



AVOIDING CROSS CONTAMINATION

For Gluten Sensitive Sufferers it is as important to avoid cross contamination in the home as it is reading food labels to ensure your food shopping is free of Gluten. Limits for acceptable amounts of Gluten in foods are less than 20 parts per million in the UK and less than 6 part per million in parts of the EU. This means even the smallest crumb could lead to someone being “Glutened”.

However by introducing a number of simple steps in the kitchen can minimize the risk of cross contamination. Food preparation surfaces and chopping boards should be washed in warm soapy water, then rinsed off , before use and of course you should frequently wash your hands. Wooden bread boards and utensils should not be used for Gluten free bread or bakery products as it is not possible to clean Gluten fully from them. A separate toaster should be used for Gluten bread or if this is not possible then food bags should be used to protect the Gluten free bread from contamination. These can be obtained from Coeliac UK. Another area where contamination can occur is when the same knife is used on spreads, including jams, butter, margarines etc where these are spread over both Gluten Free Bread and normal bread.

When eating out in restaurants ideally the same rules need to be applied. Prior to booking a table call ahead to check if the restaurant uses a separate

food preparation area for gluten free foods. Speak to staff on arrival to communicate your special needs for both food preparation areas and GF ingredients. You might also want to check that all staff have had awareness training to prevent cross contamination. Caterers should also be able to provide information on the allergens in dishes they serve, if in doubt ask.

This list is not exhaustive and each kitchen may present new considerations to prevent cross contamination. For instance pet owners should check what goes into their pet food as it is known that some brands of pet food contain gluten. When preparing foods it makes sense to extend the same rules as if you were preparing your food and make sure surfaces and utensils are washed down well with hot soapy water.

Lastly as Gluten can be airborne caution should always be observed at all times.

KEY TAKEAWAYS;

- Wash worktops and food preparation boards in hot soapy water before and after preparing food
- Do not use wooden boards and utensils in the gluten free kitchen
- Do not share the same toaster for gluten bread and gluten free bread
- When eating out speak to the manager when making booking to confirm their implementation of GF areas.

Disclaimer

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