

# Annalise

## “I HAVE BEEN HOSPITALISED BECAUSE OF MY ALLERGIES”

A DIAGNOSIS OF FOOD ALLERGIES COMPLETELY CHANGED MODEL ANNALISE BRAAKENSIEK'S LIFE. BY Nicola Conville



I've suffered from food allergies all my life. I can't eat any dairy or wheat products. Thankfully my mother picked up on my dairy allergy when I was young. She gave me fresh goat's milk produce from our biodynamic farm instead of dairy.

"My reaction to dairy is very severe. I get puffy eyes, sinus and adenoid problems and rashes. I discovered that I am allergic to wheat about seven years ago after several blood tests, ultrasounds and visits to hospitals and doctors. When I eat wheat, my belly expands so much that I look like I'm six months pregnant it's excruciatingly tight, extremely swollen and I get sharp, stabbing pains. I have been hospitalised on several occasions with pain so severe they thought I had ruptured ovaries, burst cysts, miscarriages, endometritis ... but it was just my reaction to wheat nothing else.

"My allergies have made me so miserable at times. It can be really frustrating when I'm at a restaurant, wedding, party or on an aeroplane. So often I can't eat anything on the menu. On top of my allergies, I choose not to eat meat. People sometimes think I'm just being picky! But, believe me, if they had to live with allergies, they would do everything to help another sufferer out.

**"Peter Babilis is my kinesiologist, homeopath, chiropractor, acupuncturist and life saviour!** He really got it sorted for me. I also went to see a blood specialist. I went on a four-month detox to cleanse my system, which involved no sugar, honey, alcohol, caffeine, wheat, dairy, meat or fruit. It changed my life completely. I now do Alejandro Junger's detox Clean once or twice a year too. It's incredible, and so beneficial for allergies.

"Since being diagnosed, I have completely changed

my diet and lifestyle. Even though I love crusty bread and a cheese platter, it's just not worth the pain! I eat food that agrees with me as often as I can and it makes my life a whole lot happier.

"First thing in the morning, I'll have hot water with lemon, then I go on a power walk along the coast. Breakfast usually consists of tahini, tomato and rocket (from our garden) on organic spelt toast, or homemade bircher muesli, or an Israeli omelette, followed by Pilates or yoga if time permits.

"Lunch is usually a tuna salad with legumes and organic vegies, or tofu and vegies on brown rice. Dinner always varies. I cook almost every night, anything from Indian, Thai, Italian and Moroccan to Israeli, Tunisian, Japanese and Indonesian food. It just depends what's in season and what I feel inspired to cook.

"When I'm eating well, I sleep well, and am pain- and rash-free. I feel fantastic, with an abundance of energy, clarity of mind and a feeling of general wellbeing. I do miss some of the foods I've had to cut from my diet, but I have become an incredibly creative cook, and have researched so many wonderful equivalents. If you prepare conscientiously, and make your home an allergy-free haven full of dairy- and gluten-free products, you really needn't miss anything.

"I have a catering company called Love Lunch, with love being the main ingredient in all my food. I just love cooking and eating delicious, organic, healthy food. I'm a firm believer in eating biodynamic or organic produce, and it's wonderful to be able to share that with others. One of my biggest joys is showing people that eating well can be delicious, and we needn't feel deprived, nor do we have to kill animals to eat well."