

THE CASE FOR KETO

Rethinking Weight Control and the Science
and Practice of Low-Carb/High-Fat Eating

Gary Taubes

Copyright © 2020 by Gary Taubes

Here's the British endocrinologist Raymond Greene's version from his seminal 1951 textbook *The Practice of Endocrinology*:
Foods to be avoided:

- 1 Bread, and everything else made with flour
- 2 Cereals, including breakfast cereals and milk puddings
- 3 Potatoes and all other white root vegetables
- 4 Foods containing much sugar
- 5 All sweets

You can eat as much as you like of the following foods:

- 1 Meat, fish, birds
- 2 All green vegetables
- 3 Eggs, dried or fresh
- 4 Cheese
- 5 Fruit, if unsweetened or sweetened with saccharin, except bananas and grapes

And here's how Robert Melchionna of Cornell University's Medical School described the reducing diet that they used at New York Hospital in Manhattan in the early 1950s: "Concentrated carbohydrates, such as sugars and breadstuffs, and fats must be restricted. Diets, therefore, should exclude or minimize the use of rice, bread, potato, macaroni, pies, cakes, sweet desserts, free sugar, candy, cream, etc. They should consist of moderate amounts of meat, fish, fowl, eggs, cheese, coarse grains and skimmed milk." And how about the "general rules" of a successful reducing diet, as published by a physician at Chicago's Children's Memorial Hospital in 1950?

- 1 Do not use sugar, honey, syrup, jam, jelly or candy.
- 2 Do not use fruits canned with sugar.
- 3 Do not use cake, cookies, pie, puddings, ice cream or ices.
- 4 Do not use foods which have cornstarch or flour added such as gravy or cream sauce.
- 5 Do not use potatoes (sweet or Irish), macaroni, spaghetti, noodles, dried beans or peas.
- 6 Do not use fried foods prepared with butter, lard, oil or butter substitutes.
- 7 Do not use drinks such as Coca-Cola, ginger ale, pop or root beer.
- 8 Do not use any foods not allowed on the diet and only as much as the diet allows.

Abstinence

- No grains, which means no rice, wheat, corn, or even “old world” grains like quinoa, millet, barley, and buckwheat. No products made from these grains: no pasta, breads, bagels, cereals. No sauces that use cornstarch as a thickening agent, as many do.
- No starchy vegetables, so no root vegetables or tubers. No potatoes, sweet potatoes, parsnips, or carrots. You won’t eat vegetables that grow below ground. It’s okay to eat those that grow aboveground.
- No fruit, with the exception of avocados, olives, and tomatoes (all technically fruit), and with the possible exception of berries, which we’ll discuss.
- No beans or legumes, which means no peas, lentils, chickpeas, or soybeans.
- Absolutely no sugary foods and particularly sugary beverages, even if the sugar comes from “natural” sources like fruit: so no soda, fruit juice, smoothies, cakes, ice cream, candy, bonbons, or even health-food bars, and perhaps particularly those advertised as low in fat.
- No milk or sweetened yogurts, particularly low-fat varieties (in which the fat content is removed and replaced, typically, with some kind of sugar). I agree with Michael Pollan that if a food product makes a health claim on its packaging, it’s probably a good idea to avoid it.

Below are the foods that you can eat, the foods that are very low in carbohydrates and/or high in fats.

- Meat: from animals or fowl (chicken, turkey, duck, goose), the fatter the better and all preferably raised on grass, in pastures, and not in factory farming conditions
- Fish and shellfish
- Eggs

You can also eat:

- Butter, preferably from grass-fed animals, and oils, preferably from fruits rather than nuts, seeds, or legumes, and so olive, coconut, or avocado oil
- Low-carbohydrate vegetables, which means all leafy green vegetables, in particular, kale, spinach, and lettuce, but also cabbage, broccoli, cauliflower, asparagus, Brussels sprouts, tomatoes (technically, a fruit, as mentioned), mushrooms, cucumbers, zucchini, peppers, and onions
- Fatty fruits: olives and avocados
- Dairy fats: cheeses, cream, (unsweetened) yogurts, all full fat

These foods you can eat but in moderation, as I'll discuss.

- Low-sugar chocolates, the lower the better
- Berries
- Nuts and nut butters
- Seeds and seed butters



Two versions of a dinner just over six hundred calories. The fattening meal (top): a roasted chicken breast, broccoli, and potatoes.

The non-fattening/weight-loss meal (bottom): two chicken thighs, more broccoli, no potatoes, butter.



Two versions of a seven-hundred-calorie lunch. The fattening meal (top): A small cheeseburger, fries, ketchup, and a small Coca-Cola.

The non-fattening/weight-loss meal (bottom): a Double Quarter pounder with cheese (no bun), a green salad with ranch dressing, and ice water.



Two versions of a breakfast of just over seven hundred calories. The fattening meal (top): cereal, half a banana, skim milk for the cereal (four ounces), buttered toast, and orange juice (eight ounces).

The non-fattening/weight-loss meal (bottom): three eggs scrambled with cheese and sausage, two strips of bacon, half an avocado (sliced), and ice water.