

Low Carb Living: The secret to surviving the holidays in good health.

Inspire Magazine

History of Keto Diets



As far back as 500BC, we know that people followed a low carb and high fat diet to treat epilepsy. In fact, by the 1920's, a full ketogenic diet was the primary treatment for seizure disorders. Fast forward to today, and keto diets/low carb living are making a comeback, but for much more than seizures. Low carb eating has been shown to reduce your risk for diabetes, heart disease, stroke, Alzheimer's and more. And, probably the best bonus, it helps you lose weight. But how do you know if it's the program for you? And is it possible to follow with the holiday season approaching?

The fact is, there are many different ways to lose weight, and it may depend on a person's genetics or body type to determine which diet plan is best. But one thing is sure: we are learning that processed food and excess sugars have to be avoided if you want to trim that waistline or stop chronic inflammation. And then if you can add more healthy fats to your diet, you will feed your brain the nutrients needed for clear thinking and preserving memory.

Eat more fats



After decades of being told that we should minimize fats in the diet, this is quite the paradigm shift. But those who follow low carb eating, or keto-friendly diets swear by the results. The Standard American Diet “SAD” is typically high in carbohydrate content, and the burning of carbohydrates for fuel results in a yo-yo pattern of fluctuating energy, fatigue and chronic hunger and cravings. When you switch to burning fats as your fuel system, the energy levels are consistent. Fats are more satisfying, so there is less hunger, and you won’t need to eat as often. A low carb diet literally will reduce your blood sugar and insulin resistance, and therefore reverse type 2 diabetes. Yes, that’s right. It actually can reverse type 2 diabetes!

The Insulin Test

The Kraft insulin test is one of the best ways to find out if low carb living is for you. In this test, a blood test is taken to determine your fasting insulin level. After drinking a glucose-containing drink, the blood is drawn again every 30 minutes for a total of 2 hours. A person with a healthy hormonal response will have a rapid and mild increase in insulin, with quick return to low levels. On the other hand, a person with a damaged pancreas will show a delayed and prolonged increase in insulin. These people have pre-diabetes and are already experiencing dysfunction of the beta cells, the work-horses of the pancreas. But have no fear, there may be time to reverse this! It is sugar and processed foods that cause the damage to the beta cells in the pancreas. And if you learn to successfully avoid these foods, you can save your pancreatic function.

Prepare for the holidays



With holiday season around the corner, you know you'll be faced with sweets and treats and temptations. You have the power to make good choices, and low-carb/keto-friendly meals are the way to keep yourself feeling full, and stop your sugar cravings. Focus on moderate protein at each meal, allow liberal healthy fats (like oils and butter), and don't even reach for those carbohydrates! Keeping your daily carbohydrate count below 40 should be enough to keep you in fat burning mode. And you'll fly through the holidays with great energy, a clear mind and a smaller waistline!



Dr. Judi Woolger is the Chief Medical Officer at the Agatston Center, where patients are successfully following low carb/ keto friendly eating plans with amazing success. The Agatston Center has concierge offices in South Beach and Pinecrest.

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