

# Charlotte Celiac Connection

*Supporting the Charlotte, NC Area*

[www.charlotte-celiac-connection.org](http://www.charlotte-celiac-connection.org)



**No Wheat!**  
**No Rye!**  
**No Barley!**

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Dear Celiac Friend or Parent of a Newly Diagnosed Child,

The diagnosis of Celiac Disease may be a little overwhelming at first; however, you will have lots of support. The good news is – if there is a best of the best diseases to have, Celiac is the one! That's because science has identified the villain, which is **gluten - a protein found in the grains wheat – rye – barley**. The bad news or the challenge we face is trying to identify all the places this villain can be hidden. It has become a little easier because of the 2006 Food Allergen Labeling and Consumer Protection Act. This Act requires manufactures to clearly label if there is wheat in their products. However, this does not apply to rye or barley. In addition, in 2009 a voluntary "**gluten-free**" labeling law is expected to go into effect.

In no time at all, you will become an expert on how to manage the gluten-free lifestyle! There is one rule – **you must follow the gluten-free diet**. You can never cheat, not even a little. Also, know that you may experience a wide range of emotions. Sometimes you will feel sad and, at times, totally isolated in food settings not prepared with the gluten-free diet in mind. However, you will definitely become healthier and if you have suffered symptoms then you will most likely see these disappear.

We have identified the following key documents that will help you get started. There is a ton of information on the internet and not only can it be overwhelming but you must be careful with what information you take as fact. A good rule to follow is take advice only from those that are considered experts in the field. Listen to others but always verify information before taking it as golden. We have included only information from credible sources and segmented the documents into two sections: (1) Information on Celiac Disease & The Gluten-Free Diet, and (2) Local & National Support Information.

**Membership:** The Charlotte Celiac Connection is here to help you transition to and thrive in the gluten-free lifestyle. Being a member of our support group will help you learn from others who have been managing this condition for years. There is also something very healing about being with others who really understand what you are experiencing. There are no fees or requirements to join our support group. Membership will help you stay current on local news as well as what's happening in the global celiac community.

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**Online Support:** Our group started a “Yahoo Group!” site in July 2008, which allows every member to give and receive support 24x7. Members post questions and information on products, stores, new foods, restaurants, or just about anything celiac related. Currently, we have about 200 members, so there will always be at least one person who can answer a question. To join simply go to the home page and click on the “Yahoo Group Join Now” link (top center area) then continue by creating a Yahoo ID (if you don’t already have one) and then complete the membership process. It’s that easy and there are no fees for joining our Yahoo Group!

**Monthly Luncheons:** We meet once a month (except Dec.), usually the 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday, at a local area restaurant. We only rotate through restaurants that provide a gluten-free menu. You simply RSVP and then come to share information or ask questions. There will always be index cards and pens to jot down important notes. We also welcome spouses, children, other family and friends. If you join Yahoo Groups then you will receive email notices in advance of upcoming luncheons. We also post the details on our main web-site. The only cost to attend a luncheon is the cost of your lunch.

**Dietitian:** A registered dietitian (RD) can help you understand your new dietary requirements and develop an approach that meets your needs and lifestyle! Pat is a Registered Dietitian whose daughter was diagnosed with celiac disease in 1998. Pat is very knowledgeable about the needs of the celiac patient and the requirements of the gluten-free diet. You may want to contact Pat for a consultation to help you get started. Pat serves the Charlotte area and can provide a receipt with insurance codes for reimbursement purposes.

**Pat Fogarty, MS, RD, LDN**  
[glutenfreerd@carolina.rr.com](mailto:glutenfreerd@carolina.rr.com)

**Additional Support:** You may have a few questions about things you read, heard, or maybe you just want to talk with someone who has personal experience and cares. Drop a note to Caroline and Daphne. They started the very first support group in Charlotte and, although it is dissolved, they continue to offer their support. They have a wealth of information.

**Caroline Herdle**  
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**Daphne Ledford**  
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Just remember, you are not alone and that over time you will be able to manage your new gluten-free lifestyle with ease!

*With Warm Regards,*

*Janet, Phylis, Carol, Pat, Caroline and Daphne*