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Summary

OTHER SPECIAL DIETS IN ADDITION TO GLUTEN-FREE DIET ARE COMMON IN ADOLESCENTS AND YOUNG ADULTS WITH CELIAC DISEASE, BUT DO NOT ASSOCIATE WITH OVERALL WELLBEING OR TREATMENT SUCCESS

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One-third of adolescents and young adults with celiac disease follow additional special diets beyond gluten-free diet, but these do not appear to affect treatment adherence or overall well-being.

KEY POINTS

- In a survey of 211 Finnish celiac disease patients aged 16-30 years, 33% reported following other special diets in addition to gluten-free diet, most commonly vegetarian or vegan diet (9%), major food allergies (4%), and low-FODMAP diet for IBS (3%).
- Patients following additional special diets showed no significant differences in gluten-free diet adherence (100% vs 97%), prevalence of persisting symptoms (20% vs 27%), health concerns, or overall well-being compared to those on gluten-free diet alone.
- The only significant demographic difference was higher reporting of non-binary gender among those with additional diets (4% vs 0%, p=0.042), while age, BMI, employment status, physical activity, and substance use did not differ between groups.
- 11% of patients reported difficulties combining gluten-free diet with other special diets, though this did not translate to measurable differences in treatment outcomes.
- This study may be relevant to clinicians managing adolescent and young adult celiac disease patients who are considering or already following multiple dietary restrictions.

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