

# Is gluten one of the foods affecting your mood and anxiety levels?

By Trudy Scott, Food Mood Expert & Certified Nutritionist,  
author of *The Antianxiety Food Solution*



Looking at whole-wheat bread with a different set of eyes is so important if you have any mood problems or physical health concerns! Perhaps you are one of the many people who cannot tolerate wheat and other gluten-containing grains. **Wheat, rye, barley, spelt and kamut all contain gluten. Oats is often contaminated** with gluten during processing and transportation.

I'm going to share exactly how gluten affects you, how to do the gluten elimination challenge, how to beat those cravings for cookies and cake (and other sweet stuff!), a comprehensive food intolerance questionnaire and available lab testing.

There are **many studies supporting the gluten-mood connection** – anxiety, social phobia, depression and even schizophrenia. A study titled "Psychiatric symptoms and celiac disease" states that celiac disease "should be taken into consideration in patients with psychiatric disorders particularly if you are not responsive to psychopharmacological therapy, because withdrawal of gluten from the diet usually results in disappearance of symptoms". Gluten can also cause **fatigue, aches and pains, poor focus** and of course **digestive problems** like **constipation, gas, diarrhea** and **bloating**.

I work with women with mood problems and I assess all my clients for gluten intolerance and most of them do experience **dramatic improvements on a gluten-free diet – improved mood, no more anxiety, more energy, better sleep and improved digestion**. One of my clients saw an almost complete **resolution of the eczema** that had been plaguing her for over 10 years, was

able to **get off her antidepressants** and **lost over 10 pounds**. Another client has her **Hashimotos thyroiditis** (an autoimmune disease affecting the thyroid) under control as a result of removing gluten from her diet. I've seen a number of people who have seen improvements in their **rheumatoid arthritis** (also an autoimmune disease) when they quit gluten.

### **Gluten Elimination Challenge: An easy way to figure out if it affects you!**

The easiest and most affordable way to figure out if gluten affects you is to do a **2-week gluten elimination trial** (and see how you feel) and then **provoke or challenge with gluten** (and see how you feel). The 2 week trial will mean **zero consumption of food containing wheat, rye, barley, spelt, kamut, triticale or oats**. It really is **best that you eat home-made, real, whole foods** (always, but especially during the trial) as gluten is so often “hidden” in many processed foods. **Watch for ingredients** like hydrolyzed protein, textured vegetable protein and all derivatives of wheat, oats, rye and barley (including barley malt, modified starch, most soy sauces and natural flavoring).

### **Other wonderful grains and nutritious starchy vegetables**

Rice, corn and buckwheat are acceptable, as are the wonderful ancient grains like quinoa and amaranth. You can find gluten-free-everything – pasta, crackers, you-name-it – made from rice, bean, potato, coconut and corn flour. There are also many wonderful recipes books but some call for margarine, soy milk and excessive sugar – so make substitutions as needed. Rather than simply replacing the problem grain with another grain, **consider incorporating more vegetables into your diet**. Starchy vegetables like sweet potato and squashes are a wonderfully nutritious source of carbohydrates.



### **Adding back the gluten**

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Once you have removed the gluten from your diet and seen improvements in your mood and other symptoms (digestive, pain, skin etc), add it back after 2 weeks and see if it affects you adversely. **This test is often more powerful for my clients than any lab test.** I've seen symptoms ranging from severe mood swings to terrible anxiety to stomach aches to general aches and pains to fatigue and brain fog (and all of the above in some very sensitive individuals). If you experience any of the above, then it's important that you **remove gluten from your diet** and work with a holistic health practitioner and consider additional testing.

### Using Amino Acids to Reduce and End Cravings



In *The Diet Cure* (2011), Julia Ross suggests using **targeted amino acids to help reduce cravings** and make it easier to avoid problem foods, especially carbohydrates such as baked goods, breads, and other grains, as well as dairy and sweets. This approach has been **extremely helpful** for the majority of my clients, **often within minutes of taking the amino acid**. Here are some examples:

- If you have **afternoon or evening cravings** for carbohydrates and gluten-containing grains, you may have **low serotonin**. Tryptophan or 5-hydroxytryptophan may help.
- If you **crave comfort foods** like bread, cookies, or ice cream, they may be providing an **endorphin rush**. Taking D-phenylalanine (DPA) may help.
- If you overeat bread, cereal, pasta, or dairy **to calm down**, you may have **low levels of GABA**. Taking supplemental GABA may help you relax and experience fewer anxiety-related cravings.
- If you're prone to **low blood sugar** and have **intense cravings for something sweet** or starchy, **glutamine really helps**, as it plays a role in moderating blood sugar levels.
- If you crave something sweet for a **quick energy fix**, you may have **low levels of catecholamines**. Taking supplemental tyrosine may help.

Glutamine is covered in chapter 2 of *The Antianxiety Food Solution*, and the other amino acids are discussed in chapter 6. Before supplementing with amino acids, be sure to read chapter 6 closely, especially the section “Amino Acid Precautions.”

### **Food Sensitivities Questionnaire** (from chapter 4 of *The Antianxiety Food Solution*)

This questionnaire will help you identify whether food sensitivities could be contributing to your anxiety or causing other emotional or physiological symptoms, including digestive problems. Check off any of the following signs and symptoms that apply to you on a regular basis:

#### **Part 1: Signs and Symptoms**

Anxiety, fear, panic attacks, or social phobia

Depression

Excessive daily mood swings or bipolar disorder

Preferring to eat certain foods daily, such as bread, pasta, cheese, or ice cream

Fatigue or drowsiness, especially after eating

Asthma, congestion, postnasal drip, or hay fever

Sensitivity to food dyes and additives, showing up in symptoms such as rashes or headaches

Insomnia

Digestive problems like gas, bloating, constipation, or diarrhea

Migraines or chronic headaches

Rashes, eczema, dermatitis, or psoriasis

Frequent colds and infections

#### **Part 2: Conditions**

Iron-deficiency anemia or low ferritin

Other nutrient deficiencies, particularly low vitamin D

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Inability to gain weight

History of colic as a child

Celiac disease, wheat or gluten sensitivity, or known issues with eating wheat or dairy

Having first-degree family members with celiac disease or gluten sensitivity

Type 1 diabetes or autoimmune thyroiditis

Having first-degree family members with type 1 diabetes or autoimmune thyroiditis

High whole blood histamine or seasonal environmental allergies

Low whole blood histamine or known food sensitivities

Pyroluria (see chapter 7)

Osteopenia, osteoporosis, or frequent bone fractures

Infertility, history of miscarriage, or having a baby with low birth weight

Epilepsy

Fibromyalgia or a neuromuscular condition, such as ataxia

Autism spectrum disorder or learning disorder, including attention deficit disorder or attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder

Schizophrenia or abnormal thinking

If you check off five or more items in each section, I encourage you to use this chapter to determine whether food sensitivities may be a factor in your anxiety. It may be worthwhile to be tested for celiac disease too. At a minimum, do the elimination-challenge trials as described, or find a nutritionist who can guide you through the process.

This questionnaire is based on my clinical experience working with clients with mood problems, food sensitivities, and celiac disease, along with information from *Nutrition and Mental Illness* (1987), by Carl Pfeiffer, *Digestive Wellness* (2004), by Elizabeth Lipski, and *Dangerous Grains* (2002), by James Braly and Ron Hoggan (2002).

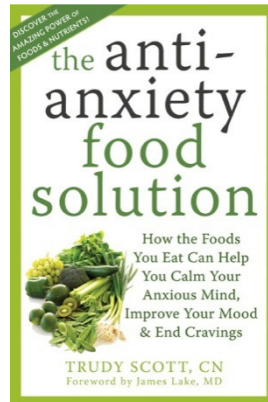
## Lab Tests

- Many at-home saliva tests for adrenal function, such as the Adrenal Stress Index (ASI) offered by Diagnos-Techs, include antigliadin antibodies.
- Delayed reactions to foods containing gluten (IgG food sensitivities) can be identified by blood tests that require either a blood (serum) draw or a finger prick. Known as an enzyme-linked immunosorbent assay (ELISA), this type of testing can be very effective, especially when considered in conjunction with your symptoms and health history and a food log.
- Elevated levels of two thyroid antibodies—antithyroglobulin and antithyroperoxidase—may indicate that you have Hashimoto’s thyroiditis, in which the body is creating antibodies to its own thyroid gland. This autoimmune condition is common among people with celiac disease or gluten sensitivity. Levels of both antibodies can be assessed with blood tests that your doctor can order.
- Two tests can help you determine whether you have celiac disease. One is a biopsy and the other is simple blood test measuring: IgA tissue transglutaminase (IgA-tTG), IgA antigliadin antibodies (IgA-AGA) and Serum IgA.
- The genes HLA-DQ2 and HLA-DQ8, are associated with a greater risk of having celiac disease, as well as other autoimmune diseases, including type 1 diabetes and autoimmune thyroid disease.

I am Trudy Scott, a Food-Mood expert and nutritionist and I educate women about real whole food and finding natural solutions for anxiety and stress, depression and low motivation and other mood problems. I am so passionate about what I do because I used to suffer terribly from anxiety, unexplained fears, waking with a sense of doom and even panic attacks - and I have used gluten elimination and the amazing healing powers of foods and nutrients to completely heal.

You can read more about gluten and other food intolerances in my book ***The Antianxiety Food Solution: How The Foods You Eat Can Help You Calm Your Anxious Mind, Improve Your Mood and End Cravings***. You can also read about the other areas that may affect your mood: eating real whole food (including four unique antianxiety food solution diets), avoiding sugar and balancing blood sugar, avoiding caffeine and alcohol, optimizing digestion, balancing brain chemistry, addressing zinc and vitamin B6 deficiencies and lifestyle factors. You will be able to

use this information to take charge of your mental and physical health – so you can feel on top of the world always!



I invite you to sign up for my twice-a-month ezine “*Food, Mood and Gal Stuff*” here [www.anti-anxietyfoodsolution.com](http://www.anti-anxietyfoodsolution.com) or here [www.everywomanover29.com](http://www.everywomanover29.com). You’ll get up-to-date information, new research, recipes, workshop, new product information and two free Special Reports “*5 Simple Steps to Reduce Anxiety Now*” and “*9 Great Questions Women Ask About Food, Mood and their Health*”. You can also find many great articles on my blog [www.everywomanover29.com/blog](http://www.everywomanover29.com/blog)

And if you need more help and one-one support, please contact me about a consultation. I do work with people all over the world and we start the process with a complimentary 15-minute phone consultation. Again, please just email me [trudy@everywomanover29.com](mailto:trudy@everywomanover29.com)

To your health and happiness!

*Trudy*

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