

# WHAT IS GLUTEN?

## Occurrence, function and use

**Gluten is a component of the seed of many cereals. This includes wheat in particular, but gluten is also present in barley, green spelt, spelt, rye and some other cereals. The seed consists of various parts: the seed coat, the endosperm and the embryo. The gluten is in the endosperm, together with the starch grains.**

### FUNCTION

Gluten is a general term for various proteins. During the baking process, gluten develops to a stretchy and chewy mass and thus forms the dough framework.

**Gluten has various food technological properties:**

✓ Binding water

✓ Stabilising structures

✓ Carrying flavours

✓ Gelling

✓ Emulsifying

When grain is processed to flour and a dough is made of it, the gluten protein contained fulfils many important functions. It binds the water added to the flour, stabilises the structures and carries flavours.

### USAGE

Pizza is a good example of how it works. The carbon dioxide produced during fermentation is kept in the dough by gluten. This results in a pleasant, fine-pored structure after baking. Gluten fulfils similar functions also in pasta, bread, rolls as well as sweet and savoury pastries. **Not all gluten-containing ingredients are easy to recognise.** They are also hidden in many processed products and ready meals. For example, gluten can also be found in floured dried fruits, sauces or broths.

In case of doubt, it helps to have a closer look at the list of ingredients to find out whether ready meals contain gluten or not.

#### References:

- 1) Biesiekierski JR. What is gluten?. J Gastroenterol Hepatol. 2017;32 Supl 1:78-81. Doi:10.1111/jgh.13703
- 2) Shewry p. (2019). What Is Gluten-Why Is It Special?. Frontiers in nut , 6, 101. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fnut.2019.00101>

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