



NEWSLETTER



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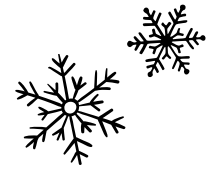
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WHO WE ARE



The Calgary Celiac Association serves our local community through programs of awareness, advocacy, community events, education and research. We are a chapter of Celiac Canada.

Celiac Canada is the national voice for people who are adversely affected by gluten and dedicated to improving diagnosis and quality of life.

CONNECT WITH US

OFFICE HOURS
 Tuesday and Thursday
 10:00 AM - 3:00 PM
 Visitors by appointment only.

GENERAL INQUIRES
 403-237-0304
info@calgaryceliac.ca

OUR TEAM

President	Lisa Cerato president@calgaryceliac.ca
Vice President	Christy-Lynn Jenkins
Treasurer	Brooke Barrett
Secretary	Daphne Nakhid
Directors	Kristen Stringer Bob MacEwan Sonya Hope Dana Hagg
Charity Administrator	Trenna Allain admin@calgaryceliac.ca
Event Coordinator	Allison Robinson events@calgaryceliac.ca

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MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT

SPRING FORWARD: ADVOCATING FOR CELIAC AWARENESS & FOOD SECURITY

As we prepare for the renewal of spring, I believe it is a perfect time to reflect on how we can make a lasting impact in our communities. For those living with celiac disease, access to safe, nutritious food is not just a preference, it is a necessity. Yet too many people face food insecurity, struggling to find gluten-free options that fit their medical needs.



Lisa Cerato

Calgary Celiac Chapter President
2023 - Present

This year let's make a difference. Advocacy starts with awareness. As a community, we must work to ensure that all people, regardless of income or background, have access to the food they need to thrive. Supporting policies that increase access to gluten free foods in food assistance programs, encouraging local food banks to stock safe options, and pushing for greater food labeling transparency. It also means standing with those who need our help by donating gluten-free items and spreading the word about available resources. **Check out our Q and A article with the Calgary Food Bank in this issue.**

The CCA Education committee continues to host local grocery store tours around Calgary and provide suggestions for healthy gluten free eating and shopping on a budget. Most recently, the committee is preparing a communication document that raises celiac awareness and advocacy with local post-secondary institutions. Stay tuned for more information about this initiative in our May is Celiac Awareness Month newsletter.

In the coming months, we will be busy planning several community events and our board and staff are focused on updating our strategic plan. A Celiac community survey will be launched in the next few weeks asking for your feedback on how we can make this chapter even better. In my quest for a personal best, I have started preparing for a yearlong fitness challenge, aiming to complete four 10K races and a half marathon.

Registration is now open for anyone interested in joining our CCA Fundraising Team at the Servus Calgary Marathon. This event remains a major fundraiser for our Calgary chapter, helping to support both local initiatives and national celiac disease research. If you've ever considered participating, we would love to have you join our team. Feel free to bring along family and friends to help fundraise with us.

If you have any thoughts on how we can make an impact in our celiac community, please let us know. We appreciate hearing from you and are always open to comments & suggestions.

In good health,

Lisa



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UNCOMPROMISED
CRAFTSMANSHIP

2024 BY THE NUMBERS

Here are just a few ways Calgary Celiac impacted the community last year.



CALGARY FOOD BANK DRIVES

394 lbs GF food donations

\$490 Cash donations

- 18** Events Hosted
- 36** Marathon Racers
- 72** Peer Support Interactions
- 109** Volunteers
- 1446** Event Attendees



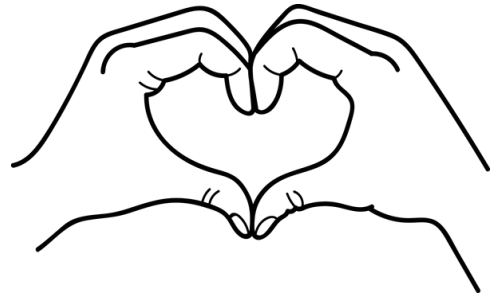
FUNDRAISING

\$275 Skip the Depot donations

\$5,057 Marathon donations



THANK YOU VOLUNTEERS



We want to thank our volunteers and advocates affiliated with the Calgary Celiac Association.

Beyond generous monetary donations, many of you gave countless hours of your time and were the voices that drive change.

Whether you donated, fundraised, or volunteered your time or knowledge, you helped create awareness surrounding Celiac Disease and gluten related disorders. Thank you for your support!

Stay tuned for more information about our Volunteer Appreciation event in April!



Join Us!

We are always looking for friendly, knowledgeable, and enthusiastic volunteers to fill various roles in:

- ADVOCACY
- BOARD OF DIRECTORS
- EDUCATION
- EVENTS
- FUNDRAISING

Email your interest to:
info@calgaryceliac.ca



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NAVIGATING DATING WITH CELIAC DISEASE

Dating can be a complex experience for anyone, but for individuals with celiac disease (CD), it presents a unique set of challenges. The need to adhere strictly to a gluten-free diet can affect various aspects of dating, from choosing a restaurant to the intimacy of kissing. Insights from Celiac Canada's *State of Celiac Survey* and other studies shed light on these challenges and provide valuable guidance for navigating the dating scene with celiac disease.

“
35.6%
of respondents
feel that the
gluten-free diet
affects their
relationships
”

THE CHALLENGES

The Impact of Celiac Disease on Dating According to Celiac Canada's *State of Celiac Survey* shows 35.6% of respondents feel that the gluten-free diet affects their relationships at least some of the time. Another study, *The Impacts of Celiac Disease on Dating*, found that most participants felt that it had a major or moderate impact on their dating life. This impact manifests in several ways, including:

- **Hesitation Toward Dating and Kissing:** Many individuals with celiac disease are hesitant to start dating or engage in physical intimacy due to concerns about gluten contamination.
- **Decreased Quality of Life (QOL):** The need to constantly manage their diet can lead to a lower quality of life and greater social anxiety.
- **Less Adaptive Eating Attitudes and Behaviors:** Some people with celiac disease may engage in riskier eating behaviors or intentionally consume gluten.
- **Social Challenges:** While on dates, 39.3% of respondents were uncomfortable explaining precautions to waiters, 28.2% engaged in riskier eating behaviors, and 7.5% intentionally consumed gluten.
- **Intimacy Concerns:** 39.0% of all participants were hesitant to kiss their partner because of celiac disease, with females being more hesitant than males (41.1% vs. 22.7%).

THE STRATEGIES

Despite these challenges, there are ways to manage celiac disease while maintaining a fulfilling dating life:

- **Open Communication:** Being upfront about your condition early on can set the stage for understanding and support. Explain what celiac disease is, the importance of a gluten-free diet, and how it affects your daily life.
- **Choosing Safe Restaurants:** Research and select restaurants that offer gluten-free options and have good reviews from the celiac community. Calling ahead to discuss your dietary needs with the staff can also ensure a safer dining experience.
- **Plan Non-Food Dates:** Consider planning dates that do not revolve around food, such as going to a movie, visiting a museum, or taking a walk in the park. This can reduce the stress associated with finding safe food options.
- **Carry Your Own Snacks:** Bring your own gluten-free snacks on dates to ensure you have something safe to eat if needed. This can be especially helpful in situations where gluten-free options are limited.
- **Stay Confident:** Confidence in managing your condition can make a big difference. Trust that you know what's best for your health and don't be afraid to prioritize your well-being.



References: Celiac Canada's 2024 State Of Celiac Survey Results: Navigating Dating with Celiac Disease.
<https://www.celiac.ca/state-of-celiac/>

Dating with celiac disease undoubtedly presents unique challenges, but with the right strategies, it is entirely possible to maintain a fulfilling and enjoyable dating life. Open communication, careful planning, and a supportive partner can help you navigate the complexities of dating while managing celiac disease. By taking proactive steps to educate yourself and your partner, you can build a relationship that respects your dietary needs and enhances your quality of life.



GLUTEN FREE EXPO

by **LOKAL.**

Canada's biggest
**GLUTEN
FREE
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**April 13, 2025
BMO Center**

**100+
brands**

**\$5
TICKETS**

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the Calgary Food Bank

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GFEXPO.CA

GLUTEN FREE PLAYDOUGH

1. In a large bowl, add all of the dry ingredients: flour, salt and cream of tartar. Mix until well combined.
2. In the second bowl, add vegetable oil and water. Now add the Kool Aid packet. Whisk well.
3. Add the wet ingredients to the dry. Mix everything together until completely blended. If the mixture is too dry, add a bit more water. If the mixture is too wet, add a bit more flour. Just add bits until you get a nice consistency.
4. Take the playdough out of the bowl and knead until smooth.
5. Repeat for each color until you have created your rainbow of playdough!
6. Store the playdough in an airtight container or plastic bag. It is best to store the colors individually.

Gather the following ingredients to start making your playdough one colour at a time.



- 1 c. Gluten Free flour
- 1/4 c. salt
- 1/2 c. hot water
- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 1 tsp cream of tartar
- Kool Aid packet in color of your choice



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Sunday



When it comes to kid's crafts, homemade slime is one of the best ideas! It's easy, quick, and super inexpensive.



- 8 oz bottle Elmer's white school glue
- 1 tbsp baking soda
- 1 ½ - 2 tbsp contact solution, saline solution or slime activator (more as needed)
- Optional: food coloring

GLUTEN FREE SLIME

1. Place glue in a bowl. If you're adding food coloring, add it now until desired color is reached. Then mix in baking soda.
2. Add 1-1/2 tbsp of saline solution or slime activator and mix until combined. Add 1/2 tbsp more at a time if it is too sticky. The more you add, the thicker it'll be. The less you add, the slimier it will be.
3. Stir until you can no longer stir and then knead with your hands. It will be sticky at first, but keep moving it with your hands until it is no longer sticky and your desired consistency is reached.
4. Pull apart and have fun playing. Store in a covered container or ziploc bag. Best to play with on a place mat.

7TH
GLUTEN FREE MARKET
FROST EDITION

SATURDAY March 1st, 2025 10-3
 Marda Loop Community Hall
 3130 16 St SW Calgary T2T 4G7

RSVP
ON EVENTBRITE OR FB EVENTS

EMBRACELOKAL.CA LOKAL. EMBRACELOKAL.CA



MEMBERSHIP



The Perks

- Membership Discount Program
- Member Only events
- Early access to purchase tickets to some of our biggest events
- Voting rights at the annual AGM

Membership Discount Program

GF

Business?

If you would like to offer a discount to CCA members, please complete and email the [Membership Discount Enrollment Form](#) to admin@calgaryceliac.ca

Alkeme	15% online
Arepa Boss	10%
Arepas Ranch	10%
Avatara Pizza	12%
Delissitude	10%
Heaven Restaurant and Market	10%
Hornby Organic	10% online
M&M Food Market – Airdie	10%
M&M Food Market – Marlborough	10%
Miss P’s Gluten Free	10%
Misoan	10% pre-orders
Sunnyside Natural Market	5%
The Golden Crumb	10%
The Village Flatbread Co.	10%
The Salt Cellar	15% online
Tre Vietnamese	10%

RESEARCH ROUND-UP

CANADIAN DIGESTIVE DISEASE WEEK



James King, MSc & Quinn Goddard, MA

Canadian Digestive Disease Week™ (CDDW), an annual conference for the latest education and research in gastrointestinal health, is set to take place from February 28 to March 2 in Québec City, Quebec. We are excited to share some of our latest research on celiac disease in Alberta at CDDW. Preliminary findings from these studies have just been published as abstracts in the February supplement of The Journal of Canadian Association of Gastroenterology.^{1,2} Before discussing the preliminary findings from these research projects, it's important to note the terminology for “celiac disease autoimmunity” as opposed to “celiac disease” by itself. The data used in these research projects comes from provincial laboratory testing. This captures celiac disease blood screening tests—you might remember getting a “tissue transglutaminase” (tTG-IgA) test when you or a family member were first diagnosed. By accessing these tests, we can identify Albertans who are newly positive for the tTG-IgA. Since not everyone with a positive tTG-IgA test goes on to have an upper endoscopy to confirm their celiac diagnosis, we can refer to “celiac disease autoimmunity” to capture those with elevated tTG-IgA levels, as they are highly probable to have celiac disease but may not be formally diagnosed.

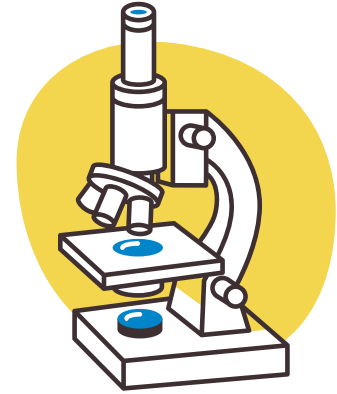
One of the studies we are conducting looks at patterns in prescriptions for psychiatric medication before and after individuals are positive for tTG-IgA.¹ These include antidepressants (like Zoloft or Prozac), anxiolytics (like Xanax or Valium), and antipsychotics (like lithium or clozapine). It's important to note that these medications can also be prescribed for non-psychiatric reasons, so we can't be sure yet why a particular prescription was made in this first phase of the project.

Among approximately 14,000 Albertans with new celiac disease autoimmunity between April 2015 and March 2023, roughly one-third (36%) were prescribed antidepressants at least once. We also found that psychiatric medication use actually increases after tTG-IgA positivity—a higher proportion (+6%) were prescribed antidepressants and there was an increased number of dispensations following. This means individuals were taking psychiatric medications for longer periods than before.

“ Among 14,000 Albertans with new celiac disease autoimmunity, roughly one-third or
36%
were prescribed antidepressants at least once. ”

*COVID-19 is still present, but most public health restrictions implemented throughout 2020–2022 are no longer present (the World Health Organization officially declared the end of COVID-19 as a public health emergency in 2023)

These patterns were consistent between females and males, as well as for children and adults (but not seniors). Prescriptions for antipsychotics had similar trends before and after tTG-IgA positivity, but were not as commonly prescribed compared to antidepressants (only 8% with at least one antipsychotic dispensation). Anxiolytics were prescribed in a slightly lower proportion of individuals following tTG-IgA (+1%), but were also not as commonly dispensed relative to antidepressants.



There is insufficient information at this stage to definitively explain the trends observed in this study. It is plausible such increases could be from delayed diagnoses, as there was a marked reduction in many healthcare services during the pandemic. Therefore, the higher rates seen in the post-pandemic period may reflect a “catching up” of cases that would have been identified previously. It is also worth looking more closely to assess any direct impact from COVID-19 infection itself, as it has been shown to increase the risk for many adverse health outcomes over the years. Before determining the precise reasons for such trends, it is still important to consider the growing number of children with celiac disease autoimmunity (and likely diagnosed celiac disease as well) in Alberta—those affected will need the proper care to best manage the condition and ensure optimal health in the long-term as they transition into adulthood.

Disclaimer: We report on evidence from various peer-reviewed studies and our ongoing research on celiac disease. However, in these reports we also take this evidence into forming our own considerations on how to interpret these findings. These views are informed by our perspectives as epidemiological researcher, our interactions with those in the celiac disease community, and as celiac disease patients in the healthcare system. We do not have medical training and therefore can not make clinical recommendations for individual health concerns.

Contact: If you have any comments, questions, or general feedback about this article, or would like to see certain research topics discussed, please contact jamking@ucalgary.ca.

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2. JA King, S Coward, J Godley, A Metcalfe, P Ronksley, GG Kaplan, T Williamson. Celiac disease autoimmunity increasing among various pediatric subgroups in Alberta, Canada. *J Can Assoc Gastroenterol*. 2025;8(supp_1):i1–i3. <https://doi.org/10.1093/jcag/gwae059.003>
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4. Ludvigsson JF, Lebwohl B, Chen Q, Bröms G, Wolf RL, Green PHR, Emilsson L. Anxiety after coeliac disease diagnosis predicts mucosal healing: a population-based study. *Aliment Pharmacol Ther*. 2018;48(10):1091–1098.

SPOLUMBO'S SAUSAGE & SPINACH QUICHE



- 3 Gluten Free Spolumbo Sausages
- 1 Gluten Free pastry crust
- Egg mixture:
 - 6 large eggs
 - 1 cup half-and-half cream (or whole milk)
 - ½ cup cottage cheese
 - ½ cup pecorino romano or parmesan
 - 1 cup chopped spinach

Remove sausage from casing and fry sausage meat on low heat, cooking thoroughly.

Reserve 1/2 cup sausage for topping. Prebake your Gluten Free pastry crust in the oven at 350 degrees for 10 min. Cover pastry edges with foil so edges don't overcook. Pour egg mixture into pastry crust. Bake Quiche an additional 45-55 minutes until golden brown and set. Top with grated parmesan cheese and reserved sausage. Enjoy!



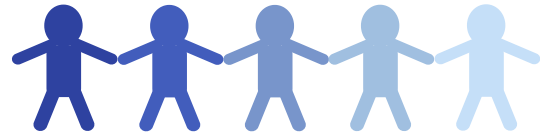
Ask your local grocer for original Spolumbo's

All meat. No wheat

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All-Natural ❖ Gluten-Free



LEGACY GIFT



Planning your will? Your legacy gift will directly translate into improving the lives of people in the Calgary Celiac community. You will be directly supporting our mission to be the primary support and advocate for people living with Celiac Disease and gluten sensitivity in Calgary and Southern Alberta.

Besides supporting Calgary Celiac's mission through the years to come, you will also be giving your family an example of philanthropy that will become a precious family tradition in your honour. Contact an estate planner / lawyer to maximize your tax savings for charitable donations on your estate.



"Nurturing the
Seeds of
Yesterday for a
Brighter
Tomorrow."

Charity Legal Information Legal Name: Calgary Celiac Association
Address: 102, 6940 Fisher Road SE, Calgary, AB , T2H 0W3
CRA Charity Reg # 119 218 691 RR0001

[DONATE HERE](#)

UPCOMING EVENTS



GLUTEN FREE MARKET

10:00 - 3:00 PM

Marda Loop Community Hall



CELIAC 101

7:00 - 9:00 PM

Virtual via ZOOM



GLUTEN FREE EXPO

10:00 - 5:00 PM

BMO Centre - Hall D



CELIAC AWARENESS DAY

Stay tuned for a list of monuments that will light up green to *Shine a Light on Celiac*.



SERVUS CALGARY MARATHON

Join our team to fundraise for Celiac Disease and choose your length of walk/run.

Is there an event you'd like to see? Reach out to our Event Coordinator at events@calgaryceliac.ca to tell us about your idea.

To stay up-to-date on CCA events, check our website, sign up for our email updates, or follow us on social media @calgaryceliac.



CELIAC CALGARY FUNDRAISER



Calgary Marathon will be taking place over two days this year. Participants will be able to choose between an in-person event on May 24 & 25, or the virtual race experience that runs from May 26 to June 22.



Participants can fundraise for any of 100+ charities through the Charity Challenge, and the Calgary Celiac Association is one of them. We'd love for you to join us!



CHOOSE YOUR DISTANCE AND RUN, WALK OR WHEEL!

SATURDAY EVENTS:

- 5 km
- 10 km
- Kids Race
- Diaper Dash

SUNDAY EVENTS:

- 21.1 km
- 42.2 km
- Kids Race

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CALGARY FOOD BANK HAMPER INFORMATION

With food insecurities at an all time high, the Calgary Celiac Association wants to provide you with information on what to expect if you donate gluten-free food to the Calgary Food Bank or if you go there seeking gluten-free food.

Please read the most up-to-date information we have and the following Q&A provided by the Calgary Food Bank. They are always looking for knowledgeable volunteers to help with sorting and distributing.

Keep an eye out for our “SAVE ME FOR GLUTEN FREE” donation drives throughout the year.

When you donate gluten free food to the Calgary Food Bank, it will get into the hands of those that require a gluten free diet.



For every one dollar donated to the Calgary Food Bank, they can distribute \$3.50 worth of quality food.

CALGARY FOOD BANK Q&A

Q: How do people request a GF hamper? Who do they contact?

A: We have a new choice model at the Main Calgary Food Bank location so if folks are booking online or over the phone for the main location they are not asked dietary requirements because they choose what to take home when they arrive. If they are booking for a satellite location over the phone, a volunteer will ask them about dietary restrictions so we can send celiac friendly products to that location in advance.

<https://www.calgaryfoodbank.com/needfood/>

Q: If you are not able to provide a hamper where do you send them? Do you have a list of other programs that have a hampers?

A: We are committed to having gluten free products available and do purchase gluten free pasta if it is not donated but on occasion, we might run out of the gluten free hamper snack bags. We do not currently have a list of other locations to recommend for folks so if you have one available that would be great, and we can share with our front-line staff. Generally speaking, though, the categories we provide are grains, proteins, pantry staples and produce and these all have GF options so it is unlikely we would have someone come and not receive food they could eat.

Q: Do you save GF food items marked gluten free for individuals that require them?

A: We offer gluten free pasta and rice as core grain options, anyone can choose them but we commit to always having those on hand. Our volunteers also sort all donations, and anything labelled gluten free is put into a separate celiac snack hamper that folks can ask for when they arrive and is built into our choice system.

Q: Do you give your volunteers any education on choosing GF items?

A: Volunteers who sort the celiac hampers know to only choose items that are labelled gluten free. When clients come to choose their items, if they choose a celiac snack hamper or gluten free pasta it shows up on their individualized order and have a specific place on our shopping line so it is clear to volunteers what is gluten free. We shop all hampers to order at our main location so folks choose exactly what they want to take home that day out of the available options.

Need Food? Get Your Food Hamper - Calgary Food Bank

Need food support? We can help.

Call the Hamper Request Line at 403-253-2055

Request an Emergency Food Hamper www.calgaryfoodbank.com



BULLETIN BOARD



ONLINE SURVEY

Watch for our community survey launching in February.

Participate for a chance to win some awesome prizes!



CELIAC KIDS CAMP POSTPONED

Unfortunately, Kids Camp with the Calgary Celiac Association is postponed until further notice.

Ensuring a safe and well-organized experience for all participants is our top priority, and we still need additional time to address safety measures and build a dedicated team of volunteers to support the planning and execution of this event.

We appreciate your patience and understanding as we work toward creating a safe and enjoyable experience for the children. If you are interested in volunteering or contributing to future planning of Kids Camp, please reach out to our Event Coordinator at events@calgaryceliac.ca.

We will provide updates as soon as possible. Thank you for your support!



A CANADIAN CELIAC PODCAST

Sue Jennett and Dr. Diana Major discuss the intersection of food insecurity and diet adherence in children with Celiac Disease, which presents a unique public health challenge.

LISTEN HERE!



PARLIAMENTARY TAX PETITION UPDATE

As many of you know, Parliament has been prorogued and will not return to session until late March. You may be wondering: What does this mean for our Parliamentary tax petition, which was signed by 27,000 individuals?

The petition, sponsored by Member of Parliament Sonia Sidhu (Brampton South), was presented on December 3rd. According to Parliamentary procedures, the government must provide a response within 45 days or during the next available sitting of the House of Commons.

[READ THE FULL UPDATE HERE](#)

HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO US!

On March 28th the Calgary Celiac Association turns 45!

Here's to many more years of advocating, educating, and celebrating living our best gluten-free lives in Calgary.

CELIAC CALGARY IS ON SKIP THE DEPOT!



SKIP THE DEPOT



DOOR TO DOOR BOTTLE COLLECTION

1. Download the app to get started today!
2. Enter your address & select a date for pick up.
3. Select your charity to donate.
4. Put bags out on day of pickup or wait around.

It's that easy!

