



پاکستانی سیلیک سوسائٹی
Pakistani Celiac Society
www.celiac.com.pk

گلوٹن کے بغیر روزمرہ زندگی All About Gluten-Free Lifestyle

NEWSLETTER

Spring 2010

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MISSION STATEMENT

The Pakistani Celiac Society is a national, volunteer, non-profit organization dedicated to provide support and services to individuals and families with celiac disease and dermatitis herpetiformis through programmes of awareness, advocacy and education.

What is New?

Recent Advances in Celiac Disease

The Digestive Disease Week (Annual conference of the American Gastroenterological Association) was held in New Orleans, Louisiana from May 1-5, 2010. This is the premiere meeting of the gastrointestinal specialists where thousands of clinicians and researchers from around the world gather to present and discuss their work. As always, there were several presentations on various aspects of celiac disease. This report highlights some of the current research on celiac disease that was presented at the conference.

Genetics of Celiac Disease:

It is well recognized that celiac disease is a genetic disorder. Both first and second-degree relatives of a patient with celiac disease have a higher risk of developing the disorder. Almost all patients with celiac disease carry a particular genetic marker called HLA-DQ2 or DQ8. However, these genes are present in about one-third of the North American population, the majority of whom will never develop celiac disease. Therefore, it seems that other genetic and/or environmental factors are also involved in the causation of celiac disease.

This has led to a search for other genetic factors. Using blood samples from thousands of patients with celiac

disease from several countries, European researchers have identified another 39 genes that may play a role in celiac disease. Of these, 26 genes have strong association and 13 have a possible role in celiac disease. Interestingly, these genes are also involved in the development of the immune system, how allergens are presented to and processed by the immune cells in the intestine and how these cells cause inflammation. About one-third of genes implicated in celiac disease are also present in patients with other autoimmune disorders like type-1 diabetes. This knowledge will help scientists better understand precisely how celiac disease and other autoimmune disorders occur and develop strategies to help prevent the development of these disorders in the future.

New Serological Tests:

One of the greatest advancements in celiac disease over the last two decades has been the development of serological tests for screening of this disorder. The IgA-based tissue transglutaminase antibody (TTG) is a highly sensitive and specific test and currently is the recommended screening test for celiac disease. IgA deficiency is common in celiac disease so total serum IgA level must also be measured. The anti-gliadin antibody (both IgG and IgA) tests are now considered redundant and should not be performed.

The deamidated gliadin peptide (DGP) antibody is a new generation serological test that has been around for the last few years and is now becoming available for routine clinical

use. Like the TTG, it is also very sensitive and specific for celiac disease and has the added advantage of being useful in individuals with IgA deficiency and in children less than 3 years of age where TTG is less reliable. It is hoped that the combination of TTG and DGP may offer a nearly perfect way to diagnose celiac disease with blood tests alone. However, it must be cautioned that until more data are available, small intestinal biopsy still remains the best way to confirm the diagnosis of celiac disease.

Interpretation of Intestinal Biopsies:

Small intestinal biopsy is the definitive test to confirm the diagnosis of celiac disease. The biopsies are tiny bits of tissue obtained from the lining (mucosa) of the small intestine through an endoscope. They are immediately placed in a liquid fixative called formalin and then sent to the pathology lab for processing, staining, microscopic examination and interpretation. The pathologist looks at the structure of the villi and the degree of inflammation to decide whether celiac disease is present or not.

A study presented at the conference revealed that if the biopsy specimens obtained at endoscopy are not laid open for proper orientation of the tissue before fixation, the villi may not be appropriately aligned. This may lead to difficulty in interpretation of the biopsies.

The skill of the pathologist is also important in making the correct diagnosis of celiac disease. In another study presented, when the same biopsy was shown to several pathologists, the diagnosis changed in 9 to 11% of cases.

These studies highlight the fact that when it comes to intestinal biopsies, which part of the small intestine they are taken from, how they are processed and who interprets them are important factors in arriving at a correct diagnosis. This raises the concern that that some individuals who are reported to have a "normal" biopsies may, in fact, have celiac disease which was not correctly diagnosed due to technical issues involved in processing and interpretation of the biopsies. Similarly, some with "abnormal" biopsy may be incorrectly diagnosed.

Researchers are discovering new information daily about celiac disease, but there is still much to be learned about this fascinating disorder.

Awareness, Awareness!

The most effective way of improving the lives of patients with celiac disease on a gluten-free diet in Pakistan is to increase awareness of this disorder amongst the health care professionals and the society in general. Once there is better understanding of this disorder, there will be better recognition of celiac disease leading to early diagnosis. Similarly, increased awareness amongst the public and food industry will lead to better and affordable availability of gluten-free foods in the country.

This is a difficult task and requires a lot of effort. The Pakistani Celiac Society is doing its part as best as possible. The Medical Advisors of the Society have written a couple of articles highlighting the challenges of celiac disease and

gluten-free diet. These are expected to be published in some of the medical journals in Pakistan. Once published, the information will be shared with the membership. Educational materials are also distributed to doctors at meetings and conferences.

The patients with celiac disease also have to do their part. As a start, they should become members of the Society. They should meet each other and also stay in touch via the web site. They should be proactive and come forward to donate their time and resources to fulfill the mission of the Society. Only then can everyone reap the benefits of a better gluten-free lifestyle.

Patient support groups and organizations always start small and with the efforts of interested volunteers they are able to become strong and effective. Hard work, patience and persistence are key to achieving their goals.

Recipe of the Month

PEANUT BUTTER COOKIES



Preparation time: 10 minutes

Bake: 15 minutes

Ingredients:

- 1). Crunchy peanut butter 1 cup
(Peanut butter can be bought from many department stores like Al-Fatah in Lahore)
- 2). Egg 1
- 3). Sugar 1/2 cup

Preparation:

- Preheat oven to 325^o F
- Mix one cup crunchy peanut butter, half cup sugar and one egg until well blended
- Roll into 24 balls
- Place balls 2 inches apart on ungreased baking sheet
- Flatten with fork
- Bake 15 minutes or until lightly brown (Do not overbake)
- Makes 24 cookies

ENJOY!

Watch out for Wheat



Wheat comes with several names. Everything in the list below has wheat and should NOT be consumed by people on a gluten-free diet. It is important to read the ingredient list when buying food products.

Atta, Maida, Bulgur, Couscous, Durum, Einkorn, Emmer, Enriched white/whole wheat flour, Farina, Gluten, Graham flour, High gluten/ protein flour, Kamut, Seitan, Semolina, Spelt (dinkel, fero), Triticale (a cross between wheat and rye), Triticum Aestivum, Wheat bran/ flour/germ/starch.

Membership of Pakistani Celiac Society is Open to All

Join our free membership on-line at

www.celiac.com.pk

Contact us at info@celiac.com.pk