

## Department of Gastroenterology

# What about oats?

### Information for patients attending the Addenbrooke's Coeliac Disease Clinic

We know that **wheat, barley** and **rye** contain gluten that can damage the intestine in patients with coeliac disease. There is still some controversy about whether oats can also cause coeliac disease.

- Oats are not closely related to the other three cereals and in fact look completely different. However, they do produce substances similar to gluten.
- In laboratory experiments, oats do not seem to cause the same reactions as the other cereals that we know cause coeliac disease.
- The majority of patients with coeliac disease are able to eat oats without any problems.
- However, in a very small number of patients, oats do appear to cause intestinal damage.
- Contamination of oats with other cereals frequently occurs during processing. Even in those patients who do appear to have a reaction to oats, it is not entirely clear that this is due to the oats rather than contamination with other cereals.

The advice from professional organisations is now that oats are safe for coeliacs, **providing they are free of contamination with other cereals**. Coeliac UK recommends specific brands of oats that are known to have a low risk of contamination.

In Addenbrooke's Hospital, we currently recommend that adult patients starting on a gluten free diet include oats in the diet. We routinely carry out another biopsy of the intestine after a period of nine months on a gluten free diet. If at this stage the intestine has not shown any signs of recovery, the first step would be to remove oats from the diet. In this way we will know for certain whether patients are reacting to oats or not. This will help with managing the coeliac diet in the longer term.

## How can I find out more information about coeliac disease?

Coeliac UK – the patient support group – is an excellent resource. As well as publishing a booklet of all gluten free food manufacturers and produce, they produce a quarterly magazine – ‘Crossed Grain’ – and local groups that meet regularly. There is also a very informative website for those with internet access – this can be found at [www.coeliacuk.co.uk](http://www.coeliacuk.co.uk). The helpline number is 01494 444 8804.

Please ask if you require this information in other languages, large print or audio format: 01223 216032 or [patient.information@addenbrookes.nhs.uk](mailto:patient.information@addenbrookes.nhs.uk)

Potete chiedere di ottenere queste informazioni in altre lingue, in stampato grande o in audiocassetta.

### Italian

若你需要本信息的繁體中文、大字體或音訊格式的版本，請要求索取。

### Cantonese

तमने आ माळिती बीछ भाषाओमां, मोटा अक्षरोमां अथवा सांभजी शकाय जेवा माध्यम (ओडीओ डोमेन्ट)मां जेठती छोय तो कृपा करीने पूछो.

### Gujarati

تکایہ پرسیار بگہ نہ گہر نہ وزانیاریہت دہوی بہ زمانیکی تر ، بہ پیتی گہورہ یانیش بہ شیوہی دہنگ

### Kurdish

آگر آپ کو یہ معلومات دوسری زبانوں میں، بڑے الفاظ کی اشاعت میں یا آڈیو ٹیپ پر درکار ہوں تو برائے مہربانی اس کیلئے درخواست کریں۔

### Urdu



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For advice on quitting, contact your GP or the NHS smoking helpline free, 0800 169 0 169

### Document history

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Contact number	01223596231
Published	August 2006
Review date	August 2008
File name	Coeliac.oats.doc
Version number	1
Ref	PIN 1170