

HEALTHSTYLES

Preventive Medicine News

Clinical Nutrition Center • James Berry, MD, Medical Director • 7555 E Hampden Ave, Ste 301, Denver CO 80231 • (303) 750-9454 • Summer 2003

Low Carbohydrate Diet Outperforms Lowfat Diet

A recent study reported in the New England Journal of Medicine that obese patients who participated in a low carbohydrate diet for six months lost more weight and fared better on certain cardiovascular and diabetes measures than patients on a lowfat diet.

One hundred thirty two obese men and women, whose average weight was 288 pounds, were randomly assigned to either a low carbohydrate diet or a lowfat diet. The low carbohydrate group was instructed to limit carbohydrate intake to 30 grams daily. The lowfat diet group was told to follow a calorie restricted diet that contained no more than 30% fat.

The volunteers assigned to the low carbohydrate diet lost an average of 13 pounds compared to 4 pounds for the low fat group. The low carbohydrate dieters reduced the levels of their triglycerides—blood fats, which like cholesterol, may contribute to clogged arteries—by an average of 20% versus 4% for the low-fat group.

The study results underscore the paradox of America's fascination with low-fat eating: we are eating less fat, but not losing weight or improving cardiovascular risk factors as a result. People have gotten the message loud and clear—they're restricting fat, but they are still overeating. And when they overeat carbohydrates, they remain overweight and perhaps even exacerbate the development and management of diabetes, unfavorable lipids (blood fats) and heart disease. People should



not get the message that if they lower their fat intake they can eat unlimited quantities of (low-fat) junk food.

Also insulin sensitivity improved for the non-diabetic members of the low carbohydrate group, while it worsened for the non-diabetic members of the low-fat group. The authors noted that although all the study participants remained significantly overweight, those in the low carbohydrate group significantly reduced risk factors for diabetes and heart disease: their triglycerides dropped to normal range and their blood sugar levels approached normal as well. The metabolic effects were fairly impressive.

This study provides validation for eating fewer carbohydrates, more protein and a moderate amount of fat for more successful weight management. However, even the best diet must be combined with increased activity to combat obesity.

Clinical Nutrition Center eating plans for weight loss include the principles validated in this study. All of our eating plans include adequate, but not excessive protein, moderate amounts of fat and limited amounts of carbohydrates.

BEWARE Bitter Orange

Ephedra, a stimulant commonly found in over the counter weight loss aids, stimulates heart rate, which the manufacturers claim increases metabolism and, therefore, weight loss. Unfortunately, many overweight Americans using these weight loss aids experienced dangerous side effects, including elevations in blood pressure, seizures, strokes and heart attacks. Most consumers are now aware of the cardiovascular hazards of Ephedra, forcing many retailers to stop carrying Ephedra products. Several manufacturers are now substituting Bitter Orange for Ephedra in weight loss products. Bitter orange or Citrus aurantium, an extract from the bitter Seville orange, is being marketed as a "natural" weight loss enhancer despite the lack of studies showing that it works or is safe for that purpose.

One website states that their new product "displays the powerful effects of Ephedra (ma huong) without side effects." The label on another company's products promises that Bitter Orange is "the new cutting edge ingredient that gives you thermogenic [calorie-burning] benefits without the jittery side effects."

Unfortunately, the active ingredient in Bitter Orange is synephrine, a close chemical relative to Ephedra. In fact, hospitals keep intravenous synephrine on hand to rapidly increase a shock victim's blood pressure. (A similar chemical is used in the over-the-counter nasal spray Neo-Synephrine.)

Synephrine is not thought to be easily absorbed by the gastro-intestinal tract when swallowed. However, scientists are concerned that the absorption may be greatly enhanced when it is combined with the guarana and green tea in many weight loss aids. May we suggest exercise as a healthier way to increase the rate of weight loss?

(Consumer Reports on Health, April 2003)

THE SCOOP ON FROZEN DESSERTS

Did you know that ice cream must contain at least 10% milk fat by law? Lighter choices include: (All definitions are for cup servings.)

- Reduced fat: 25% less fat than a typical product (ice cream only).
- Light: at least 50% less fat or 1/3 fewer calories (ice cream only).
- Low Fat: 3 grams or less total fat for ice cream; less than 2% milk fat for frozen yogurt.
- Nonfat/Fat free: 0.5 grams fat or less for ice cream; less than 5% milk fat for frozen yogurt.
- No Sugar Added: May contain natural sugars from milk or other ingredients like fruit, but no sugars are added.



Brand	Per 1/2 Cup Serving	
	Calories	Fat grams
Baskin Robbins ice cream	250	16
Baskin Robbins nonfat frozen yogurt	90	0
Baskin Robbins Truly Free frozen yogurt (soft serve, no sugar added)	80	0
Ben & Jerry's Vanilla for a Change	240	16
Ben & Jerry's low fat frozen yogurt	130	1.5
Breyer's Natural ice cream	150	9
Breyer's Light ice cream	110	3
Dreyer's/Edy's Homemade	130	7
Dreyer's/Edy's Grand Light	100	3.5
Dreyer's/Edy's No Sugar Added	90	3
Haagen Dazs ice cream	270	18
Haagen Dazs frozen yogurt	200	4.5
Healthy Choice	110	2
Healthy Choice No Sugar Added	100	2

Did You Know?

Sunscreens Expire

(lose their sun blocking ability) when the ingredients start to separate.

This generally happens after the expiration date printed on the label and is usually 2-3 years after manufacture. Toss out any sunscreen that has expired, is separating, shows grittiness or has an otherwise changed appearance.

DUCT TAPE FOR WARTS

Researchers at the Magidan Army Medical Center in Tacoma Washington randomly assigned 51 patients to have their warts treated by cryotherapy (up to 6 sessions of freezing with liquid nitrogen) or by using duct tape. The patients in the duct-tape group were told to remove the tape after 6 days, soak the area in water, rub the wart with an emery board or pumice stone, and apply new tape after 12 hours. This cycle was repeated for up to two months. The warts disappeared completely in 85% of the duct tape group, compared with 60% of the cryotherapy group. The researchers theorize that taping may cause local irritation that stimulates the immune system to kill the virus that causes the warts.

It is worth trying as the first treatment for most garden-variety warts. Most warts respond to taping within three to four weeks. If you see no progress by then, or if irritation, redness or pain develops, be sure to consult a physician. Over-the-counter alternatives include liquids or patches containing salicylic acid such as *Clear Away One Step Wart Remover*, *Compound W Wart Remover*, or *Duofilm Wart Remover*.

Avoid self-treatment for very large, firmly entrenched, painful, spreading or hard to reach warts and warts on the face or genitals. Be sure to consult a physician for treatment for warts meeting these descriptions.

(*Consumer Reports on Health*, March 2003)

Did You Know?

Some flowers are less allergenic than others.

Most people who are sensitive to flowers are actually sensitive to the aroma, not the pollen. (Flower pollen is distributed by insects and, unlike pollens from grass and trees, is usually not air-borne.)

Low scent flowers like crocuses, daffodils, daisies, certain roses and tulips may be more tolerable for the allergy-prone.

Organic Produce May Have Benefits



Organic farming doesn't pollute the land or water with pesticides, fertilizers and herbicides. However, the nutritional benefits for organic foods have never been proven. Now new research suggests that organic farms produce crops with more disease-protective phytonutrients called phenols than crops from conventional farms.

Reporting in a recent issue of the *Journal of Agricultural and Food Chemistry*, scientists found consistently higher levels of phenols (69% versus 19%) in corn, blackberries and strawberries grown using certified organic practices compared to the same foods grown conventionally.

Phenols like quercetin, kaempferol and ellagic acid, are produced by plants as natural defenses against insects, infections and ultraviolet radiation. As potent antioxidants, they may help prevent the free radical cell damage in humans that contributes to age-related conditions like heart disease and cancer. The researchers speculate that chemicals used in conventional agriculture may disrupt the natural production of these substances. More research is needed to find out if these speculated benefits really exist for humans.

(*Environmental Nutrition*, May 2003)

STAFF NEWS

Tanja Bugas, MS, RD, Retires After 18 Years!

We are sad to report that Nutritionist Tanja Bugas is retiring just a month shy of her 18th year with Clinical Nutrition Center. Tanja says she plans to first get some rest so she can really enjoy the summer with husband, Steve, and son, Tyler. Everyone on the CNC staff will miss Tanja after all these years, and we wish her the best!

Joan Knoll, MS, RD, joins the CNC staff June 24, 2003.

Joan Knoll will join our staff in late June in order to meet Tanja's patients. Joan was previously employed by the Center for Human Nutrition at the University of Colorado Health Sciences Center where she taught weight management classes, worked in obesity research and did individual nutrition counseling. Her areas of expertise include obesity and related health problems such as cardiovascular disease and diabetes. In addition to a dietetics degree, Joan has a master's degree in exercise physiology and has taught classes at the Olympic Training Center in San Diego, California. She is a new mom to daughter, Sierra, born in October 2002.

Svetlana Kukatina welcomes a baby boy, Nicholas, in November 2002.

Lana and her husband Oleg now have two sons, Stanislav (15) and Nicholas (7 months). A teenager plus an infant keeps their household busy. We are glad to have Lana back as a medical assistant in the office.

Lisa Zella delivers baby girl, Alexis, in February, 2003.

Lisa plans to return from her maternity leave August 1, 2003. Lisa, husband, Paul and son, Jacob, say it is fun to have a baby girl around. Jake is especially pleased because he figures he won't have to share his toys with a girl. Be sure to look for lots of baby photos on our office bulletin board this year!

Outperforms Lowfat Diet! Low Carb Diet

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