

# The Gluten-Mood Connection

## Trudy Scott on the Gluten-Mood Connection

There are many studies supporting the gluten-mood connection – anxiety, social phobia, depression and even schizophrenia. A 2002 study titled [Psychiatric Symptoms and Celiac Disease](#) states that celiac disease “should be taken into consideration in patients with psychiatric disorders particularly if you are not responsive to psycho-pharmacological therapy, because withdrawal of gluten from the diet usually results in disappearance of symptoms.”

Gluten can also cause fatigue, aches and pains, poor focus and of course digestive problems like constipation, gas, diarrhea and bloating, and these symptoms.

I work with women with mood problems and I assess all my clients for gluten intolerance and most of them do experience dramatic improvements on a gluten-free diet – improved mood, no more anxiety, more energy, better sleep and improved digestion.

Of course, there are physical health issues as well, affected by gluten. One of my clients saw an almost complete resolution of the eczema that had been plaguing her for over 10 years, was able to get off her antidepressants and lost over 10 pounds. Another client has her Hashimoto's thyroiditis (an autoimmune disease affecting the thyroid) under control as a result of removing gluten from her diet. I've seen a number of people who have seen improvements in their rheumatoid arthritis (also an autoimmune disease) when they quit gluten.

There are three types of reactions to gluten:

(1) With a true wheat allergy, IgE (immunoglobulin E) antibodies are created and the reaction is immediate and severe anaphylaxis results

(2) With celiac disease, there is an autoimmune component

(3) With gluten sensitivity (GS), IgG (immunoglobulin G) antibodies are created and the symptoms can be delayed and show up 1 to 3 days after gluten is eaten

For the first time there is now consensus in the medical community on the different types of gluten reactions [Sapone 2012] and the medical community acknowledges that gluten sensitivity is a very real condition with the GI symptoms being very similar to celiac disease [Sapone 2011].

As a nutritionist this is very exciting to me because it's something we have known about in the nutrition world for many years. If one of my clients has mood problems or troublesome physical symptoms and avoiding gluten makes a difference, it makes sense to remove gluten from the diet, even if they do not have a celiac disease diagnosis.

Keep in mind that much of the earlier research linking gluten to mental health was done with patients with celiac disease, simply because gluten sensitivity was not recognized, however this is an evolving field and I anticipate we'll be seeing much more research looking at the link between gluten and mental health. Dr. Fasano is one of the leading researchers in this field and states that gluten sensitivity is “undertreated and underrecognized as a contributing factor to psychiatric & neurologic manifestations.” [Jackson & Fasano 2012.]

Trudy Scott is a nationally-known nutritionist and author of *The Antianxiety Food Solution*.

### References:

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