

## How I Survive and Deal with this "Thing" Called Celiac Disease

Staff Reports

*Article Launched: 01/24/2007 10:04:33 AM EST*

The following is Ellie Stepanskiy's winning essay.

I can't eat gluten so when I go to birthday parties sometimes they have gluten so my mom brings me my own gluten-free cupcake or maybe cake. I just deal with it by eating my own. I think about if I ate the cake with gluten my tummy would hurt me and I would throw up. And I don't like to throw up.

Sometimes at swimming pool parties they have cake. I don't care because I have my own special cake. Delicious! At the pool parties we get to splash and play and do all types of tricks. I like to jump at the deep side. But I also want a grown-up to be next to me because sometimes I get scared that I will sink to the bottom. They don't eat in the pool, they eat near it at a table on the side, so there is no gluten in the pool.

At school most kids bring their lunches because we don't share food because of my allergies or someone else's allergies. Sometimes a kid touches my food and I say to stop it and then I tell the teacher and she cleans it for me; her name is Mrs. O'Connor. Then she tells the kid not to do it anymore. Some kids have hot lunch. Some kids sit at the nut-free table because they are allergic to nuts. I sit at the "nut table" where you can eat nuts.

The first day of school they used Play-doh but Mrs. O'Connor said it was an accident and they cleaned it up and put it away. The next day my mom brought in gluten-free play-dough for all the kids and we played with it and I made a statue and it was cool.

It is hard that I can't eat gluten. Sometimes I try and taste my dad's food that has gluten but my mom and dad stop me. But that was when I was three. Now I don't try because I know because I am five. The hardest part of not eating gluten is I only have to eat my mom's food. The best part of having celiac is eating my mom's food.