

The mission of the University of Chicago Celiac Disease Center is to raise diagnosis rates for celiac disease and meet the critical needs of people with the condition, through education, research, and advocacy.

# WHAT TO KNOW

## What is Celiac Disease?

When people who have celiac disease eat foods with gluten in them, it triggers an immune response that damages the lining of the upper small intestine and its tiny hair-like structures called villi. Because villi absorb nutrients from the foods we eat, when they are damaged, the body doesn't get properly nourished. This can result in other conditions and diseases that may cause complications and affect quality of life in people who have not been properly diagnosed with celiac disease, or who do not avoid eating gluten.

**You may hear celiac disease referred to as an autoimmune condition. That's because it's the body's own immune system that attacks the body.**

**Whether you are newly diagnosed or have been living with celiac disease for decades, education is key to staying healthy and enjoying a high quality of life.** At The Celiac Disease Center, one of our goals is to provide information that makes following a gluten-free diet as easy as possible.

If you have any questions, please reach out. Your care team is only a phone call away.



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