

# Non-Celiac Gluten Sensitivity

Educational guide

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# What is NCGS?

It is important to know the difference first of all between an allergy, an intolerance and an autoimmune disease.

An allergy is something that adversely affects you within a few minutes of eating something you are allergic to. Take for example shellfish, peanuts or wheat. In this instance, the person will experience an array of symptoms such as: hives, a rash around the mouth, itchy skin, difficulty breathing and even anaphylactic shock.

An intolerance or sensitivity means that your digestive system reacts to some food but no autoimmune reaction is taking place. Non-Celiac Gluten Sensitivity falls into this category.

An autoimmune condition like Celiac Disease is when your body's own immune system attacks itself as in the case of ingesting gluten and damages the lining of your gut.

# WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS OF NCGS?



## Very similar to Celiac Disease

NCGS symptoms present very similar to Celiac Disease. Such as: headaches, abdominal pain, bloating, gas, constipation, diarrhea and brain fog.

However, blood tests do not pick up the antigens for Celiac Disease. If you get tested for Celiac Disease (the blood test known as tTg-IgA) and it comes back negative, it is likely that you do not have Celiac Disease but could still have NCGS. Currently there is no test for this condition and little is understood about it.

Studies seem to indicate that the gut-brain axis can still be affected in the case of NCGS. [1]

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## What should I do?

Since symptoms are so similar between the two conditions, it is very important that you see a gastroenterologist to determine which condition you have. A blood test will be ordered. You must be on a gluten containing diet when you get this blood test, so it is important you do not go off gluten until you get medical help and a diagnosis.

If the blood test is negative, it is unlikely you have Celiac Disease

{Positive results are covered under the Celiac Disease section.}

If the blood test is negative, it is still beneficial for you to then remove gluten from your diet, provided you get the go-ahead from your GP or other medical expert.

It is good to know about a condition in which some who test negative for the tTg-IgA blood test have. It is called a IgA deficiency.

## What is a IgA Deficiency?

- ✓ A IgA deficiency is a genetic immunodeficiency condition in which individuals do not make or have very low blood levels of IgA antibodies.
- ✓ An estimated 2% of people with celiac disease also have selective (IgA) deficiency. If someone has IgA deficiency and celiac disease, the IgA deficiency can cause a false negative on a celiac disease antibody test. [2]

Therefore if you still present with symptoms and have been tested negative for Celiac Disease, it may be worthwhile exploring this option to make sure you do not have this condition.

# *Thank you!*

I hope you found this interesting and useful. Please remember that even though you may not test positive for Celiac Disease, NCGS is a real condition that can greatly impact on the quality of your life. Therefore it is still important to remain off gluten if this is your diagnosis.



## Do You Need More Help?

**Book an appointment**

*As a health coach, I help people who have been diagnosed with either condition. I have personally been on this journey and know how hard it is to navigate. Please contact me if you would like to benefit from health coaching*

