



پاکستانی سیلیک سوسائٹی  
Pakistani Celiac Society  
[www.celiac.com.pk](http://www.celiac.com.pk)

All About Gluten-Free Lifestyle گلوٹن کے بغیر روزمرہ زندگی

## NEWSLETTER

Winter 2012  
(January to March)

### DIRECTORS

**President**--Mr. Ahsan Rashid  
**General Secretary** -- Mr. Sultan Yousaf  
**Treasurer** -- Mrs. Maria Avais

### Founder & Patron:

**Dr. Mohsin Rashid FRCP(C)**  
*Paediatric Gastroenterologist*

### 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?

March 2012 was a busy month for the Pakistani Celiac Society. There were two meetings held, one in Karachi and another in Lahore. Here is a brief report on each meeting.

### Meeting in Karachi



A meeting of the Pakistani Celiac Society (PCS) was held on Sunday 04, March 2012 in Karachi. It was kindly hosted by Mr. Anis Dhanani, owner of Damascus Restaurant. Several patients including families with children and other professionals attended the meeting. The gathering was larger than the previously held meeting in Karachi in December 2010.

There was a presentation on Celiac Disease and Gluten-Free Diet by Dr. M. Rashid followed by a question and answer session. The participants showed a keen interest in the discussion and many stimulating questions were asked.

After the presentation, a variety of gluten-free snacks were served with refreshments. These included pizza, samosa and cookies. It provided a good opportunity for individuals to interact and share ideas.

The PCS would like to sincerely thank Mr. Dhanani for organizing the meeting and provided delicious gluten-free food items. One hopes to have such gatherings on a regular basis as they provided an excellent opportunity for people with celiac disease to meet each other

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### Meeting in Lahore



The Annual Meeting of PCS was held in Lahore on Sunday 18, March 2012. This was hosted by PCS as has been the case with previous meetings of March 2010 and 2011.

The President of PCS Ahsan Rashid welcomed the guests and described the purpose of these types of gatherings. Rather than formal presentation, this time the focus was more on interactive discussion. An interesting

animated video cartoon on celiac disease and gluten-free diet was shown by Sultan Yousaf. Issues of importance were presented including better communication and contacts between members. Several members expressed their interest to volunteer their efforts for promoting better awareness and to hence contribute to PCS's mission. There was discussion on Importance was given on how members can help each other and perform awareness and advocacy tasks more effectively.

The meeting concluded with a sumptuous gluten-free lunch buffet.

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## Gluten in Non-Food Products

When we talk of gluten free we always think about food. However, gluten may be present in many non-food products and it is a good habit to check this out.

### Medications

Some medications may contain gluten as an ingredient. This applies to prescription drugs and over-the-counter medications including vitamins and minerals. It is best to read the label on the bottle or the drug package insert for a complete list of ingredients. If the ingredients are not listed there is no guarantee that it will be free of gluten. It is best to avoid the product if possible especially if the medication has to be taken for a long period of time. The pharmacist may be able to determine the safety of the medication. If the pharmacist cannot help, the drug manufacturer should be contacted directly to get the information.

A good source of information for gluten-free drugs is a web site [www.glutenfreedrugs.com](http://www.glutenfreedrugs.com) which lists the status of several drugs. This site is based out of U.S. whereas in Pakistan we generally follow the **British Pharmacopoeia**. Therefore, the names and ingredients of medications may be different. The best strategy is to contact the manufacturer.

### Herbal Products

There are several oral herbal products and supplements (minerals, vitamins, etc.) on the market that may contain gluten. If the ingredients are not listed, it is difficult to confirm their gluten-free status.

### Cosmetics

All shampoos, perfumes, eye liners (*surma*), creams, lotions and ointments are safe to use. This is because gluten is harmful only when ingested, not when applied to the skin or scalp. There is no need to read labels of cosmetics for presence of gluten.

### Toothpaste

Most toothpastes do not contain gluten. Also, the mouth is rinsed in brushing and toothpaste not usually swallowed so it should be generally safe. Young children may require supervision.

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## Importance of Awareness

Sometime people wonder why awareness of celiac disease is always being discussed. The fact of the matter is that without increasing awareness, neither those who are undiagnosed will get diagnosed, nor those who are diagnosed and on a gluten-free diet will have availability of better and cheaper food products.

We will discuss this issue in more detail in the coming issues of the Newsletter. For now, please remember that AWARENESS IS KEY.

## Celiac Quiz

Here is a quiz for your interest. Choose the correct response and provide an explanation for your answer. Send us your answer and we will publish it with your name in the next Newsletter.

**A 30 year old man has abdominal pain and diarrhea for a few weeks. He starts a gluten-free diet and symptoms improve. This confirms that he has celiac disease.**

TRUE or FALSE

## Joining Hands



Membership of Pakistani Celiac Society is open to all

Join our free membership on-line at

[www.celiac.com.pk](http://www.celiac.com.pk)

Visit our Web Site

[www.celiac.com.pk](http://www.celiac.com.pk)

We are also on Facebook

[facebook.com/pakceliac](https://facebook.com/pakceliac)

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