

## Additional risks this Easter

Easter a great time to celebrate with family and friends. Many people spend time at church and celebrate with a festive meal. Many of us munch on our easter eggs and enjoy easter themed parades and games. While it is a fun celebration, it is a time that can carry some extra risk for coeliacs. These risks may include:

### Communion Host

Holy communion can be a part of religious ceremonies that individuals may attend over the Easter period. The most common communion host used is not gluten free. However, specific gluten free hosts are available. A number of companies produce communion wafers that are suitable for coeliacs. You can ask your church to order this special host in for you. Often their usual church supplier can sometimes order these for you. Suppliers can also be found on page 263 of this year's food list (2023).

To reduce the risk of contamination with gluten from gluten containing hosts, it is advised that your communion wafers are stored and presented separately.

Some people may prefer to abstain from taking communion in the conventional way and have a blessing instead.

If you have any questions or any issue with other religious food-based items, please contact us at [info@coeliac.ie](mailto:info@coeliac.ie)

### New products

During the Easter period shops become filled with new products that are not available all year round. Lots of these products include sweet treats, eggs and cakes. We recommend looking for "gluten free" labelled products or check the Coeliac Society Easter Goodie list 2023 to see if a product is suitable. Why not call into our Coeliac Society shop located in Clondalkin which is stocking up on some gluten free treats!

### Easter Egg hunts

Easter egg hunts are a great idea for keeping the children entertained over the easter break. It is a fun activity for all the family and friends to join in.

Traditionally we think of easter egg hunts as collection chocolate eggs around the house or garden. If you are organising a hunt and know children who cannot eat gluten are taking part, try using gluten free eggs/sweets for the hunt so that everyone can consume the treats. If the event has been organised by someone else, it is important to check the easter egg/ treat is suitable for the child before they eat it. You could also ask the organiser if they could use easter treats that you know are gluten free for the event. Again, some suitable products can be found on the Coeliac Society Easter Goodie list. Remember chocolate eggs can always be swapped for plastic eggs or easter themed toys or stickers too!

## Visiting Families/ Family Dinner

Many enjoy a traditional Easter Dinner with family and friends as part of their celebrations. When visiting, the host may bake some treats, buy in easter products, or even prepare a meal for you. Before visiting it is a good idea to talk to the host about being coeliac or gluten intolerant and how about how important it is for you to follow a gluten free diet. You should also discuss the importance of prevention of cross contamination. Perhaps you could provide some gluten free alternatives or offer to bring a gluten free dish with you. Easter is a great opportunity to include fresh seasonal foods in your easter feast. To get an idea of these seasonal foods click the link to our seasonal foods article. Or try any of these traditional Easter recipe ideas.