

“May Contain” Statements for Wheat on Foods Labeled Gluten-Free NOT Useful Predictors for Gluten

Allergen Advisory Label Review

In the March 2018 *EJCN* article on allergen advisory statements, authors retrospectively reviewed labeling information of 328 products labeled gluten-free and tested for gluten content through Gluten Free Watchdog, LLC.

Summary of findings of foods labeled gluten-free

Testing results	Number of products (n=328)	Contained an allergen advisory statement for wheat/gluten (n = 31)	Did not contain an allergen advisory statement for wheat/gluten (n = 297)
<20 ppm of gluten	314	29 (9%)	285 (91%)
≥20 ppm of gluten	14	2 (14%)	12 (86%)

ppm = parts per million



29 of 31 products that contained an allergen advisory statement for wheat tested <20 ppm of gluten (28 of which were <5 ppm). Product packaging included precautionary statements such as:

May contain traces of wheat

Processed in a facility that uses wheat

Produced on equipment that also processes wheat

May also contain wheat

Did you know?

“May contain” statements for wheat are allowed on foods labeled gluten-free.

Regardless, they must be in compliance with the FDA’s gluten-free labeling rule and contain <20 ppm of gluten.

Know the difference!

Food Allergen Labeling and Consumer Protection Act	Allergen Advisory Statements
“Contains”	“May contain”
Top 8 allergens, including wheat, are required to be identified if among ingredients	Voluntarily added to labels
FDA regulated	Not defined by any federal regulation

BOTTOM LINE

Consumers should not make gluten-free purchasing decisions based solely on the presence or absence of an allergen advisory statement for wheat.

Citation: Tricia Thompson, Amy Keller, Trisha B. Lyons. *When foods contain both a gluten-free claim & an allergen advisory statement for wheat: should consumers be concerned?* European Journal of Clinical Nutrition, Published online: 26 March 2018 <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41430-018-0141-y>

For more details, free, full text article available: <http://rdcu.be/JRMO> For more information about this study, contact tricia_s_thompson@hotmail.com