



# Gluten-Free eNewsletter

[http://bit.ly/GIGECW\\_Newsletters](http://bit.ly/GIGECW_Newsletters)

*Educate / Motivate / Advocate*

## The Name May Have Changed...



**Al Klapperich**

May 6, 2011 · 🧑

G.I.G. branch application has been filled out, signed, addressed and now waiting a stamp. That only took 2.5 years...



Peggy Vossekul Klapperich, Kimberly Stowell and 6 others

10 Comments

This memory appeared on my Facebook page the other day. Ten years ago this month we changed our name from East Central Wisconsin Gluten-Free Group to Gluten Intolerance Group of East Central Wisconsin.

We may have jumbled up the name, we have added some new faces, and we miss the old familiar faces, but at the end of the day (a decade + three?) we are still a gluten-free family.

In 2008, with the blessing and help of Peggy, we started ECWGFG. If we could pull one person out of the darkness and into the light, it'd all be worth it.

A huge THANK YOU our dedicated members - our gluten-free family. You make the group what it is. Without out you, we wouldn't exist. I'm hoping things will get back to normal this year, and we can meet in person.

Much Love,

Al & Peggy

### It's official, we are now a GIG Branch

📅 05/25/11 23:01 Filed in: [group](#)



Well now, that only took two and a half years to complete!

I received notice earlier this week that everything was approved. I am now in the process of reading through the handbook and related materials - lots of information to keep straight. I think my head will 'splode!

Officially we are now called *GIG of East Central Wisconsin*. Along with the new name, I am also in the process of re-doing the website. The new website is [GIGofECW.org](http://GIGofECW.org).

Currently, GIG is allowing us to keep individual branch websites, but they are also allowing us to have [branch pages](#) within their own website. I'm not sure how things will shake out yet, but stay tuned! I've also updated our [Facebook Page](#).

I am excited and yet somewhat nervous. Although it has been 25 years since I've started a new job, it feels like I'm starting a new job. I now have a "boss" to report to, lots of new things to learn and do.

I am excited because I feel GIG allows our little group to reach beyond the four walls of [RMC](#), beyond Ripon, beyond Wisconsin. This association allows us to do things nationally and globally - something that would be hard to do on our own. I **really** like what GIG does for the gluten-free community and I am proud to be a part it.

Thanks to everyone at GIG National and thanks to everyone that encouraged and supported me over the years [and continue to do so]. I wouldn't have been able to start this group without your help!

Here's to the next phase of our journey!

Al Klapperich  
GIG of ECW Branch Manager

## The Celiac Project Podcast - "Celiac State of the Union"

Mike and Cam share their thoughts on the "Celiac State of the Union" for Celiac Awareness Month.

They offer up five things that have improved and five things that need improvement.

What changes have evolved since you started your gluten-free journey? What improvements would you like to see?

Click here to listen:

<https://bit.ly/33y4Hbz>



Here is a summary of their list (in no particular order):

### Improved:

- Celiac is more normalized. More awareness. Less explaining in restaurants. The general public have been understanding - they either know someone, or have a family member.
- Number of medical studies being carried out. Exciting time for research. Hoping medication will be game changers. The process of developing the drugs will lead to a greater understanding of the condition.
- Food options are increasing - products in stores and on restaurant menus.. More products getting certified - great for celiacs, but companies are understanding the value and importance of certifications and going the extra mile.
- More recognition politically & legally. Legislation in the works - Gluten in Medication Act. Please contact your representative.
- Growing community size = louder voice.
- Increased and improved education opportunities. Getting great doctors to educate general public and fellow colleagues. Dr. Daniel Leffler feels science will discover a way to turn off the celiac gene expression!

### Needs Work:

- The undiagnosed rate of 83% hasn't appeared to have changed. Face of celiac is changing. GI symptoms vs asymptomatic. Neurological symptoms and non-gastro involvement (joint and bone health).
- Not all GF is equal. Items will be portrayed as GF, but not really GF - like in restaurants. Turn over in staff & management, policy & procedure changes, and supply chain issues due to COVID. Keep asking questions - changes may have occurred.
- The need for a gluten-challenge to get a diagnosis. Some changes have been made in the protocol to lessen exposure.
- More treatment options. Celiac disease is not new, but treatment options are lacking. Treatment options in development pipeline need to be effective for everyone.
- Too much confusion in Social Media when it comes to reliable and trustworthy information [gluten-reduced/removed beer or gluten-cutting enzymes]. Be wary. Get your info from trusted sources.
- Testing for dietary compliance. Something to accurately gauge/monitor compliance. The Tissue Transglutaminase Antibody test while excellent in diagnosis, is known to be a poor indicator for this aspect.
- More studies to increase the science.

## Aldi's Gluten-Free Finds May 2021

Every year during the month of May (Celiac Awareness Month), Aldi releases a select group of gluten-free products. These products are only available for a limited time - they're not available all year-round.

Some things to be aware of: Not all stores carry these items, so you may have to store-hop to find them. Each store puts out their products/restocks at various times. It's common for stores to roll out their items on Wednesday to coincide with their ads, however, some stores will stock the shelves before hand. These product are hot commodities, so they go fast. Some people swoop in and buy up large quantities - leaving little to nothing for other shoppers.



View Aldi's GF Finds: <https://bit.ly/33Elb1X>

Gluten Free			
 <p><b>Mama Cozzi's Pizza Kitchen</b> 12" Gluten Free Deli Pizza Cheese or Pepperoni</p> <p>each <b>\$5.99*</b> 17.5-17.78 oz.</p>	 <p><b>liveGfree</b> Linguini or Fettuccine</p> <p>each <b>\$3.49*</b> 9 oz.</p>	 <p><b>liveGfree</b> Gluten Free Stuffed Shells or Lasagna Roll-Ups</p> <p>each <b>\$5.99*</b> 12 oz.</p>	 <p><b>liveGfree</b> Gluten Free Seeds &amp; Grains Bread</p> <p>each <b>\$3.99*</b> 12 oz.</p>
 <p><b>liveGfree</b> Spinach &amp; Cheese or Cheese Ravioli</p> <p>each <b>\$3.99*</b> 10 oz.</p>	 <p><b>liveGfree</b> Gluten Free Cheesecake Sampler</p> <p>each <b>\$8.99*</b> 32 oz.</p>	 <p><b>liveGfree</b> Chicken Alfredo or Chicken Florentine Skillet Meal</p> <p>each <b>\$4.99*</b> 18 oz.</p>	 <p><b>liveGfree</b> Chocolate or Glazed Gluten Free Donuts</p> <p>each <b>\$4.49*</b> 10.5 oz.</p>
 <p><b>liveGfree</b> Gluten Free Stuffed Sandwiches</p> <p>each <b>\$2.99*</b> 9 oz.</p>	 <p><b>liveGfree</b> Gluten Free Egg Rolls Chicken or Vegetable</p> <p>each <b>\$4.99*</b> 9 oz.</p>		

## Eating Out Gluten-Free from a Professional Cook with Celiac



Our friends at Gluten Intolerance Group of Portland shared these thoughts from Cait Holmes, a chef with celiac disease. Cait offers some interesting food for thought. The COVID pandemic can make it even harder for restaurants to accommodate our needs. Trained help is in short supply. There maybe changes in management and to policies and procedures. Supply chain issues may be limiting or removing GF products/ingredients from the menu. Now, more than ever, we need to be asking questions - even at our tried, true, and trusted establishments.

*"Ok hi all. Now that restaurants are re-opening and everyone is asking questions about eating out, I want to do a small PSA from a food service worker with celiac disease.*

*I am a professional cook and sous chef. I have been working in GF and non GF kitchens for years.*

*Here's my input on eating out in non 100% gf restaurants.*

*You will have cross contamination in any "gf" food you get. As a celiac I can't even make sure no gluten gets into the gf food we sell. The cross contamination will be minimal but it will be there. Any regular cook/chef without allergies will cross contaminate your food even worse.*

*I have worked with countless cooks and chefs of all skill levels up to 3 Michelin stars and when I go into depth talking about CC and what 20 parts per million looks like they all quickly realize they can not make safe food for a celiac.*

*So eating out is all about knowing how much you are willing to risk. If you eat out repeatedly back to back the levels of gluten within you will go up and up making your reaction worse with time.*

*To be extra safe always call ahead and ask if they can make food safely for someone with celiac disease. It is the best way to phrase it.*

*Also it is safest to go when the restaurant is not busy, each server only handles 3-4 tables but there is typically only 1 cook for every 15 tables in the restaurant. The busier the cooks are the higher the chance of them cross contaminating your food.*

*You will get a lot of no's but it's better to be told no than to be told yes and get poisoned." ~ Cait Holmes*



# Centers for Disease Control & Prevention

## Safety of Activities











On May 13th, the CDC updated their guidance for fully vaccinated individuals. This new information bodes well for resuming in-person meetings. What do you think?

*"If you are fully vaccinated, you can resume activities that you did prior to the pandemic.*

*Fully vaccinated people can resume activities without wearing a mask or physically distancing, except where required by federal, state, local, tribal, or territorial laws, rules, and regulations, including local business and workplace guidance.*

*If you haven't been vaccinated yet, find a vaccine."*

Entire guidance is found here: <https://bit.ly/2Ql6uxB>

Outdoor Activities		
Unvaccinated People	Example Activities	Fully Vaccinated People
 Safe	Walk, run, wheelchair roll, or bike outdoors with members of your household	 Safe
 Safe	Attend a small, outdoor gathering with fully vaccinated family and friends	 Safe
 Safe	Attend a small, outdoor gathering with fully vaccinated and unvaccinated people	 Safe
 Less Safe	Dine at an outdoor restaurant with friends from multiple households	 Safe
 Least Safe	Attend a crowded, outdoor event, like a live performance, parade, or sports event	 Safe

Indoor Activities		
Unvaccinated People	Example Activities	Fully Vaccinated People
 Less Safe	Visit a barber or hair salon	 Safe
 Less Safe	Go to an uncrowded, indoor shopping center or museum	 Safe
 Less Safe	Attend a small, indoor gathering of fully vaccinated and unvaccinated people from multiple households	 Safe
 Least Safe	Go to an indoor movie theater	 Safe
 Least Safe	Attend a full-capacity worship service	 Safe
 Least Safe	Sing in an indoor chorus	 Safe
 Least Safe	Eat at an indoor restaurant or bar	 Safe
 Least Safe	Participate in an indoor, high intensity exercise class	 Safe

## DiGiorno's Gluten-Free (?) Pizzas

Their newly released Pepperoni and Four Cheese pizzas have been burning up the internet recently. Why? Because they contain wheat starch. Like oats, wheat starch is a controversial ingredient. You'll need a variety of facts to make an informed decision to determine if wheat starch is right for you.

Wheat starch has been used in gluten-free products for decades - in some parts of the world - but not here in the USA. Elaine Hartsook, dietitian and original founder of the Gluten Intolerance Group, approached Ener-G Foods about their Low Protein bread. According ["Our Story"](#) on Ener-G's website, *"Elaine Hartsook, R.D., whom I hadn't previously met, came into the office and complained that we were "killing" her patients with our wheat starch bread."* Elaine discovered that celiac patients were purchasing and consuming this Low Protein bread developed for dialysis patients. Ener-G reports this bread probably contained less than 20 parts per million of gluten. Dr. Cyrus Rubin, inventor of the Rubin Biopsy Tube and professor of Gastroenterology at the University of Washington and his dietitian - yep - Elaine Hartsook met with Ener-G and asked them to develop a gluten-free bread without using wheat starch. By 1978, Ener-G created probably one of the first (only?), commercially available gluten-free breads.



### Gluten Intolerance Group Information on Wheat Starch Excerpts from "3 Tips for Gluten-Free Label Reading"

"A product that is labeled gluten-free may include the term "wheat" in the ingredient list (such as "wheat starch") or in a separate "Contains wheat" statement, but the label must also include the following statement: *"The wheat has been processed to allow this food to meet the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) requirements for gluten-free foods."*

If "wheat starch" is an ingredient in a GFCO-certified product, the wheat has been processed to such an extent that the food meets the GFCO standard of 10 ppm or less gluten. "

#### About Wheat Starch

"Someone allergic to wheat should avoid wheat starch. For someone avoiding gluten, wheat starch could contain gluten unless it is in a product that is certified or labeled gluten-free. In that case, the gluten in wheat starch has been processed out. **As long as the product is certified or labeled gluten-free, it is safe for someone avoiding gluten.**"

Read more: <https://bit.ly/2S6pZe4>

#### Things to know:

- Wheat starch IS allowed to be included in foods labeled gluten-free as long as the final product contains less than 20 parts per million.
- The FDA considers it an ingredient processed to remove gluten.
- The FDA states: "Wheat starch, when properly manufactured, does not involve hydrolysis of the gluten and can be protein-free."
- A 2014 study out of Germany - Wheat starch has been shown to contain a wide range of gluten: from less than 5 parts per million to over 10,000 parts per million - depending on the processing.

*DiGiorno's Pizzas Continued***DiGiorno's Ingredient List**

**INGREDIENTS:** WATER, WHEAT STARCH\*, LOW-MOISTURE PART-SKIM MOZZARELLA CHEESE (CULTURED PART-SKIM MILK, SALT, ENZYMES), TOMATO PASTE, PEPPERONI MADE WITH PORK, CHICKEN AND BEEF (PORK, MECHANICALLY SEPARATED CHICKEN, BEEF, SALT, CONTAINS 2% OR LESS OF SPICES, DEXTROSE, PORK STOCK, LACTIC ACID STARTER CULTURE, OLEORESIN OF PAPRIKA, FLAVORING, SODIUM NITRITE, SODIUM ASCORBATE, PAPRIKA, PROCESSED WITH NATURAL SMOKE FLAVOR, BHA, BHT, CITRIC ACID TO HELP PROTECT FLAVOR), 2% OR LESS OF VEGETABLE OIL (SOYBEAN OIL AND/OR CORN OIL), MODIFIED RICE STARCH, SUGAR, SALT, BUCKWHEAT FLOUR, YEAST, FLAX SEED, GUAR GUM, PSYLLIUM FIBER, SPICES, DRIED GARLIC.

**CONTAINS: WHEAT\*, MILK.**

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\*The wheat has been processed to allow this food to meet the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) requirements for gluten-free foods.

Anytime information is needed, you folks know that I'm going to include Tricia Thompson, MS, RD. Without further ado...

**Tricia Thompson, MS, RD of Gluten-Free Watchdog**  
**Excerpts from "Does Wheat Starch Belong in a Gluten-Free Diet?"**  
**May 2017**



"Wheat starch is not wheat grain and it is not wheat protein. It is not intended to contain any gluten. BUT it is very difficult to completely separate the starch and protein components of wheat so small amounts of gluten remain in the wheat starch. Not all wheat starch is created equal. Depending on the extent of processing wheat starch will contain varying amounts of residual gluten."

"In 2008 I wrote the following on wheat starch (from the Gluten Free Nutrition Guide, McGraw Hill):

*"... If a manufacturer of wheat starch or products containing wheat starch demonstrates through testing that its products contain less than 20 parts per million of gluten, then in theory I support their consumption by people with celiac disease."*

BUT more is known today about testing wheat starch for gluten than was known 10 years ago."

"Updated opinion on wheat starch..."

**Because of the current limitations associated with testing wheat starch for gluten, it is the opinion of Gluten Free Watchdog that products containing wheat starch are best avoided by individuals with celiac disease.**

That said, if you have celiac disease or another gluten-related disorder and you would like to eat wheat-starch based foods, it is the recommendation of Gluten Free Watchdog that you do the following:

1. Eat foods containing wheat starch only if the product is labeled gluten-free.
2. Establish with the manufacturer that the final product is tested using both a sandwich and competitive ELISA.

Read more: <https://bit.ly/33Su9c0> I invite you to read this entire article.

Gluten-Free Watchdog's "Using Wheat Starch in Gluten-Free Food" - April 2015: <https://bit.ly/3hxbACi>

Gluten-Free Watchdog's "What the FDA has to say about wheat starch" - Sept 2020: <https://bit.ly/33T5Af8>

*DiGiorno's Pizzas Continued*

An interesting article was published by Van Waffle on GlutenFreeLiving.com in February 2015. Van's article offers a good bit of history and background information on wheat starch. Included in the article are the thoughts and advice of several trusted experts in the gluten-free community. You'll notice different perspectives on this ingredient.

**GlutenFreeLiving.com • Van Waffle**  
**Excerpts from "The New Word on Wheat Starch"**  
**February 2015**

"Products made with gluten-free wheat starch are absolutely safe, says Cureton, even for people with particularly high sensitivity to gluten. Wheat starch contains such a tiny amount of gluten that it doesn't significantly add to the gluten level in the final product. But consumers have to continue to read labels, understand what they mean, and make sure anything containing wheat starch also identifies itself as gluten-free and says that the ingredient has been processed to remove gluten."

"Wheat starch in a gluten-free food may come as a surprise to U.S. consumers, but it has an established record in Europe where Dr. Schär has used it for at least 20 years, according to Anne Lee, R.D., director of nutritional services for the company's U.S. operations in Lyndhurst, New Jersey.

Research has found no evidence that foods containing gluten-removed wheat starch harm people with celiac disease. A 2003 study at Tampere University Hospital in Finland tracked newly diagnosed patients after they adopted a gluten-free diet.

In recommending wheat starch, the authors of this study argued that minute contamination of less than 20 ppm of gluten is virtually impossible to avoid in any diet. International standards have accepted this level because it's considered safe for the vast majority of people with celiac disease."

"But some experts express skepticism. "I would not expect to see gluten-free wheat starch approved in Canada in the near future, but if the experience is a positive one in the United States, there may be a review of the situation in the mid to long term," says Sue Newell, operations manager for the Canadian Celiac Association.

While wheat glucose syrup, wheat-based caramel and wheat maltodextrin—gluten-free derivatives allowed by Canadian labeling law—occur in food only in small fractions, wheat starch could contribute a higher proportion to the final food product, Newell notes. And she worries about the cumulative effect from traces of gluten in wheat starch when added to unavoidable gluten from cross-contamination. "

"The Celiac Disease Foundation supports the legislation allowing wheat starch, however. "The FDA went through a vigorous consulting process with the national groups in celiac disease, both medical and scientific, and this was the consensus: that wheat starch that has been processed to remove gluten to the FDA standard is safe for the celiac disease population," says Marilyn Geller, chief executive officer of the foundation.

Authors of the Tampere University Hospital study point out wheat starch's benefits. Compliance with a gluten-free diet is more important to recovery than avoiding trace amounts of gluten, they say. Because wheat starch improves the flavor and texture of certain foods, it can mean the difference in some people's ability to accept such a difficult diet. "

Read more: <https://bit.ly/3tSvJoO> I invite you to read this entire article.

*DiGiorno's Pizzas Continued*

Schar has been a trusted and respected name in gluten-free community for decades. Currently, in the U.S. their Gluten-Free Croissants are made with wheat starch.

**Schar.com****Excerpts from "What You Should Know About Gluten Free Wheat Starch"****"Wheat Free vs. Gluten Free**

One thing to keep in mind when talking about wheat starch versus wheat flour is that gluten free does not necessarily mean wheat free, and vice versa. Remember, wheat starch is made from the same grain as wheat flour, it just goes through extra processing. This means that people who are intolerant or allergic to wheat - even if they are not sensitive to gluten - could have a negative reaction."

**"What Gluten Free Products Use Wheat Starch?"**

Although gluten free wheat starch has been approved by the FDA, there is still a great deal of skepticism about it. It may comfort you to know, however, that the use of wheat starch in gluten free foods has been rigorously tested. In fact, Schär has been using it for over 20 years. When gluten free wheat starch enters the Schär facility, it goes through additional testing using the ELISA method to ensure it meets standards. In fact, more than 90% of the wheat starch Schär uses tests below 5ppm."

"Research has shown no evidence that foods made with gluten-removed wheat starch are harmful to people with celiac disease."

**"The Bottom Line**

The truth of the matter is that it is entirely your choice which food products you do and do not eat.

For the most part, wheat starch can be considered a safe ingredient as long as it is labeled gluten free. You still need to do your due diligence in reading food labels, but as long as a product is certified gluten free it is safe to eat. "

Read more: <https://bit.ly/2QrzzaJ>

I've thrown a lot of information at you. Hopefully, there is enough here for you to make an educated choice.

Alan Klapperich - Branch Manager

## GIG of ECW's Picnic 2021



During our Tuesday night meeting, we worked out the details of our first in-person meeting since March 2020. YAY!

**When: Saturday, July 24th @ 4:30 P.M.**

**Where: Ceresco Park, Ripon (same place as 2019)  
Union, North, Church, and Warren Streets**

We'll be having grilled brats, and hotdogs.

For those new to the picnic, everyone brings a dish to pass. Please remember to bring a printed recipe for your dish. The recipe will help others if they have additional foods they need to avoid.

If you are concerned about D2PD (Dish-2-Pass Duplication) - please let me know what you're bringing and I'll share the list in a group email.

BYOBuns - Over the years, we've discovered most members passed on buns. If you're bun person, please bring your favorite GF buns.

Bring a comfy chair for your non-edible buns if sitting on picnic table bench seats isn't your thing.

Also, feel free to bring any beverages of your choice (adult GF beverages are acceptable).

Big thanks to Jane and Jeff Davison for providing the bottled water!

Please let me know how many will be in your party so I know how many brats and dogs to prepare.

Looking forward to seeing everyone!



## Goodbye, Red Robin Bacon Strips

Heads up if you dine at Red Robin.

The bacon is now off-limits. Evidently, they are now frying it in their non-GF fryer.

*Very sad, because this was my favorite burger to order.*

Always remember to check their Allergen Menu before you order.

<https://www.redrobin.com/pages/allergens/>



**Guacamole Bacon Burger**

Ingredients

- Classic Sesame Bun SWAP

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- Burger Patty

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- Premium Mayonnaise

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- Tomato Slices

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- Shredded Iceberg Lettuce

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- Fresh Red Onion Rings

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- Guacamole

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- Sliced Swiss Cheese

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- Bacon Strips

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- Red Robin Seasoning

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CAUTION: Grilled Burger Patties May Be Cross-contacted During Cooking

**WEDNESDAY, MAY 26TH**  
8 PM ET / 5 PM PT


## Celiac Disease: Getting the Supports You Need

- The pros and cons of family and friends as support
- How to find reputable sources of information online – and avoid the misinformation
- The scientific benefits of peer-to-peer support and support groups
- Identifying, and working with, healthcare providers in addition to your doctor


**A FREE VIRTUAL EVENT!**

gluten.org


**OUR EXPERT PANEL**



**Dr. Dale Lee, MD**  
Pediatric Gastroenterology,  
Seattle Children's Hospital



**Alyse Bedell, PhD**  
GI Health Psychologist Assistant  
Professor of Psychiatry & Behavioral  
Neuroscience, The University of Chicago



**Lori Welstead, RDN**  
U of Chicago Celiac Disease Center and  
GIG Chicago Support Group Co-Leader

Event by Gluten Intolerance Group • Online: [us02web.zoom.us](https://us02web.zoom.us) • Wednesday, May 26, 2021 at 7 PM CDT – 8 PM CDT

Price: Free · Duration: 1 hr

A celiac disease diagnosis can be both a shock and a relief: shock to hear your health condition means you have to make permanent changes to how you live and relief that you finally know what's wrong.

Getting the supports you need after diagnosis can help you navigate the physical, mental, and emotional challenges you might face.

In this dynamic panel, we'll talk about:

- The pros and cons of support from family and friends
- How to find reputable sources of information online – and avoid misinformation
- The scientific benefits of peer-to-peer support and support groups
- Identifying and working with healthcare providers in addition to your doctor

Bring your questions and curiosity to learn more from our Guest Experts:

- Dr. Dale Lee, MD, Pediatric Gastroenterology, Seattle Children's Hospital
- Alyse Bedell, GI Health Psychologist Assistant Professor of Psychiatry & Behavioral Neuroscience, The University of Chicago
- Lori Welstead, RDN, U of Chicago Celiac Disease Center and GIG Chicago Support Group Co-Leader

Find out more here: <https://bit.ly/3yBe9cC>



## It's GIG's 47th Birthday!

Thank you for supporting our mission to make life easier for everyone living gluten-free.



*"It's our 47th birthday, and our small team is excited to celebrate (a few of us wanted to say hi!) For over 4 decades, our non-profit organization has been committed to making life easier for everyone living gluten-free - here's how:*

→ *Generation GF provides support for children and families living with gluten-related disorders. Through our peer-to-peer mentor programs, support groups, summer camps, and events like our Teen Summit, we work to empower kids through education, support, and fun!*

→ *The Gluten-Free Certification Organization (GFCO) began in 2005 when GIG's leadership recognized a strong need for easy-to-identify labeling of safe, gluten-free products for consumers. Since then, GFCO has certified over 60,000 products to make shopping for and selecting gluten-free products easier and less confusing.*

→ *The Gluten-Free Food Service Certification Program started in 2014 and provides a set of standards and procedures that food service establishments follow to provide safe food handling practices for gluten-free food production and service. With over 359 Safe Spots to date, GFFS works to make dining out easier and less stressful for anyone living gluten-free.*

→ *GIG Outreach program has existed since the very beginning and focuses on supporting the gluten-free community through educational initiatives and community-based efforts. To date, there are around 85 local support groups that provide safe spaces for connection and assistance from others living gluten-free in their area. Additionally, outreach works to empower medical professionals like retail dietitians and school nurses with knowledge on celiac disease and gluten-free living to better support the populations they serve.*

→ *GIG's Cutting Costs program is in development and will work to address the financial burden of living gluten-free for individuals and families who struggle with food insecurity.*



### GIG of ECW - We Speak Gluten-Free

**When:** The third Saturday of odd numbered months (January, March, May, July/August, September, November). 9:30AM to 11:30AM

**Where:** Where ever you are! Since March 2020, we've been meeting virtually via [Zoom](#) due to the COVID-19 pandemic. When we meet in-person, we gather at [Ripon Public Library](#).

Check our [Facebook page](#) for updates and notifications.

***Gluten Intolerance Group's Mission:  
Making life easier for everyone living gluten-free.***