WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT THE KETO DIET

The Ketogenic diet, also commonly referred to as the "Keto" diet, was first developed to help manage seizures in people suffering from epilepsy.

These patients required close supervision from medical professionals because of the complexity of the diet and health considerations.

Fast forward to present time, when the Keto diet is largely viewed as a potential weight loss plan. The diet calls for very low carbohydrate, high fat, and moderate protein intake. Carbohydrate intake on a Keto diet can be as low as 5% of daily calories and fat as high as 90% of daily calories. However, Keto diets for weight loss vary in their recommendations. Because of Keto's popularity, many consumers who reduce carbohydrate intake refer to their diet a keto diet. That reduced intake of carbohydrates, however, may not result in achieving a state of ketosis and not meet the true definition of the Ketogenic diet.

How it Works

Carbohydrates are the body's primary source of energy. When carbohydrates are restricted in the diet and stored glucose is depleted, the body switches to a new fuel source through fatty acids, called ketones. Ketones are used to provide fuel to the brain and other tissues in the body. This process is called ketosis and can take up to a week to achieve depending on the individual.

Pros of a Keto Diet

The Keto diet for weight loss has shown beneficial results in the short term, including weight loss, improvement in insulin resistance, and improvement in other health conditions such as high blood pressure. Two theories regarding the weight loss impact of the Keto diet include reduced food cravings due to higher fat intake and decreased insulin levels. However, it is important to note that a majority of studies assessing the benefits of the Keto diet for weight loss are shorter than six months in length. Long-term studies are limited at this time.

Cons of a Keto Diet

A high fat, low carbohydrate diet can be challenging to sustain, and there are potential side effects associated with a lack of carbohydrates. These may include "Keto Flu," constipation and nutrient deficiency.

Due to increased fat in the diet, specifically saturated fat, regular monitoring of lab work for cardiovascular health is recommended. Additionally, this diet is not appropriate for everyone, and consulting a medical professional before starting it is recommended. According to the American Heart Association and the Dietary Guidelines for Americans, saturated fat intake should be limited due to its negative impact on cardiovascular health. Lastly, due to the difficulty of sustaining such a restrictive, low carbohydrate diet, research is limited to a Keto diet's long-term effects.

Indvidual Approach

There are several interpretations of the Keto diet for weight loss. Taking an individualistic approach is key to finding what works best for your health and goals. Those interested in a Keto diet for weight loss may also find success with a less restrictive approach. Additionally, the Keto diet's long-term findings are limited, and the sustainability of this diet has its challenges and considerations. Therefore, someone considering this diet should consult a doctor and a registered dietitian.

Foods Eaten on a Keto Diet

Foods eaten on the Keto diet are typically high in fat. Additionally, protein sources such as meat, fish, eggs, cheese, and non-starchy vegetables are encouraged. Many Keto recipes include saturated fats from sources such as meats, cheese, and butter. Heart-friendly unsaturated fats such as nuts, avocados, and olive oil also have a place in the keto diet.

Foods Avoided on a Keto Diet

A Keto diet for weight loss consists of low carbohydrate intake. Most Keto diets recommend less than 50 grams of carbohydrates a day, with some as low as 20 grams a day (equivalent to one apple). Carbohydrate-containing foods often avoided on the Keto diet include grains, dairy containing carbohydrates, starchy vegetables, foods containing added sugars, and most fruit.

Eat Right. "What is the Ketogenic Diet"
Accessed at https://www.eatright.org/health/wellness/fad-diets/what-is-the-ketogenic-diet
Pennsylvania Academy of Nutrition & Dietetics. "The Low Down on Keto"
Accessed at https://eatrightpa.org/members/blog/the-low-down-on-keto/
Harvard T.H. Chan. "Diet Review: Ketogenic Diet for Weight Loss."
Accessed at https://www.hsph.harvard.edu/nutritionsource/healthy-weight/diet-reviews/ketogenic-diet/
US National Library of Medicine National Institutes of Health. "Scientifically Proven Diets that Work."
Accessed at https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3826507/
Cambridge Core. "Very-low-carbohydrate ketogenic diet v. low-fat diet for long-term weight loss: a meta analysis of randomised controlled trials."
Accessed at https://doi.org/10.1017/S0007114513000548
Dietary Guidelines for Americans. "Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2020-2025."
Accessed at https://www.dietaryguidelines.gov/sites/default/files/2020-12/Dietary_Guidelines_for_Americans_2020-2025.pdf

ConnectCare3®

©2020 ConnectCare3, LLC - All Rights Reserved