. I could not eat within 6 hours of running races. Due to years of not knowing I had Celiac Disease, I now have some health problems like osteopenia (pre-cursor to osteoporosis). But after 3 years of being gluten-free, I started to see major changes in my health and body. For me, I started to feel better three weeks after going gluten-free. The bloating went down and I felt more comfortable.

However, my best improvement marker came two and half years after being gluten-free; I made the Olympic Team! I represented the United States in the 10,000 meters in Beijing. Now I get asked about eating and training gluten-free. I wanted to put out this guide to Celiac or gluten intolerant athletes of all abilities. Once you get your health restored with a gluten-free diet you can accomplish any goal you set your heart and mind to!

Getting diagnosed and going gluten-free is hard at first. You will spend a lot of time reading food labels and ingredient lists. I would suggest you get some things to help you.

1. Triumph Dining Gluten-Free restaurant cards to give to restaurants when you go somewhere that does not have a gluten-free menu.
2. Triumph Dining The Essential Gluten-Free Grocery Guide
3. Triumph Dining The Essential Gluten-Free Restaurant Guide
4. IMCG Toast it bags – to keep the bread from cross contamination in a shared toaster if you have gluten eaters in your house.

There are so many new gluten-free cookbooks to choose from, just go to the store and find one that fits your cooking style. There are also a lot of informative websites for Celiac information, eating and cooking gluten-free. This is just a short list to start with:

Websites:

Celiac.org

Celiac.com

csaceliacs.org

celiaccenter.org

Glutenfree.com

glutenfreeliving.com

Triumphdining.com

Glutenfreegirl.com

Amyskitchen.com

Generationucan.com

Udisglutenfree.com

naturespath.com

celiacchicks

glutenfreemommy.com

glutenfreemall.com

BUT the things I learned from trial and error that are really important are:

1. Cross contamination is huge! Be very careful especially prior to big races, don't take a chance.
2. Chips at most Mexican restaurants are off limit. They fry them in the same oil as everything else like chicken fingers. Some places will bake them for you.
3. When traveling for races Outback, PF Changs and places that have Gluten-Free Menus will become your go to places. Use the sweet potatoes and brown rice as your carbs. In a pinch I also use Wendy's. You can have the chili, potatoes and frosty!
4. Diners are hard to eat at as well because they use a flat top grill for everything. If you go for breakfast, ask that your eggs and potatoes get cooked in a separate little pan and not on the flat top.
5. Burgers can be hard sometimes because a lot of places grill or warm the buns on the grill where they grill the meat. Always ask about the cooking method even if the waitress has to go back 4 times to check.
6. At restaurants start with the manager, it will save you time. If they are not available tell your server you are "allergic", that word gets more attention. Also, if the server does not know what items are gluten-free then give them a couple options of what you want to order so they can check with the chef. That will save them trips and you time.

7. Double check chicken and rice at restaurants. A lot of restaurants pre-season the chicken with soy sauce and put wheat in the seasoned rice.

Airports are terrible places to find gluten-free food, when I travel my carry-on is full of food.

My Favorite Travel Food:

Udi's – Bread, bagels, granola, muffins

Generation UCAN

Justin's Nut butter – almond butter, chocolate almond butter packets that can be taken in carry-on in your "liquids" bag

Glutenfreeda Instant Oatmeal

Apples, oranges or other fruits

Almonds, cashews, hazelnuts

Mary's Gone Crackers

505 Green Chili packets

Quaker Rice Cakes

Vegetables with hummus - at Costco I found Tribe Hummus in 2 ounce sizes, perfect to fit in your carry-on "liquids" bag

Thai Kitchen noodle packets – I take these on long trips (foreign travel) with a hot pot

I get asked a lot about my carb sources. Even though I can't have wheat, gluten, pasta, bread, etc there are still so many things I can eat. They include: brown rice, jasmine rice, quinoa, corn tortillas, sweet potatoes, squash, Gluten-free tortillas, rice noodles, and gluten-free noodles. I like all kinds of gluten-free noodles. My husband went gluten-free as well but he only likes the corn based noodles. I love spaghetti squash. It is my favorite substitute for spaghetti. For baking, I like to use Bob's Red Mill Gluten-free flours. Bob's Red Mill also has GF oats and a GF hot cereal mix. They are a local Oregon company that I like to support. Gluten-free specialty foods are becoming easier to find. A lot of grocery stores are starting to mark the items on the shelves or even have a whole gluten-free section. In Portland, we have a great variety of local gluten-free companies and bakeries.

I am excited to say that GF bread has really improved over the years. It has been fun to add "bread" back into my diet. My favorite gluten-free bread is Udi's. They now have different varieties of bread, hamburger buns, hot dogs buns, cinnamon rolls, muffins, and pizza crusts. The buns are brand new this year and might be hard to find but well worth the effort! I loved having my first hamburger on a bun in 5 years. Grilling burgers and hot dogs will be so fun this summer! We also love make your own pizza night. Udi's products have the best shelf life of all

gluten-free breads. It can stay on the counter for 7 days or 21 days refrigerated. It can also be frozen for 6 months. The 7 day shelf life, without being refrigerated, makes it perfect for traveling. The texture of Udi's bread is best I have eaten. Most gluten-free breads fall apart or need to be toasted but Udi's can be eaten out of the bag. Udi's has gone national and can be found in most Kroger stores.

At home, I like to cook a lot of different foods. I really like spicy foods, thanks to living in New Mexico for two years. I enjoy cooking curries, stir-fry's and grilling. I eat a lot of red meat, especially bison (buffalo) because it is leaner than chicken and has more iron. I feel that endurance athletes need protein for recovery and red meat to keep the iron levels up.

Favorite Foods at Home:

Udi's Gluten-Free Products - we love make your own pizza night

Udi's Gluten-free – muffins, bagels, granola, hamburger buns, hot dog buns, pizza crusts, and cookies

Greek Yogurt

Bob's Red Mill GF oatmeal and mixes

Nature's Path Cereals

Chex Cereals

Silk Unsweetened Soy Milk

Amy's Products – organic and gluten free frozen meals

Almond Butter

Bananas

All Fruits and Vegetables

Hummus

Tinkyada pasta

Mrs. Leeper's Corn Spaghetti

Bison, chicken, seafood – especially our great NW salmon

Typical Gluten-free Meals at home:

BREAKFAST:

- Nature's Path Cereal, silk unsweetened soy milk, banana
- Bob's Red Mill GF Oatmeal, unsweetened soy milk, fruit, nuts
- 3 egg omelet with vegetables, grits, soy milk, and melon
- Udi's bread, 2 eggs, 2 slices turkey bacon, soy milk
- Udi's bread, cream cheese or almond butter, banana

LUNCH:

- Amy's soups, Mary's Gone Crackers, salad
- Gluten-free tortilla, rice and beans, cheese, green chili and fruit
- Udi's bread, lean meat, salad
- Salad with lean meat, fruit

DINNER:

- Grilled meat like bison, salmon, or chicken, salad, sweet potato
- Stir fry with lean meat like shrimp, chicken or bison, vegetables, brown rice, fruit
- Stuffed bell peppers with rice, beans, mushrooms, cheese and salsa
- Red curry chicken with vegetables and rice
- Baked eggplant parmesan
- Black bean burritos with gluten-free tortillas
- Taco Salad
- Udi's Pizza Crust for make your own pizza night
- Sushi

SNACKS:

- Udi's bread, almond butter or cream cheese, banana
- Plain kefir with agave nectar, almonds
- Cottage cheese with fruit
- Greek yogurt, with Udi's granola, and fruit
- Hummus and vegetables
- Rice cakes with almond butter
- Trail mix or popcorn