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Low Carb and Lowfat Diets...A Scam?!

By Dr. Tara Barker

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by: **Dr. Tara Barker**

If anyone knows anything about fitness, it's that a low fat diet is the healthiest way to avoid serious diseases, right? Maybe wrong.

In many instances quality research has shown just the opposite...that a low fat diet, sometimes even a vegetarian diet, can be harmful to your health. Although vegetarian and low-fat diets have been proven to reduce cholesterol and triglyceride levels, they have not demonstrated significant reductions in deaths from any disease.

The Low-Fat Approach

Popular diets of today encouraging low-fat approaches, such as the diets of Dr. Pritkin, Dr. Ornish, Macrobiotics, and Weight Watchers, are generally effective with weight-loss and reduction in blood fats. The low-fat approach has even been proven to overcome serious illness successfully.

But the majority of dieters find these plans difficult to stick with. And most research trials have not shown these diets effective in decreasing death rates from diseases in general, long-term.

Fats in a meal make you feel more `full'. They slow the time it takes for your stomach to empty, thus ensuring you will not feel hungry too soon.

Generally, high-carb, low-fat meals have the opposite effect. The stomach empties quicker and insulin levels increase following the meal. This means you may be hungry sooner than you'd like.

Research shows the higher insulin levels of a low-fat, high-carb diet may predispose you to adult onset diabetes, hypoglycemia, and even heart disease.

The Low-Carb Approach

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These diets claim that limiting carbs, like sugars, grains, fruits, and some vegetables, is the solution. The Atkins Diet, South Beach Diet, and even the Zone Diet all suggest if you cut out the carbs or have a balance of fat/carbs/protein in every meal, you will experience weight loss and better health. Many dedicated dieters find this to be true.

Although a low-carb diet can cause weight loss, the goal of any program should be life long radiant health. It is still up for debate if this approach leads to any significant health advantages. It is possible to hasten heart disease, arthritis, cancer, and aging with a diet too high in the wrong fats and too low in essential nutrients from various fruits and veggies.

Many health care professionals find it difficult to prescribe to either of the above theories. If there is no definitive answer in either direction that is indisputable, then there must be a middle ground.

A Healthy Solution for Everyone

It is difficult to imagine that reducing intake of the wonderful fruits and vegetables that keep people well is the way to a healthy future. Research will back this up. The average American already ingests too little fiber, vitamins, minerals, antioxidants, and other factors present in whole, unprocessed fruits and vegetables.

In much of our history, it was rare to have many of the diseases we live with today. Most people in native cultures eating diets dictated by availability experienced vibrant health. Their death was caused by accidents, bacterial or viral diseases, or by old age. Very few died of our number one killers: cardiovascular disease and cancer.

People did not begin to experience heart disease and cancer in such great numbers until the advent of our more modern diet and lifestyle customs.

These "advances" included: growing and eating more grains discovering how to `refine' and `preserve' foods to extend shelf-life consuming sugar and `simple` carbohydrates pasteurizing and homogenizing dairy products

With the human tampering of food overall health took an undeniable turn for the worse.

Almost exclusively we now eat, even in so called `healthy` or `organic` foods, the following: refined products, products with added sugar, preservatives, additives, petroleum products, animal products laden with antibiotics and hormones, and animals that are fed diets that they would never eat in the wild (wild cattle do not eat other cattle, poultry by-products, or even grains; cattle eat grass).

Native cultures worldwide, before being indoctrinated with more westernized food choices, eat remarkably similar diets.

Since many food products spoil without refrigeration or freezing, most people fermented their foods. This supplies necessary probiotic bacteria, which many people supplement with today since we eat natural fermented foods so infrequently.

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Whether or not they inhabited the same regions, most people ate a wide variety of fruits, vegetables, and animal products in season. Very few societies tip the scales by eating mostly animal products (Inuit cultures) or mostly vegetarian (a few tribes in Africa and South America).

The similarities that bind the historical human diet together are: A diet based on fresh or fermented whole, unrefined foods A diet high in essential fatty acids with an omega 6 to omega 3 ratio of 4:1 (current US diets have a ratio of 16:1) A diet where spirituality around food is more meaningful than the material A diet with 10 times the level of fat soluble vitamins (A, D, E, K) A diet lower in total calories overall

Wisdom passed down through the ages says that a varied diet with foods found abundant in nature is best. In almost all cultures this means a diet, as available, of fresh or dried wild meats and fish, fermented cheeses, fresh whole or fermented milk, butter, eggs, fresh, dried, or fermented fruits, fresh or fermented vegetables, whole grains (these were fermented normally, even if dried), some beans, and water or fermented beverages to drink.

It is interesting to note that instead of eating fresh foods or those naturally fermented, we chose to cook or destroy what could spoil in our foods then add additives and preservatives. Are these `foods' as digestible? Do they supply the same nutrients? Does the magic number of carbohydrates versus fats or proteins really matter? What if the answer lies in ancient wisdom and thousands of years of knowledge?

Something to think about.

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Low-Carb Dieting During Pregnancy May Benefit Your Baby!

By Melissa White

As low-carb dieters change their eating habits, it is likely that these habits will stay with them. There is no surprise then that more and more pregnant women are trying to maintain their low-carb routine during the months of pregnancy. There are new studies being done on low-carb dieting that point to the fact that there may be benefits in the long run for children of low-carb dieting.

Scientists from the Southampton School of Medicine have used mice to study the benefits of low-carb diets during gestation. It was found that pups born to mice fed a high-unsaturated protein and fat diet and low in carbohydrates were more likely to have low liver triglyceride levels than the pups born to mice fed a standard diet which was high-carb and low-fat. Low-carb pups also had higher amounts of

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protein that help in burning fat than the pups that were on the standard diet.

The mother mice were put on either the low-carb diet or the high-carb/low fat diets six weeks prior to being impregnated and stayed on the diets throughout their entire pregnancy as well as the duration of nursing. Post weaning all pups were fed the same high-carb diet, despite this fact, the pups born to the low-carb mothers were found to have significantly greater levels of the hepatic proteins CD36, CPT-1 and PPAR α , which help with fatty acid oxidation.

The mice on the low-carb diet ate about 21 percent less than the high-carb/low fat diet. These low-carb mothers also consumed about 57 percent fewer carbs, 23 percent more protein, and 153 percent more fat than the high-carb mothers.

Humans too need to maintain low levels of liver triglyceride and a good lipid (fat) metabolism. This will help reduce the risk of coronary artery disease. This disease alone kills thousands of Americans each year.

Melissa "Granny" White is a Low-Carb Diet fan and has been making delicious Low Carb recipes for years. You can get all 800 of her delicious recipes at:

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