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Celiac Disease: Wheat's Role in our Lifestyles and The Cost of Going Gluten Free

Celiac disease (CD), an autoimmune disorder causing the destruction of microvilli in the small intestine when in the presence of gluten, has become significantly more prevalent over the last decade. CD is often undiagnosed, yet in the US, about 1 in 133 people are living with CD. Costly biopsies, blood tests, and genetic testing make it difficult for many patients to validate the diagnosis. This literature review describes recent studies involving CD, and primarily aims to aid those trying to manage CD with limited resources. Research focuses on the response of emergency food providers, and how limited resource individuals can eat gluten free. Ideas like, creating meals based on naturally gluten free ingredients to avoid the steep prices of specially processed gluten free foods or substituting rice, quinoa, corn, bean, nut, and soy products can provide cheaper alternatives. Food banks around the country have recognized the increasing need for gluten free products. A variety of educational materials were created to inform the community and suggest inexpensive ways to control symptoms. Educating the public, gluten free donations, as well as the continuation of research, all contribute to improving the lives of celiacs, particularly those experiencing financial pressure.