

LABEL READING ROADMAP

1 Is the product labeled gluten-free?

If so, you can purchase the product knowing that it's safe for people with celiac disease. If not, continue to the next stop.

2

Does the product's allergen statement have wheat listed?

If yes, do not purchase the product.** If no, continue to the next stop.

**Turn the page over for more information about gluten-free wheat starch.

3 Read the rest of the ingredients list.

You can find safe & unsafe ingredient lists on our website. Does it contain any gluten-containing ingredients? If yes, do not purchase the product. If no, continue to the next stop.

3

4

Does the product have any voluntary labeling?

This includes language like "May Contain" or "Produced in a Facility." If yes, follow the stoplight system in our Voluntary Labeling handout (available on our website). If no, continue to the next stop.

5 Use your best judgement.

There are many products that are naturally gluten-free but are not labeled gluten-free. Refer to the next page for more information to make an informed decision about whether to purchase the product.

5

Children's National Celiac Disease Program

[www.childrensnational.org/departments/
ceeliac-disease-program](http://www.childrensnational.org/departments/ceeliac-disease-program)
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Children's National

What should you do if you come across a product that does not have any gluten-containing ingredients but also does not have a gluten-free label?



In 2014, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) introduced the Gluten-Free Labeling Rule that standardized the definition of “gluten-free” on packaged products. It requires that if a manufacturer labels their product as gluten-free, it must not contain wheat, barley, rye, or any derivatives of those ingredients, OR be processed to contain less than 20 parts per million (ppm) gluten. Before this rule, people with celiac disease relied only on ingredient lists or non-standardized “gluten-free” claims.

Today, many foods are naturally gluten-free but are not labeled as such. Testing for gluten can be very expensive, so many food companies choose not to include a gluten-free claim. It would be overly restrictive for patients with celiac disease to completely avoid any product that is not labeled gluten-free. What you and your family do will depend on a number of factors, including comfort level. However, you can ask yourself a couple of questions to determine if a product is gluten-free without a gluten-free label:

1

Are there any grain or grain-adjacent ingredients?

This includes things like rice, corn, buckwheat, amaranth, beans, legumes, etc. The preference here would be to buy something that is labeled as gluten-free because there is more of a chance that the item has had cross-contact with gluten.

Rice flour is naturally gluten-free, but grains can sometimes be processed with or near each other. The best option here would be to purchase a rice flour that is labeled as gluten-free.

2

What would manufacturing processes look like?

Are there any obvious ways that grains could sneak in through cross-contact? Look to the examples on the right to understand the decision-making process.

Tomato sauce typically contains tomatoes, olive oil, herbs, and spices. While wheat flour can sometimes be found in herb and spice blends as a bulking agent, its presence would be required to be listed in the ingredients list. Pure herbs and spices are gluten-free. In this case, a tomato sauce that is not labeled gluten-free would likely be fine for someone with celiac disease to eat.