

Adult Celiac Disease Program at Rush

OUR EXCEPTIONAL TEAM

Mark T. DeMeo, MD, serves as the medical director for the Adult Celiac Disease Program at Rush. A recognized expert in the field of celiac disease, Dr. DeMeo serves as director of the Section of Gastroenterology and Nutrition at Rush University Medical Center. In addition to patient care, Dr. DeMeo conducts clinical research studies related to this medical condition and is a respected national speaker and guest lecturer.

Susan Mikolaitis, RD, LDN, CNSD, is a registered dietitian specializing in celiac disease and other gastrointestinal disorders. Providing comprehensive nutrition services, she helps patients transition to a gluten-free lifestyle. With more than 25 years of experience in nutrition therapy and 10 years of experience with gluten-free diets, Ms. Mikolaitis provides invaluable insight and support to help people successfully manage their condition.

Sharon Jedel, PsyD, is a clinical psychologist who integrates therapeutic techniques into gastrointestinal disease management, including mind-body connections, relaxation strategies and stress management techniques to help people balance the day-to-day implications of celiac disease.

CONVENIENT LOCATION

The Rush campus is conveniently located just west of downtown Chicago and is easily accessible from I-290 off of Ashland Ave. or the Chicago Transit Authority's Blue line (Forest Park train at Illinois Medical District stop) or Pink line (Polk stop). To see a map and get directions, please visit www.rush.edu or call (888) 352-RUSH (7874).

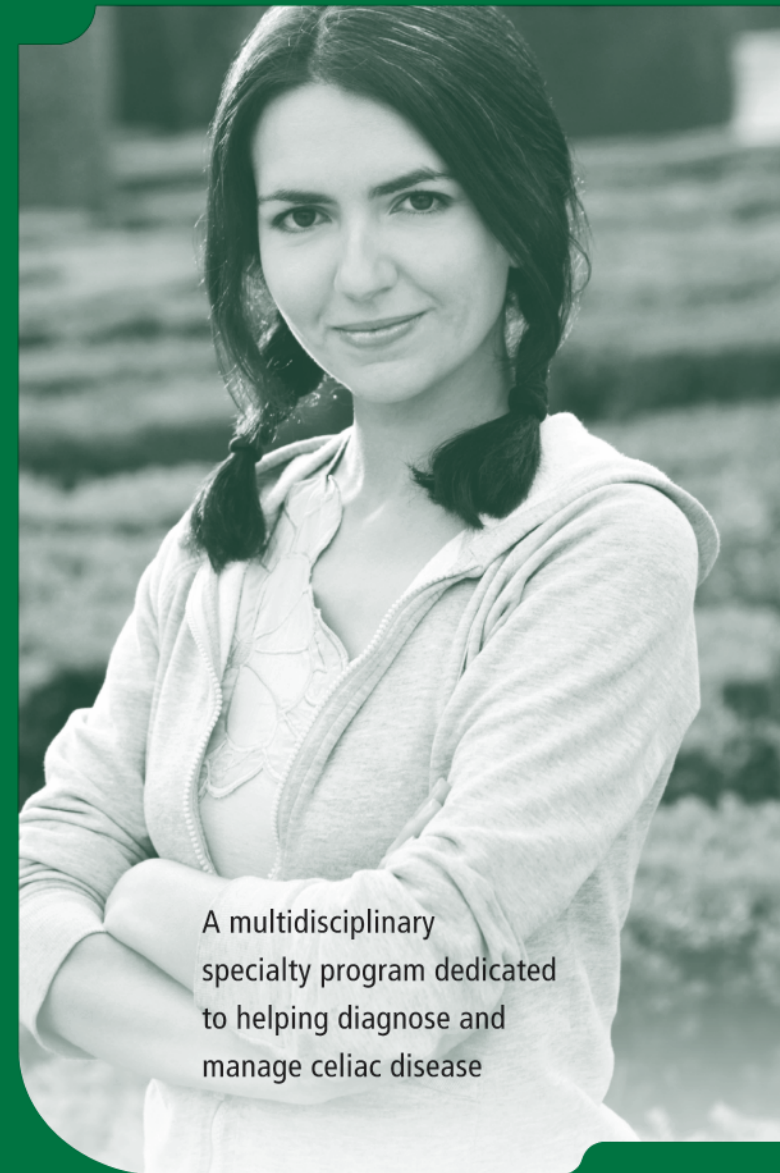
CONTACT US

To make an appointment or for more detailed information on these services, call (888) 352-RUSH (7874). Or visit www.rush.edu to learn more about programs and physicians at Rush, and for additional health information.

Adult Celiac Disease Program
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www.rush.edu



A multidisciplinary specialty program dedicated to helping diagnose and manage celiac disease



The Adult Celiac Disease Program at Rush University Medical Center offers comprehensive, supportive care for those living with celiac disease, an immune response to the gluten protein that is found in wheat, rye, barley and possibly oats. Comprising medical experts recognized for their specialty training and care of this medical condition, the program offers treatment for a disease that is, in many cases, widely underdiagnosed and misunderstood. As one of only a few such specialty programs in the Chicago area, the Adult Celiac Disease Program is committed to helping patients from diagnosis to day-to-day management and follow-up care.

WHAT IS CELIAC DISEASE?

Affecting one out of 133 Americans, celiac disease is the body's inability to metabolize gluten, a protein found in wheat, rye, barley and possibly oats. These proteins are commonly found in foods like breads, cereals, crackers and many other items that people eat every day. Gluten damages the small intestine and interferes with the absorption of nutrients from food.

People affected by celiac disease are often unaware that they have this condition. Without adherence to a gluten-free diet, people with celiac disease are at risk for serious medical conditions, including the inability to absorb nutrients and vitamins, accelerated bone disease, cancers and neurological disorders.

RISK FACTORS AND COMMON SYMPTOMS

Celiac disease can affect people in very different ways — some people may develop symptoms as children while others develop the disease as adults. Some may not have any symptoms. Also, the disease can emerge after a traumatic event, such as infection, physical injury, severe stress, surgery or a stressful pregnancy. People with Down syndrome, autoimmune diseases, such as type I diabetes or thyroid disease, and other disorders may be at risk as well.

Symptoms can include the following:

- Abdominal pain and bloating
- Chronic diarrhea or constipation
- Fatigue
- Gas or pale, foul-smelling stool
- Irregular menstrual cycles or early menopause
- Itchy, blistering skin rash
- Male and female infertility
- Pain in joints
- Tingling numbness in the hands and feet
- Unexplained anemia
- Weight loss

CARE BEGINS WITH AN ACCURATE DIAGNOSIS

Some people afflicted with celiac disease may not have any symptoms. However, because the symptoms of celiac disease often mimic different gastrointestinal disorders, such as irritable bowel syndrome and Crohn's disease, it is imperative to obtain an accurate diagnosis to rule out other conditions. The health care team at the Adult Celiac Disease Program at Rush are experts in diagnosing and treating this condition.

The team conducts an extensive medical history and physical examination. Patients undergo a complete

evaluation including diagnostic tests such as the following:

- **Blood tests** to measure for serum antibodies associated with celiac disease
- An **upper endoscopy** to remove a tiny piece of tissue from the small intestine to evaluate any damage to the villi, which line the intestine and absorb nutrients from food
- A **capsule endoscopy**, a small pill that travels through the small intestine and takes images, to evaluate intestinal damage

SUPPORTIVE TREATMENT AT RUSH

If patients receive a diagnosis of celiac disease, the health care team is there to help patients transition to a gluten-free lifestyle, which is the primary treatment for the disease. The good news is that the damage to the small intestine can be reversed by adhering to a gluten-free diet, which may also decrease the risk for other associated conditions.

Those afflicted with celiac disease may develop other symptoms and conditions that require specialty care. The Adult Celiac Disease Program works collaboratively with other medical disciplines across the Medical Center, such as rheumatology, allergy and immunology, neurology and obstetrics/gynecology, to help patients get the care they need.

At Rush, patients benefit from the comprehensive, specialty care offered at one of the nation's leading academic medical centers. In fact, the gastroenterology program at Rush is consistently ranked among the nation's top programs by *U.S. News & World Report*. And Rush has been named among the top five academic medical centers in the country by the University HealthSystem Consortium in its annual quality and accountability performance ranking.