

## Celiac Disease: No Treat to Eat Wheat

Patricia L. Raymond MD FACP FACG

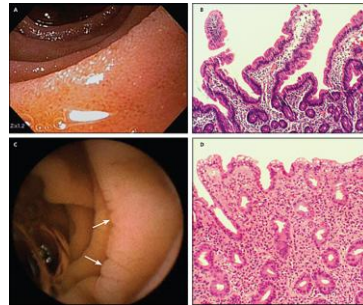
Assistant Professor Clinical Internal Medicine, Eastern Virginia Medical School

Rx For Sanity

### *What you've probably heard before: Bowels, Bones, & Blood*

Celiac sprue or gluten-sensitive enteropathy

- ❖ Condition of abnormal small intestinal mucosa that improves on a gluten-free diet and relapses when gluten is reintroduced.
- ❖ Described by Samuel Gee in 1887 "On the Coeliac Affection," similar description of a chronic malabsorptive disorder by Aretaeus from Cappadochia (now Turkey) second century AD
- ❖ Known to be an allergy to the protein gluten (found also in wheat, rye, barley)
- ❖ US frequency about 1%, but only about 1 in 3000 diagnosed. Estimates of 3 million affected in the United States
- ❖ 10% in first degree relatives



Diarrhea

- ❖ From 45-85% of patients
  - Diarrhea persisting despite GFD
    - Microscopic colitis
    - Steatorrhea secondary to pancreatic exocrine insufficiency
    - Secondary lactose or fructose malabsorption
    - Anal sphincter dysfunction causing fecal incontinence
    - Irritable bowel syndrome
    - Small bowel bacterial overgrowth

Constipation

- ❖ due to low fiber intake with avoidance of common whole grains
- ❖ responds to dietary rice bran and ispaghula husks (psyllium)

Anemia

- ❖ 10-15% of celiac patients
- ❖ Due to impaired absorption of iron or folate from the proximal small intestine.
- ❖ In celiac disease with ileal involvement, absorption of vitamin B-12 might be impaired.
- ❖ 6- 12% of iron deficient patients found to have celiac disease, 20% of nonresponders to supplemental iron

## Bone loss

- ❖ Osteopenia, rarely osteoporosis.
- ❖ Due to secondary hyperparathyroidism, likely from due to **vitamin D** deficiency.
- ❖ Partial reversal with a gluten-free diet; peripheral bone loss may persist despite apparent normalization at axial skeletal sites
- ❖ Advanced disease may have bone pain, pseudofractures, or deformity
- ❖ May occur without gastrointestinal symptoms
- ❖ Most patients are asymptomatic or have only raised serum levels of alkaline phosphatase or hypocalcemia
- ❖ Patients diagnosed with celiac disease should be evaluated for bone loss using a DEXA (dual energy x-ray absorptiometry) scan; repeat DEXA scan after one year

***What else can happen, beyond bowels, bones, & blood?***

Brain	Pancreas (endocrine)
Tongue	Kidney
Thyroid	Female infertility
Heart	Male infertility
Lungs	Immune system
Spleen	Joints
Liver	Skin
Pancreas (exocrine)	Malignancy



Virginia gastroenterologist **Patricia L. Raymond M.D.** speaks for hospital systems and medical conventions. Through her company **Rx For Sanity** ([www.RxForSanity.com](http://www.RxForSanity.com)), she humorously leads nurses and physicians to play nicely in the sandbox of medicine. Her books, **Don't Jettison Medicine: Resuscitate Your Passion For the Career You Loved!**, **Colonoscopy: It'll Crack u Up** and **Colonoscopy is A Gas!** are available at [PositivelyHealthyGifts.com](http://PositivelyHealthyGifts.com) where you should join your colleagues & sign up for your complimentary subscription to the re-invigorating newsletter **Passionate HealthCare**. PHC is bursting with medical humor and practical tactics to enhance your joy in medicine.

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Dr. Raymond is now broadcasting the fun 90 second show **Your Health Choice Radio** ([www.YHCRadio.com](http://www.YHCRadio.com)), where we make the healthy choice the fun and easy choice.

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