



## Pre-test patient advice

The NICE guidance on coeliac disease specifies the advice to give patients before they have a test<sup>1</sup>

Here is the advice as a quick reminder

- 1 Before testing patients for coeliac disease, explain what you are testing for**, that the test is not completely diagnostic and is only a way of selecting patients for definitive testing via endoscopy and duodenal biopsy
- 2 Explain that if positive**, it would be worth getting other **close members of the family tested**
- 3 If the test is negative**, it means **coeliac disease is unlikely** but could still be there or present in the future, also that persistent symptoms will need further investigation and referral
- 4 It is vital that patients are not on a gluten-free diet when they are tested** and they should eat a normal diet, eating some gluten-containing foods like bread or biscuits at one or more meals per day, **for at least 6 weeks before having the test**
- 5 If they will not do this** then, depending on how concerned you are regarding the diagnosis, they should be advised that **this will make an accurate diagnosis difficult and that a delayed diagnosis** could mean continued ill health, they may also be referred to a GI specialist

1. National Institute for Health and Care Excellence. Coeliac Disease- Recognition and assessment of coeliac disease (CG86). 2009. London: National Institute for Health and Care Excellence.