The Keto Method Eat fat, get thin.

Disclaimer

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What is The Keto Method?

The Keto Method is a lifestyle which follows the ketogenic diet to improve your physical and mental health, reducing your body fat and breaking the high carb diet trap that plagues us with a whole range of metabolic related health issues.

The ketogenic diet (pronounced *key-toe-jenik*) is one which consists of restricting carbohydrates and increasing fat consumption for weight loss and improved overall health. The goal here is to reduce our glycogen levels and increase our ketone levels.

Glycogen is a type of sugar that the body can use as a source of energy. It is a fast and easy fuel source created by the intake of carbohydrates.

Is glycogen the best fuel for the body? What happens if you don't eat carbohydrates and never 'refuel' your glycogen stores? The answer to these questions lie in the alternative body fuel: fat. The term 'ketogenic' comes from the principal of burning fat (instead of glycogen) for fuel.

Burning fat for fuel means your body is in 'ketosis', which can be verified by ketone bodies present in your breath, blood and urine.

Fat doesn't make you fat

The idea that eating fat to lose weight or to improve our health may sound absurd, but there is lots of evidence to suggest that this is true.

Fats, especially saturated fats (found in butter, coconut oil, meat, eggs and dairy), have many benefits to our health, including:

- Improving our cholesterol levels.
- Keep us fuller for longer.
- Improving our dental health.
- Easier fat loss.
- Reducing our risk of diabetes, high blood pressure, cardiovascular disease, inflammation, early-onset Alzheimer's and dementia.
- Improving our mood levels and brain function.
- At this point you're probably wondering about what damage this would cause to your heart. The answer is: none. There is no evidence that links saturated fat to heart disease.

> *A meta-analysis of prospective epidemiologic studies showed that there is no significant evidence for concluding that dietary saturated fat is associated with an increased risk of CHD or CVD.*
>
> Source: http://ajcn.nutrition.org/content/early/2010/01/13/ajcn.2009.27725.abstract

Controlling your hormones

The primary control for your weight / fat storage is insulin. Insulin is a hormone that your body needs to regulate glocuse levels in your blood. Type 1 diabetics cannot produce their own insulin and require medical intervention. Type 2 diabetics are those who have become insulin resistant. Prolonged periods of high insulin levels will lead to your body requiring more than you can produce. (Think of how a drug addict always needs a higher dosage.)

Insulin is produced when there is an increase of sugar in your blood. The insulin helps move the sugar from your blood and into your fat storage. The more sugar you eat, the higher demand there is for insulin.

The goal of the ketogenic diet is to control this hormone by keeping your blood sugar levels low and consistent throughout the day. This will help stop sugar spikes and sudden drops in blood sugar (causing dizziness, headaches and a false indication of hunger.)

If your blood sugar never spikes then there is no need for increased insulin levels.

What causes sugar spikes?

The obvious answer here is sugar. Where the problem lies is that not everyone knows exactly what is considered to be sugar once it's been digested. All forms of sugar, wheat, grains and carbohydrates will all increase your blood sugar levels. The only exception is fiber which is digested differently, causing no sugar spikes.

Alternative names for sugar

Agave nectar	Barley malt	Beet sugar	Blackstrap molasses
Brown rice syrup	Cane juice	Caramel	Carob syrup
Corn sweetener	Corn syrup	Crystaline fructose	Dextran
Diastatic malt	Diastase	Ethyl maltol	Fructose
Fruit juice concentrates	Galactose	Glucose	Golden syrup
High-fructose corn syrup	Honey	Lactose	Malt syrup
Maltodextrin	Maltose	Maple syrup	Molasses syrup
Oat syrup	Panela	Panocha	Rice syrup
Sorghum	Sucrose	Treacle	Tapioca syrup

Don't you need carbohydrates?

No, not exactly. There are no essential carbohydrates that your body needs. Everything you require to survive can be found in fats and protein. It is true that your brain requires a certain level of glucose to function but with the right diet your body will make its own.

This process is called gluconeogenesis (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gluconeogenesis), where your body will convert amino acids from protein into glucose.

But I need to watch my cholesterol!

This is true, but which part of your cholesterol you need to monitor probably isn't what you think. Hint: it isn't just one number. Your total cholesterol score is actually a bad indicator for your health. Instead, we must break down this score into several indicators: HDL (High-density lipoprotein), LDL (Low-density lipoprotein) and triglycerides are the most relevant here.

A high level of HDL, a high level of large LDL particles and a low triglyceride score is most desirable. There is a common misconception that LDL is "bad cholesterol", but this is false. It all comes down to the particle size of LDL that's important. Small, dense particles create a dangerous risk of heart disease whereas large, fluffy particles are harmless.

Cholesterol is a fat molecule which is essential for human life and the best way to improve it is by eating saturated fat. A low cholesterol level is actually dangerous. It can increase your risk of a stroke (http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/8124144), depression (http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/7980726) and violent behaviour (http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/6674827). High cholesterol helps increase your mood, your memory and helps fight off infections and diseases. In fact, most heart attack victims have 'normal' cholesterol levels.

> *A new national study has shown that nearly 75 percent of patients hospitalized for a heart attack had cholesterol levels that would indicate they were not at high risk for a cardiovascular event, according to current national cholesterol guidelines.*
>
> Source: http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2009/01/090112130653.htm

So do not focus on your cholesterol, and remember that blood cholesterol is not the same thing as dietary cholesterol. Eating high cholesterol foods (such as eggs) does not have a negative impact on your blood cholesterol.

Isn't ketosis bad for your liver and kidneys?

No. You're probably thinking of ketoacidosis (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ketoacidosis), which is a diabetic complication that causes a high concentration of ketones in the blood (a lot higher than you could ever achieve through your diet.) Ketosis and ketoacidosis are completely different and ketosis is absolutely safe.

However, if you've had prior health problems with your liver, kidneys or gallbladder then you should speak with your doctor before any changes to your diet, just to be on the safe side.

So how do I follow a ketogenic diet?

Following the diet is simple. Here are a few basic rules:

1. **Limit your carbohydrate intake to 20-50 grams per day.** If you are new to this, you may find it easier to gradually lower from 100g down to 20g, but there is no harm in jumping in at the deep end. Gradually lowering your intake will help ease the 'keto flu' symptoms. (More on this later.)
2. **Eat a moderate protein intake.** Typically this is around 0.5g per pound of body weight. (If you weigh 200 lbs, start your protein intake at 100g per day.) You will be able to adjust this as you continue. Remember that too much protein can increase your glycogen stores (stopping the ketosis process) and too little protein can cause increased hunger and muscle loss (rather than fat loss.)
3. **Eat enough fat to keep you full.** There is no upper limit on your fat intake, just eat whatever it takes to keep you satiated.

The other way to look at it is to decide on how many calories you want to eat per day; let's say it's 2,000.

- Your fat intake should be 75% of those calories. 75% / 2,000 = 1,500. There are 9 calories per gram of fat so that's around 166g of fat per day.
- 20% of those calories should be protein. 20% / 2,000 = 400. 4 calories per gram: 100g protein.
- The remaining 5% of calories will be from carbs. 5% of 2,000 = 100. 4 calories per gram: 25g carbs.

Using these figures your daily intake for a 2,000 calorie diet would be: 166g fat, 100g protein and 25g carbs. If you want to eat fewer carbs, that's fine. Just increase your fat intake to compensate.

The biggest mental barrier is to remember that fat isn't bad for your health. It's been drummed into us our whole lives so this can be difficult to overcome at first. Do not avoid eating fat.

Calories	Fat (75%)	Protein (20%)	Carbs (5%)
1,500	125g	75g	18g
2,000	166g	100g	25g
2,500	208g	125g	31g

What is keto flu?

Keto flu is a term associated with initial flu-like symptoms you may experience when you first cut carbs and transition into ketosis. This generally lasts for 2-5 days after your last high carb meal.

To better understand keto flu, you can liken it to carbohydrate withdrawl. It’s a similar idea to a withdrawl from caffeine, alcohol or cocaine. Just remember that it’s normal and you will feel better after a few days.

When will I start seeing results?

The benefits of the ketogenic diet can be felt almost immediately. If you suffer from headaches, heart burn (acid reflux) or tiredness after meals then you will notice that these are the first ailments to disappear.

In the first 1-2 weeks, the biggest change you’ll notice is that you feel less bloated after meals and may lose 5-6 lbs in water weight. 5-6 lbs in a week may sound like a lot, but it’s expected at first. The reason for the drop in water weight is because of your decreased glycogen levels. Each gram of glycogen requires 3-4 grams of water, so without the glycogen your water retention is reduced significantly.

From 3 weeks onwards, you’ll notice an increase in your mood, energy and then the real fat burning begins. Typically you’ll lose an average of 1-2 lbs per week, depending on your caloric intake and activity levels.

This isn’t a fad or temporary diet, there is no end date. It is expected to be a full lifestyle change for the rest of your life. Eventually, you’ll stop losing weight and maintain around your natural size.

So I can never eat carbs again?

Of course you can eat them every now and then, just don’t make it a habit of eating 300+ grams of carbs every day or you’ll be back where you started: sick and overweight.

Keep carbs as a treat for around the holidays and you’ll be fine. Also, without the addictive hold of sugar over your diet, you may not even *want* to eat carbs again.
Remember that when you do indulge, you will feel sluggish and bloated again almost immediately and it can take you another 3-4 days to get back into ketosis after another, less noticeable, spell of keto flu.

What about fruit and vegetables?

When eating vegetables you need to be sure to avoid starchy veg, like potatoes and carrots. There are plenty of non-starchy veg that are high in fiber (technically a carb, but absolutely fine to eat) like broccoli and cauliflower. The basic rule is to avoid any veg that grows under ground and eat any that grow above ground.

Fruit is fine every now and then but be aware that they are high in sugar (‘natural’ sugar is no different to any other sugar.) The high sugar levels is offset by the fiber content, meaning the sugar isn’t digested as quickly. Fruit juice, on the other hand, has had its fiber removed, leaving a high sugar drink which should be avoided.

Beware of hidden sugar
100ml of orange juice contains 8.9g of sugar and 100ml of Coca-Cola contains 10.6g.

Fruit is a good source of vitamins, but there are no vitamins that you can't get from other sources. Fat, meat and vegetables covers everything your body needs.

Berries are generally okay if you want something sweet. Strawberries, raspberries and blueberries are surprisingly low in sugar. Fruits like apples, bananas and oranges should be restricted.

What about exercise?

It's up to you if you want to exercise, but it won't impact on your weight loss. You will still lose weight if you don't exercise, but feel free to carry on with your cardio or strength training if you like.

Getting started

Here is a list of foods you can and cannot eat, plus some other tips you may find useful. The list of foods below is just a sample, there are lots of other foods you can eat and have to avoid. The main things to look out for is the carb count and stick to around 20g per day.

What to eat

Fats: Butter, ghee, coconut oil, olive oil, beef tallow, lard, beef/chicken/bone broth
Protein: Fish, eggs, beef, lamb, pork, chicken, bacon, sausage
Fruit: Strawberries, raspberries, blueberries, avocados
Vegetables: Broccoli, cauliflower, lettuce
Dairy: Full fat milk, cheese, heavy / double cream
Nuts: Almonds, cashews, brazil, macadamia, pecans
Beverages: Water, tea, coffee, diet soda, spirits

What to avoid

Carbohydrates: Bread, pasta, wheat, rice, cereal, noodles, corn, chips
Fats: Trans fats, vegetable oil, canola / rapeseed oil, corn oil, sunflower oil, margarine
Fruit: Apples, bananas, oranges
Vegetables: Potatoes, carrots, anything starchy.
Dairy: Low fat yoghurt, skimmed / semi-skimmed milk
Nuts: Chestnuts
Beverages: Non-diet soda, beer, fruit juice

Tips

- Drink lots of water, around 2-3 litres per day.
- Diet soda is acceptable, but be aware that some people report artificial sweeteners cause an insulin response. The sweet taste may also help or hinder your aversion to other sweets.
- If you ever feel light headed, dizzy or heart arrhythmia then it may be an electrolyte imbalance. With the reduced water weight it is important to increase your salt intake. Add more salt to your foods or drink a beef/chicken broth.
- The electrolytes you will need to supplement are: sodium, potassium and magnesium. Sodium can be taken in your food or with a broth. Potassium can also be added to a broth by adding lite salt to your drink (Lite salt is generally 66% potassium and 33% sodium), magnesium can be taken in the form of a supplement capsule.
- Try and increase fat wherever you can. Add cheese to meals, cook meat with butter or coconut oil, etc.
- Milk is okay, but be aware it contains lactose (a form of sugar) so be careful. Stick with full fat milk and avoid skimmed and semi-skimmed.
- Brand mayonnaise is usually made with vegetable oils. This is fine if it's unavoidable (if you're eating out, for example), but when you're at home try making your own mayo – it's super easy and you can use butter or coconut oil instead.
- When you're eating out, stick to meat dishes like steak and hold the fries.
- Another option for eating out is a sandwich choice where you can scrape out the filling and ditch the bread. A BLT chicken sandwich is perfect for this.
- Tomatoes and tomato sauces are okay, but use sparingly. Avoid ketchup.
- It may be difficult to explain the keto diet to others around you (i.e. in the workplace) – it is best to just say you've cut out sugar and leave it at that. Answer questions honestly when asked but you may be left frustrated if you try to convince others of your diet choices.
- Fast food choices when you're in a rush: these are okay as long as you ditch the buns. If you ask for your order without the bread they may substitute with a lettuce wrap.
- Alcohol is okay too. Stick to spirits (whisky, gin, vodka) with water or diet soda. Red wine is good too, stick to dry.
- On alcohol, you will find your tolerance goes *way* down when in ketosis so take it easy. Your body will prioritise alcohol over everything else, so when you have been drinking, your fat burning stops.
- If you're not hungry, don't eat. You will find that you can go longer between meals, and that's okay.

Further education

If you're looking for more information, please consider these sources.

What to watch
Carb-Loaded
https://youtu.be/83tY7shXTnc

What to read
"Good Calories, Bad Calories" by Gary Taubes

What to watch	What to read
	http://amzn.com/1400033462
Cereal Killers https://youtu.be/dON-fPp5Hy0	“Grain Brain” by David Perlmutter http://amzn.com/031623480X
Cereal Killers 2: Run on Fat https://youtu.be/xsr6GfKXxks	“The Art and Science of Low Carb Living” by Jeff Volek http://amzn.com/0983490708
Fat Chance: Fructose 2.0 https://youtu.be/ceFyF9px20Y	“Why We Get Fat” by Gary Taubes http://amzn.com/0307474259
Fat Head https://youtu.be/evcNPfZlrZs	“Fat Chance” by Robert Lustig http://amzn.com/0142180432
Fed Up https://youtu.be/aCUbvOwwfWM	“The Big Fat Surprise” by Nina Teicholz http://amzn.com/1451624425
Gary Taubes Google Talk https://youtu.be/M6vpFV6Wkl4	“Cholesterol Clarity” by Jimmy Moore http://amzn.com/1936608383
Saturated Fats: They’re Good For You https://youtu.be/vRe9z32NZHY	“Keto Clarity” by Jimmy Moore http://amzn.com/1628600071
Sugar: The Bitter Truth https://youtu.be/dBnniua6-oM	“Pure, White and Deadly” by John Yudkin http://amzn.com/0143125184

Conclusion

TL;DR Eat lots of (good) fat, some protein and minimal carbs. Do it for at least 6 weeks and you’ll see the benefits.

I hope this website starts you on a path of a healthier and longer life. Definitely don’t stop here, watch and read through the resources above and do your own research if you’re still unsure. You won’t regret it.

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