

## UNDERSTANDING GLUTEN INTOLERANCE

*StoneTree Naturopathic Clinic, Collingwood, ON*

Many people have problems when they eat wheat. It gives them stomach pain, constipation, diarrhea, headaches, chronic coughs, brain fog, fatigue, depression or any number of other symptoms.

What people don't often realize is that a gluten intolerance may be the culprit.

Gluten is a protein source found in wheat, bran, barley and other grass-related grains. When we're intolerant of gluten, the immune cells in our gut see gluten as an invader, and attack. (Gluten intolerance is not the same as celiac disease, an autoimmune disease in which the immune system attacks the walls of the intestine.)

This process makes a small amount of inflammation. Usually, this is no big deal – just a normal and healthy response to an invader. The problem is that in our culture, we eat *a lot* of gluten.

Bread, pasta, cereal - with each meal, the immune system sees invaders and reacts with inflammation over and over again. Over time, the inflammation builds up, and so do the symptoms.

### **Testing Your Reaction**

It can be difficult to connect what we eat with how we feel. How do you know if you have a gluten intolerance?

Gluten intolerance can be determined in a couple of ways. The first is an elimination diet. Simply remove gluten completely from your diet for 30 days, then reintroduce it and see if your symptoms come back.

If a radical diet change is too hard, gluten intolerance can also be determined through an IgG antibody test, which measures the antibodies in blood to different food proteins.

*To learn more about solutions for chronic digestive complaints, book a complimentary 15-minute visit with a naturopathic doctor in our Collingwood, ON clinic by calling 705-444-5331, or emailing us at [feelbetter@stonetreeclinic.com](mailto:feelbetter@stonetreeclinic.com)  
[www.StoneTreeClinic.com](http://www.StoneTreeClinic.com)*