

# Eat this, not that

## Expert walks the talk on gluten sensitivity

BY HATTIE KLOTZ, OTTAWA CITIZEN MARCH 27, 2014



Holistic nutritionist Terry Battles.

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One wrong mouthful could result in days of pain for Terry Battles. The registered holistic nutritionist is celiac and is allergic to gluten. She suffers debilitating consequences if she eats the wrong food.

For those suffering with digestive issues, it's not just gluten that can upset sensitive digestive systems.

“Often, a gluten sensitivity goes hand in hand with other sensitivities, such as dairy and eggs,” she explains.

Battles owns Healthy Belly Nutrition consultancy and guides clients in their diet by avoiding foods that aggravate symptoms such as bloating, diarrhea, lack of energy, depression, weakened immune systems, low iron, skin conditions, constipation and brain fog.

“The most important thing is to learn to really nourish your body, eating whole foods and grains.”

Of course, Battles is aware of the increase in the number of people who choose not to eat gluten. “I always recommend that you go and get tested. People who discover that they are celiac have to go gluten-free, but there are plenty of others who discover a gluten sensitivity who eliminate it from their diet and do see a difference in how they feel, and they see it pretty quickly.”

The secret to better health through better eating, says Battles, is not to simply cut gluten from your diet and replace it with gluten-free products. “Plenty of these are nutrient-devoid products with a lot of sugar,” she explains. “Gluten-free junk food is still junk food. The goal is to feed your body with good-quality nutrition.”

On the whole, Battles welcomes the increased awareness of issues of gluten-intolerance.

“It’s a good thing because it’s got so many more people talking about digestive issues, and then they realize that it’s not normal to feel the way they do. There is a disconnect from our bodies that this conversation is helping to change,” she says. But on the other hand, there’s not enough awareness of the issues of cross-contamination for celiacs and those with extreme sensitivity. Just a tiny bit of gluten is enough to make a person severely ill, and this can happen by sharing a cutting board, toaster or mixing ingredients.

Nonetheless, Battles is “very optimistic” with people’s growing interest in holistic health.

“There are more and more local producers making good, gluten-free whole foods,” she says, “and people are realizing that a few simple things can make a massive change in your life.”

Battles will offer free consultations on holistic nutrition at Gluten-Free Utopia on April 5. She will also give a series of free talks at Ottawa Library locations on supporting women’s health at all life stages, with Dr. Ellen Simone, in April and May.

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