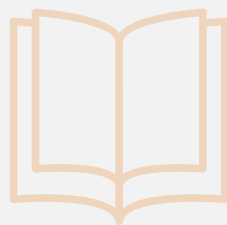


THE ULTIMATE GUIDE TO **KETO**



A keto diet is well known for being a low carb diet, where the body produces ketones in the liver to be used as energy. It's referred to as many different names – ketogenic diet, low carb diet, low carb high fat (**LCHF**), etc. When you eat something high in carbs, your body will produce glucose and insulin.

Glucose is the easiest molecule for your body to convert and use as energy, so it will be chosen over any other energy source.

Insulin is produced to process the glucose in your bloodstream, by taking it around the body. Since the glucose is being used as a primary energy, your fats are not needed, and are therefore stored. Typically on a normal, higher carbohydrate diet, the body will use glucose as the main form of energy.

By lowering the intake of carbs, the body is induced into a state known as **ketosis**. Ketosis is a natural process the body initiates to help us survive when food intake is low. During this state, we produce **ketones**, which are produced from the breakdown of fats in the liver.

The end goal of a properly maintained keto diet is to force your body into this metabolic state. We don't do this through starvation of calories, but through starvation of carbohydrates. Our bodies are extremely adaptive to what you put into it – when you overload it with fats and take away carbohydrates, it will begin to burn ketones as the main energy source.

What Do I Eat?

To start a keto diet, you will want to plan ahead. That definitely means having a viable diet plan ready and waiting. What you eat really depends how fast you want to get into a ketogenic state. The more restrictive you are on your carbohydrates (**less than 15g per day**), the faster you will enter ketosis. Normally, anywhere between **20-30g** of **net carbs** is recommended for every day dieting – but the lower you keep your glucose levels, the better the overall results will be. If you need ideas for food, there are plenty of **keto recipes** for you to choose from.

- Your nutrient intake should be something around **70% fats, 25% protein, and 5% carbohydrate**.
- You want to keep your carbohydrates limited, coming mostly from **vegetables, nuts, and dairy**. Don't eat any refined carbohydrates such as **wheat** (breads, pastas, cereals), **starch** (potatoes, beans, legumes) or **fruit**.
- Dark green and leafy is always the **best choice**. Most of your meals should be a protein with vegetables, and an extra side of fat. Chicken breast basted in olive oil, with broccoli and cheese. Steak topped with a knob of butter, and a side of spinach sautéed in olive oil. If you're finding yourself hungry throughout the day, you can snack on nuts, seeds, cheeses, or peanut butter to curb your appetite.

You might be asking, **“What’s a net carb?”** It’s simple really! The net carbs are your total dietary carbohydrates, minus the total fiber. Let’s say for example you want to eat some broccoli (**1 cup**) – seriously my favorite and most delicious vegetable out there.

- There are a total of **6g carbohydrates** in **1 cup**.
- There’s also **2g of fiber** in **1 cup**.
- So, we take the **6g** (total carbs) and **subtract the 2g** (dietary fiber).
- This will give us our **net carbs of 4g**.

Here’s a list of the most common low carb vegetables:

Vegetable	Amount	Net Carbs
Spinach (Raw)	1/2 Cup	0.1
Bok Choi	1/2 Cup	0.2
Lettuce (Romaine)	1/2 Cup	0.2
Broccoli (Florets)	1/2 Cup	0.8
Cauliflower (Steamed)	1/2 Cup	0.9
Cabbage (Green Raw)	1/2 Cup	1.1
Cauliflower (Raw)	1/2 Cup	1.4
Collard Greens	1/2 Cup	2.0
Kale steamed	1/2 Cup	2.1
Green Beans steamed	1/2 Cup	2.9

Benefits of a Keto Diet

- **Cholesterol.** A keto diet has **shown** to improve triglyceride levels and cholesterol levels most associated with arterial buildup.
- **Weight Loss.** As your body is burning fat as the main source of energy, you will essentially be using your fat stores as an energy source while in a fasting state.
- **Blood Sugar.** Many **studies** show the decrease of LDL cholesterol over time and have shown to eliminate ailments such as type 2 diabetes.
- **Energy.** By giving your body a better and more reliable energy source, you will feel more energized during the day. Fats are shown to be the most effective molecule to burn as fuel.
- **Hunger.** Fat is naturally more satisfying and ends up leaving us in a satiated (“full”) state for longer.
- **Acne.** Recent **studies** have shown a drop in acne lesions and skin inflammation over 12 weeks.

Physical Performance

You may see some limitations on your performance when you first begin a keto diet, but as your body fully adapts to using fat as the primary source of energy – all of your strength and endurance will return to normal.

Many people ask if carbs are needed to build muscle. **Of course they're not.** If you're asking this question, I will assume you know how you gain mass.

Your glycogen stores can still be refilled while on a ketogenic diet. A keto diet is a great way to build muscle, but protein intake is key here. It's suggested that if you are looking to gain mass, you should be taking in about **1.0 – 1.2g** protein per lean pound of body mass. Putting mass on may be slower on a ketogenic diet, but that's because your total body fat is **not increasing**. If, for some reason, you need to put on body fat also, you can achieve your goals through a **Cyclical Keto Diet** or a **Targeted Keto Diet**.

People often argue that performance is affected when on a keto diet, but that's **not true**. A **study** was done on trained cyclists who were on a ketogenic diet for 4 weeks. The results show that aerobic endurance was not compromised at all, and their muscle mass was the same as when they started. Their bodies adapted through ketosis, limiting both glucose and glycogen stores, and used fats as the predominant energy source. There was another **study** done on 8 professional gymnasts who had the same results.

Both groups were fed a strict diet of green vegetables, proteins, and high quality fats. So, even if you are doing long bouts of cardio – a keto diet has been proven time and time again. The only real time where ketosis can give performance loss is in exercises that need an explosive action. If you need a little boost in your performance during these, you can “**carb-up**” by eating **25-50g** of carbs about **30 minutes** before you train.

Dangers of a Keto Diet

There are a lot of misconceptions about low carb dieting which has caused an infamous outlook on this type of diet. There have been **tons** of **studies** published over the last **30 years** that show how high amounts of fat and low amount of carbs are beneficial.

People normally get this confused with high fat and high carb diets, which are terrible for the body. Of course when you eat a lot of fatty foods that are high in sugar, you'll be getting yourself in trouble.

Thinking of going on a low fat diet? It's been **shown** that a **ketogenic diet** is **healthier AND more effective** than low fat dieting. When you eat foods high in carbohydrates, your body naturally produces glucose. Carbohydrates are the easiest thing for the body to process, and therefore it will use them first – resulting in the excess fats to be stored immediately. In turn, this causes weight gain and health problems that are associated with high fat **AND** high carbohydrate diets, **NOT** a keto diet.

As a precaution, you should always check with your physician if you have any concerns about starting a keto diet. You should especially be wary if your family has any pre-existing **kidney or diabetic conditions** – as the higher intake of proteins will put strain on your kidneys.

High cholesterol, high blood sugar, and heart disease is not something you need to worry about. High fat, low carb diets are well-known and documented for their improvements in cholesterol, blood sugars, and reduction of heart disease.

What Happens To My Body

Your body is used to the simple routine of breaking down carbohydrates and using them as energy. Over time the body has built up an arsenal of enzymes ready for this process, and only has a **few enzymes for dealing with fats** – mostly to store them.

All of a sudden your body has to deal with the lack of glucose and increase in fats, which means building up a new supply of enzymes.

As your body becomes induced into a ketogenic state, your body will naturally use what's left of your glucose. This means your body will be depleted of all glycogen in the muscles – which can cause a lack of energy, and a general lethargy. In the first few weeks, many people report:

- **Headaches**
- Mental fogginess
- **Flu-like symptoms** (known as the “keto-flu”)
- Dizziness
- **Aggravation**

Most of the time, this is the result of your electrolytes being flushed out, as ketosis has a diuretic effect. Make sure you drink plenty of water and keep your sodium intake up. In fact, you should go overboard with the salt –**EVERYTHING!** This will help with water retention, and help replenish the electrolytes.

For a normal person that is starting a ketogenic diet, eating **25-40g** of net carbs a day, the total adaptation process will take about **2 weeks**. My advice is to cut your carbs to **fewer than 15g** to ensure that you are well on your way into ketosis within 1 week.

You may notice that if you're an avid gym goer, you lost some strength and endurance. This is normal. Once your body becomes keto-adapted, your body will be able to fully utilize the fats as its primary source of energy. Many studies done have shown that there is **no long term drop in performance** for professional athletes on a very low carb ketogenic diet. Many also report more energy at sustainable levels throughout the day.

Getting Started

If you're not sure on where to start, and new to the website, I'd highly recommend reading through my ["Start Here"](#) article.

Overall, eating a high amount of fat, moderate protein, and low amount of carbs can have a massive impact in your health – lowering your cholesterol, body weight, blood sugar, and raising your energy and mood levels.

Once you're in the mindset to start a more realistic, healthy approach at losing body fat – a low carb lifestyle doesn't seem as bad. Give it a few weeks to get over the initial hump, and those cravings for carbs will go away.

Some studies have shown links between artificial sweeteners and sugar cravings, so if you drink **diet sodas** or if you use a lot of artificial sweeteners – try to throw them out and reform your eating philosophies.

If you need help tracking your calories or carbs for the day, I've written up an article to [help you do that](#). While it's not necessary, it certainly helps to know exactly what you're eating so that you can pinpoint mistakes easily.

There's no real danger involved in a keto diet unless you have previous health conditions relating to the kidney or type 1 diabetes. Just be sure to know that the first week usually gives you some killer headaches and lethargy while your body adapts.