



BFit4Life Newsletter

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Welcome to the BFit4Life Newsletter

Hiya All,

Success in life is all about the choices we make. It is not about always making the right decision but what we learn from the mistakes we have made and how we take that on board as an opportunity to further develop our ability and potential. It's never too late to start on the right path and making the right food choices in our lives gives us the potential for a longer happier life with abundant energy.

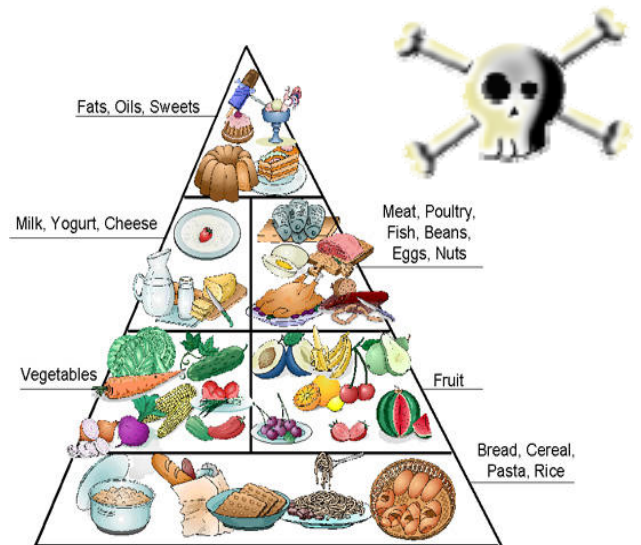
Every week new clients walk in the door, and while some believe they are eating a healthy diet, their food diaries reveal a different story. If you are still confused about what to eat, catch up this month with the latest research from The New England Journal of Medicine and some information from my recent trip to the Nutrition Conference at BoulderFest 2008 and discover while one diet does not fit all that the benefits of Low-Carb diets reach further than just weight loss !



Damien

The Truth about Low Carb Diets

Molly Malone must surely notice that it's not an unfamiliar sight to see a strain on people's waistbands and belt-buckles from her perch in Dublin's Fair city. Our bulging waistlines and muffin tops are a result of Irish people consuming processed foods and grains that are promoted by a food pyramid and heavily endorsed by our government. If our politicians and health ministers promote it, their body shapes surely resemble the shape of it, small at the shoulders and large at the hips. No-one is immune to it and Ireland's sons and daughters enter schools and colleges in mini-skirts but at the time of graduation they are replaced with baggy tracksuits with elastic waistbands for a reason.



These changes in the body-shapes of our nation should not come as a surprise. Our diet has changed so much from that of our great grandparents that our bodies have not evolved to digest the foods we eat. We are consuming way too many carbohydrates in the form of breads, cereals, pastas, beer and cakes and not enough in the form of vegetables and good quality protein. Loren Cordain author of the Paleo Diet confirms that our DNA has only changed 0.02% in the last 40,000 years so our bodies can't cope with our change of dietary habits. We ate a diet high in proteins, good fats like Omega 3's and Nuts and vegetables and now we eat a diet high in grains and sugar. Refined carbohydrates such as the ones listed above have been termed as anti-nutrients. The refined carbohydrates and artificial additives actually displace more nutrients such as Selenium, chromium, Magnesium, Zinc and B6 than we actually absorb from eating them. Weston A. Price a nutritionist and orthodontist studying the effects of nutrition on teeth labeled non foods such as white flour and white sugar products as a cause of degeneration. His book Nutrition and Physical Degeneration was compiled as a result of a 10-year study in the 1920's on different cultures of foods around the world. All of them ate protein and the quantity depended on the location of the tribe and protein's availability, e.g. Eskimo's vs. Asians. These tribes and cultures had been untouched by civilisation and had never heard of the disease we call cancer.

The Truth about Low Carb diets - continued

Our society today is riddled with disease. Eight of the top ten causes of death are linked with diet. Cancer, Heart Disease, Diabetes, Strokes etc are all on the increase and with it our obesity rates. In 1815 the annual consumption of sugar per head was 7.lbs per year. Today that it is nearly 200lbs. When you consider that research shows that 1 spoonful of sugar can depress the immune system for up to 4 hours it is with little wonder that illness is also increasing. It is not just foods that contain sugar that we need to worry about but also foods that turn into sugar very quickly in our body. Wheat, bread, cereals are examples and alcohol is another one hence it is often used in medications to get into the blood stream quickly. When something turns into sugar quickly and we are unable to use it we will deposit it somewhere on your body, and that somewhere is your love handles. A Law of 20 years shows that when there are changes to diet and lifestyle its legacy will come home to roost in 20 years time.

William Bunting realised his body and his health were changing for the worse at the start of the 19th century. He followed the diet recommended by his doctor and when his health deteriorated further he changed himself and he started eating a low carbohydrate diet and increasing his protein intake. He was pleasantly surprised when he found that his health markers improved while his weight dropped three stone as a result to the new changes in his diet. In fact, he is the author of the first ever Low Carb Diet Book "A Letter of Corpulence." Since then, when people think of Low Carb diets they think of the Atkins Diet. Dr. Robert Atkins is one man who knew the effects of sugars on the body and the role of insulin and he never received the credit he deserved as a researcher. Instead of a legacy of a man who identified Insulin management as a cause of illness, he is remembered most as a man who died whilst slipping on a kerb at 17 stone of body-weight. Atkins treated 10,000 overweight and diabetic patients from 1963-1972 with a 99% success rate. He promoted protein diets to his patients as when they ate fewer carbohydrates the pancreas got a rest from producing insulin normally released to reduce the high from sugars in carbohydrates.



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It was a craze in Ireland up until his death and different media and marketing campaigns threw in their two-pence worth slating his methods. Although not perfect in healthy foods, the concept of lowering carbohydrates meant that the blood sugar was stabilised which decreased an insulin response and it got our bodies to use fat as energy. It must be noted that green vegetables like broccoli, spinach and cabbage do not make people fat and I have yet to encounter a client complaining about cravings for brussel sprouts. It is sugary foods and foods that turn into sugar quickly that are the problem.



Now when you look at the television and magazines, slick marketers representing cereal companies target your goal of weight-loss. They promote a cereal for breakfast, dinner and tea if you want to wear that red swimsuit. The reality is that the only loss is water and muscle, not fat. This will slow your metabolism and make you fatter in the long term.

Atkins methods have been somewhat justified recently in the literature following a study recently released in the **New England Journal of Medicine**. In the study, Israeli researchers recruited 322 moderately obese subjects and they divided them into a Mediterranean Diet, a low-fat group and a low-carb diet. Comparisons and guidelines were given to each group and the low carbohydrate had an induction phase of 20g a week of carbohydrates for the first two weeks similar to Atkins before increasing to 120grams a day. If that person was on a 1500-1800 calorie a day diet that would represent 25-40% of her food intake would be carbohydrates. This is hardly low-carbohydrate or Atkin's but more similar to Barry Sear's zone diet. Each group gradually reduced their calorie intake although the low carb group was the only group who did not have to; they felt more satisfied and so ate less. This is an important point, since I've long maintained that a low-carb diet is easier to follow for many people-- especially those with sugar addictions-- because it doesn't stimulate the appetite like high-carb diets frequently do.

After two years: the low-carb group lost the most amount of weight, the low-fat diet brought up the rear and the Mediterranean group was in the middle. The weight loss results, however, were only part of the picture. The low-carb group had the highest increase in HDL ("good, protective cholesterol"), most improvement in cholesterol ratio, and the greatest reduction in triglycerides- an important risk factor for heart disease that I firmly believe is more important than cholesterol- triglycerides didn't budge in the low fat group.

It gets better. Low-carb dieters saw their C - reactive protein go down the most. C - reactive protein is a very good measure of inflammation, something I think we need to be way more concerned with than cholesterol. Inflammation is a silent killer and a component of every degenerative disease from heart disease to obesity. Incidentally, C - reactive protein levels barely budged in the low-fat group.

The Truth about Low Carb diets - continued

The bad news of the study was that the weight lost on all three diets was pretty pathetic-- average of about 12 pounds for the low-carb group, 10 for the Mediterranean group and 7 for the low-fat group- statistically significant results, but pretty depressing considering this was over a two year period! Remember, though, those numbers were averages- some people lost a lot more (the highest number of pounds lost was lost on the low-carb approach, by the way).

It is impossible to state whether the subjects stuck to their diets. There's no way to completely track compliance with any diet- people cheat, misunderstand the instructions, under-report what they ate, forget, and occasionally outright lie.

But the researchers were smart, and worked with what they had. In Israel, the biggest meal of the day is eaten at lunch, and in this study, everyone participating worked at the same facility and ate lunch at the company cafeteria. The employers cooperated fully with the researchers- all food was labeled and colour coded, plus the subjects gave written reports about what they were eating outside company hours. Everyone lost weight and what it showed is that employers can actually make a big difference. What worked here- besides the diet programs themselves- was the group support, the counseling, the accountability and the change in choices that was made available at their workplace. That's a pretty optimistic finding, so if schools applied the same principle it could make such a difference to our children.

The study showed that there are health benefits to a low-carb approach that go way beyond weight loss. Lowered C-Reactive Protein, lowered triglycerides and increased HDL is a nice slap in the face of the establishment that keeps telling us how "unhealthy" low carb diets are

The question remains to what weight loss would the low-carb group have achieved if they had eaten less than the 120 grams of carbs this group ate, all the while keeping calories at a moderate, reduced amount and incorporating other lifestyle changes like exercise and stress reduction. Levels of under 100 grams a day of carbohydrates seem to work the best for people who have problems with sugar, insulin and carbohydrates in general.

The conclusion of the study is that there are other ways to go besides low-fat and that no one program works for everyone. Weston A. Price proved this in the 1920's and now in 2008 people are starting to realise that some people may be more metabolically suited to low-carb while some people can handle carbohydrates. One look at your love handles will give you the answer. Weight loss is a tough nut to crack- but with the right match between program and person, the right social support system, a level of determination and commitment, it can be done.

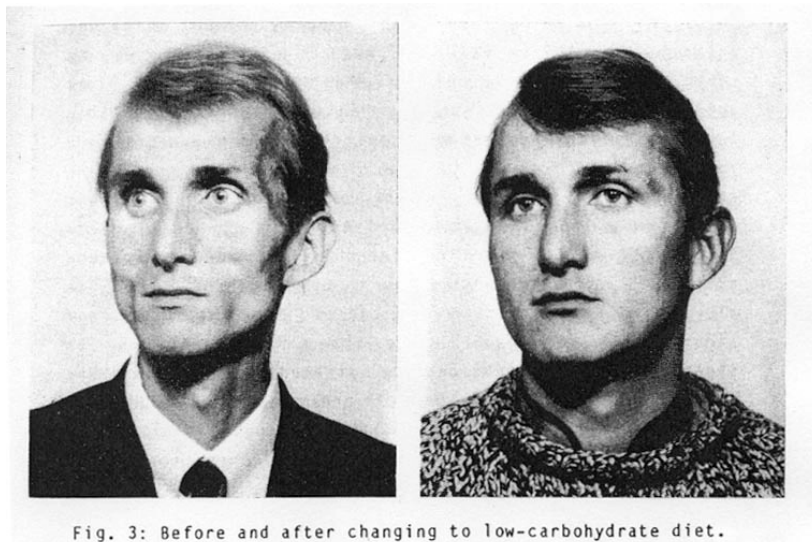


Fig. 3: Before and after changing to low-carbohydrate diet.

Dr. Wolfgang Lutz performed extensive clinical interventions in Germany on the Low Carbohydrate Diets vs. Low Fat Vegetarian Diets for a wide variety of health conditions-

Above we see a picture of a Vegan before converting to a Low-Carbohydrates Diet.
