

## Plant breeding blamed for gluten problems but evidence isn't there

Wheat—and the main protein it contains, gluten—has been cited as a cause of weight gain, “brain fog,” skin rashes, joint pain, headaches, tiredness, allergies, gas, intestinal distress, irritable bowel syndrome, depression and, in the case of celiac disease—where the immune system goes haywire and attacks the body—even death. Yet wheat, which is found not only in bread and pasta, but also in beer and numerous processed foods, makes up one-fifth of all food eaten worldwide and is the number-one source of protein in developing countries. Humans have been eating wheat for around 10,000 years, starting with domestication of wild grasses in the Near East, at the dawn of agriculture.

With all the illnesses and ailments associated with wheat and gluten, it leads one to wonder: Could the human race have been so wrong about this staple food for so long? Or are the health concerns a figment of overactive imagination, propelled by the gluten-free trend?

When it comes to gluten, speculation is rife about the cause of the recent rise in documented celiac disease and in the anecdotal reports of widespread gluten sensitivity. Perhaps wheat has been bred to contain more gluten? Or maybe wheat itself has changed and become more toxic with the advent of modern hybrid wheat breeding? Or perhaps, people speculate, genetically modified wheat is to blame for the epidemic of gluten-related problems?

Some critics say modern wheat plants, which became popular in the 1960s, are to blame for rising health issues related to gluten. This line of thinking blames plant breeding, which was aimed at increasing wheat yields and boosting food supplies, especially in the developing world. The resulting less-diverse species of wheat, critics assert, had increased or altered gluten content.

**Read full, original article:** [Unraveling the Gluten-Free Trend](#)