# Ketogenic Diet

Ketogenic or “keto diet” is a low carbohydrate diet, a high-fat diet. It has been used for a very long time to treat various medical conditions. In the 19th century, the ketogenic diet was mainly used to treat diabetes. Later, it was also used to treat epilepsy, cancer, and other medical conditions. But nowadays, this diet is gaining special attention for weight loss strategy. Studies are now being done on this diet to further explore its risks and health benefits.

**Keto Basics:**

This diet is high in fat, but low in dietary carbohydrates. It works on the principle of the “carbohydrate-insulin model”. When we consume food items that are high in carbohydrates, it signals the body to release a hormone which is called insulin. It is produced and released by the pancreas. **(1)**

Insulin is an anabolic hormone that helps the body store excess calories in the form of adipose tissues. In men, fat is usually accumulated in the abdominal region. It makes their body apple-shaped. On the other hand, women tend to accumulate fat on their thighs and hips. This body type is known as pear-shaped. Obese men are at greater risk of developing chronic diseases than women. **(2)**

This dietary pattern allows only the food items that are low in carbohydrates such as leafy green vegetables, avocado, berries, butter, cheese, nuts, seeds, poultry, fish, seafood, coffee.

If you are on a ketogenic diet, you should avoid fruits, grains, refined sugar, processed foods, sugar, honey, and other carbohydrate-rich foods.

During ketosis, protein consumption should also be moderated because the body can convert the protein into glucose which may slow down the ketosis process. **(3)**

**What is ketosis?**

Ketosis is the metabolic state of the body. It occurs when your body uses dietary fats as a source of energy rather than carbohydrates. Ketosis commonly occurs when carbohydrate consumption reduces to a certain level. During ketosis, your body burns the dietary fatty acids for energy through ketosis. **(4)**

Following the ketogenic diet is the key to enter ketosis, which reduces carbohydrate consumption to 20 to 50 grams per day. **(5)**

A review of 53 studies involving more than 68000 participants suggests that low carbohydrate diets work efficiently for weight loss than any other calorie-restricted diet. **(6)**

Furthermore, a diet that is low in carbohydrates can also help you to burn belly fat. **(7, 8, 9)**

**Weight loss:**

The ketogenic diet is proven to be a very effective diet for weight loss. Studies have also demonstrated that a ketogenic diet can also lower the risk of many diseases. On a positive note, one can lose weight on a ketogenic diet without tracking calories. **(10, 11)**

A review of 13 studies suggests that a ketogenic diet can aid in weight loss more than other low-carb diets. Participants who were given a ketogenic diet lose more weight (about 2 pounds) than the ones who followed low-fat diets. **(12)**

What’s more, a ketogenic diet can also help in lowering blood pressure. **(13)**

**Bottom-line:** Ketogenic diet is an effective and functional approach towards obesity and diabetes. It reduces total cholesterol levels and has other health benefits. It has astonishing effects on food craving, appetite, energy expenditure, and the promotion of fat loss. However, the studies regarding the long-term benefits of this diet are limited and short-term.

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