# DIETARY FAT: THE SECRET TO SUCCESSFUL WEIGHT LOSS

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*Have you struggled with weight issues? Do you find it difficult to lose weight? If so, your problem may be because you don't eat enough fat. Yes, you read that correctly, the reason you may be overweight is because you don't get enough fat in your diet. Low-fat diets actually promote weight gain and obesity*

## Dieting Makes You Fat

Susan was like many overweight women. She wanted to lose weight and worked hard at it. She tried one diet after another. Most of them seemed to work—at least at first. She would go on one diet and lose 10 or 12 pounds (4.5 or 5.5 kg), but before long the weight would come right back. She would try another diet and maybe lose 20 pounds (9 kg), but over time the weight would creep on back. Every diet she tried ended with the same results. After years of dieting, not only was she still overweight, but she weighed more than ever. All the dieting she did hadn't helped her lose a single pound. In fact, it seemed to make her even bigger. The truth is, dieting was part of her problem.

According to the Mayo Clinic, 95 percent of those people who go on weight-loss diets gain all their weight back within 5 years. Many add on more weight than they had before. Typical weight-loss diets not only don't work but often make matters worse. Yes, dieting can actually make you fat.

The problem with many weight-loss diets is that they focus only on calorie restriction. While paying attention to calorie consumption is important, it is not the only factor that influences body weight. The sad fact is that

**Virgin Coconut Oil is a Good Source of Dietary Fat**

all low-calorie, low-fat diets are doomed from the start. No matter what type of food you eat, if the diet relies solely on calorie restriction, it is programmed to fail.

In addition to calories, you must consider other factors. One of these is metabolism. Your metabolic rate is affected by many things. One of these things is the amount of food you eat. Our bodies have a built-in survival mechanism that strives to maintain a balance between our metabolism and the environment. This mechanism was vital for our ancestors who were greatly influenced by the seasonal availability of their foods. When food was plentiful, metabolism ran at the height of efficiency. A higher metabolism has advantages in that it raises energy levels, keeps the brain alert, improves immune system function, and speeds healing, tissue growth, and repair. During winter or famine when food was less plentiful, metabolism slowed down. The advantage was that less energy (i.e. food) was needed to fuel metabolic processes. People were able to survive on fewer calories during times of scarcity.

Today with modern food preservation and delivery

methods, getting enough to eat is no longer a problem for most people. Food is abundantly available all year around. However, our bodies still maintain the ability to adapt quickly to famine. If we suddenly start to eat less food, it signals to our bodies that there must be a famine and, as a means of self-preservation, our metabolism decreases to conserve energy. The problem with this is that when we diet, we cut down on calorie consumption and the body thinks it's starving, so our metabolic rate slows down. Slower metabolism also means our bodies have less energy and we become fatigued more easily.

When you go on a calorie-restricted diet, your body reacts as if it were experiencing a famine. For the first week or so, while your metabolism is still running at normal, the restriction in calories works and you lose weight. Weight loss is always greatest for the first few weeks. After a while as your body adjusts to lower calorie intake, metabolism gradually slows down. Now the calories you consume are balanced with the calories you burn. Weight loss slows or even stops.

In order to lose more weight you must cut your calorie intake even further. If you do, you will lose a few more pounds until your body adapts and your metabolism again slows down. As long as you continue to restrict calories, your metabolism will drop to balance calorie intake with calorie output. Dieting becomes very restrictive and uncomfortable. This is why some people can decrease their total daily intake to less than 1,000 calories and not lose any weight, or in some cases may even gain weight.

When you decide to end the diet, even if you still eat less than you did when you started, the extra calories start to add on weight because your metabolism is depressed. It still thinks you're in a famine. Now when you increase calorie intake, the excess calories are packed on as fat, even though you may be eating fewer calories than you did before you started the diet. By the time your metabolism has figured out that the famine is over, you've added back the weight you've lost. In addition, your body tends to add on more fat to protect itself in case of another famine. So after dieting, you gradually gain back all the weight you lost and a few extra pounds for good measure. In the end, you weigh more than when you started. This whole cycle may take only a few months or drag out for several years. The end result is the same.

The next weight-loss diet you attempt has the same outcome, as does the next and the next. Each time you diet, you end up weighing more than you did before. This process is termed "dieting-induced obesity" or the "yo-yo effect."

**All Calories Are Not Equal**

Innumerable books have been published on low-calorie, low-fat diets promoting the concept that all calories are alike. An entire weight-loss industry has been built around this belief. It doesn't matter if your calories come from carbohydrate, protein or fat—a calorie is a calorie, they say. Fat contains more than twice as many calories as either carbohydrate or protein. One gram of carbohydrate or protein each supplies 4 calories, while a gram of fat supplies 9 calories. If all calories are equal, it appears to make sense to cut down on fat consumption as a means to reduce total calorie intake. As a consequence, fat has been targeted as the villain and eating too much fat is often blamed as the root of our obesity epidemic. The problem is that fat consumption has declined over the past 30 years from about 40 percent to 32 percent, but at the same time overweight and obesity has skyrocketed. If we eat less fat, why are we fatter? Something must be wrong with the theory.

Also, most overweight people don't over consume fatty foods. In fact, just the opposite. They are the ones who are most likely to choose low-fat foods, trim off the fat from meat, and limit the amount of foods they eat. Slim people, on the other hand, generally eat whatever they please, gorging on fatty foods, and eating until their heart's content. This has been demonstrated in obesity studies. Those people who have a history of weight problems are more likely to eat low-fat foods than normal weight individuals. They eat fewer calories but have greater difficulty losing and maintaining their weight.

Dietary fat has become such a villain, that people just assume that any fat we eat will automatically be converted into body fat. If that is true, why do people who eat low-fat diets seem to have the greatest difficulty losing weight?

Most of the fat in our bodies does not come from the fat in our diets, it comes from the carbohydrates we eat. All of the carbohydrate in our diet, which is not used immediately for energy, is converted into fat and stored in our fat cells. That spare tire around your middle was once the stack of pancakes you ate for breakfast, the donut you had as a snack, and the large order of fries you wolfed down at lunch. The vast majority of food we eat comes from carbohydrates. On average, we consume about 60 percent of our daily calories in the form of carbohydrate, only 40 percent comes from a combination of protein and fat. Most of the protein and fat we consume is used as structural materials to build and maintain muscles, bones, and other tissues. Only a tiny fraction of the protein and fat we eat is used to produce energy or is stored as fat. The body does not need to use protein and fat for energy because there is so much carbohydrate available, even an excess. This excess carbohydrate is what ends up as body fat.

Studies have shown that a carbohydrate-rich diet, like we normally eat, increases the synthesis of fat and cholesterol. When some of the carbohydrate is replaced by fat, fat and cholesterol production in the body decreases![1] These studies disprove the theory that all calories are equal. Therefore, replacing most of the carbohydrates in the diet with fat will lead to less fat production and lower body weight (and cholesterol levels improve too). It is really that simple.

**You Must Eat Fat to Lose Weight**

In the 1950s two British scientists, Alan Kekwick and Gaston L. S. Pawan, discovered that the source of the calories plays a significant role in weight management. Kekwick and Pawan set out to study the relative effects of fat, protein, and carbohydrate on weight loss in a low-calorie diet. They put 14 obese patients on four different diets in succession over a period of time. Each of the diets provided 1,000 calories per day, but differed in the amount of fat, protein, and carbohydrate. One diet had 90 percent fat, the next 90 percent protein, the next 90 percent carbohydrate, and the last was a normal mixed diet. The patients rotated through each of the diets. The subjects stayed in a hospital so they could be kept under constant observation to insure strict dietary compliance.

If all calories are equal, as most scientists believed at the time, the 1,000 calorie diet should have produced the same amount of weight loss in each of the subjects. But that is not what happened. The 90 percent fat diet (high-fat, low-carb) produced the greatest weight loss, followed closely by the 90 percent protein diet. Next, came the mixed diet. Last of all was the very low-fat 90 percent carbohydrate diet.[2] This study demonstrated that low-fat diets are the absolute worst as a means of weight loss. In essence, the higher the carbohydrate content, the lower the weight loss; the higher the fat content, the greater the weight loss.

In a follow-up study, Kekwick and Pawan compared the weight loss of obese subjects on a high-carbohydrate diet with a high-fat diet, eating twice as many calories as in the previous study. Subjects on a high-carbohydrate 2,000-calorie diet failed to lose any weight. The same subjects on a high-fat diet not only lost weight at 2,000 calories, but lost weight even when calorie consumption increased to 2,600![3] Wait a minute! Eating 2,600 calories is not exactly a low-calorie diet, yet with ample fat the subjects still lost weight! One of the subjects in the study designated as BJ, illustrates a typical example of what happened. After eight days on the high-carbohydrate, 2,000-calorie diet, BJ didn't lose an ounce, but lost 9 pounds in 3 weeks on the 2,600-calorie, high-fat diet. Wow, what at concept—add more fat, eat more calories, enjoy delicious tasting, rich foods, and lose weight! This doesn't sound like a diet at all, but a great way to eat while achieving optimal body weight.

Kekwick and Pawan discovered a hormone-like substance that apparently stimulates the breakdown and burning of body fat, resulting in increased weight loss. Thus, adding fat into the diet stimulates the burning of stored body fat. Eating fat, it turns out, increases the body's utilization of stored fat, leading to weight loss. This provided the reason why eating fat caused greater weight loss than eating carbohydrate or protein. It also demonstrated again why all calories are not alike.

**Eating Fat is Better Than Fasting**

Eating a high-fat diet is even more effective than eating nothing at all. In the 1960s Dr.

Frederick Benoit and colleagues at the US Naval Medical Research Institute compared two groups of overweight subjects; one group ate a high-fat diet, while the other group consumed no food at all. The subjects' weight loss over time was measured. The high-fat group consumed 1,000 calories a day, 90 percent of which came from fat. The other group consumed no calories at all, only water. After ten days the fasting group lost 21 pounds on average, but most of that was from lean body tissue and water; only 7.5 pounds came from body fat. In comparison, the high-fat diet group lost on average 14.5 pounds, 14 of which came from body fat.[4] The group that ate 1,000 calories, mostly from fat, *lost twice as much fat as the group that ate nothing!* Plus, they lost very little water and lean muscle. A reduced calorie diet with ample fat and limited carbohydrate will produce much greater weight loss than any low-fat diet, regardless of the number of calories consumed—even if this number is zero! Therefore, including an ample amount of fat in the diet is essential for greatest weight loss. This is a very important concept to remember for anyone trying to lose weight. You need to eat fat to lose fat. The discoveries of Kekwick, Pawan, and Benoit disprove the common belief that a calorie is a calorie. The source of the calories is important.

**Dietary Fat Maintains Metabolism**

Another reason why weight loss is greater with a high-fat diet is that fat contains more calories than carbohydrate or protein. That may sound like a contradiction, but in fact, it is not. It is a contradiction to the old outdated theory that "a calorie is a calorie," but we just saw that all calories are not alike. Low-fat dieting causes diet-induce obesity. When you cut fat out of a low-calorie diet the body interprets it as a famine and pulls the breaks on your metabolism. However, if you eat an ample amount of fat, even on a low-calorie diet, *your metabolism remains normal!* Dietary fat, with its higher calorie density, singles a time of plenty and that there is no threat of famine or starvation, even though total calorie intake may be reduced. Consequently, there is no drop in metabolism. The body does not interpret the reduction in food as a danger sign but simply a choice not to eat as much.

An additional benefit of adding fat into the diet, particularly a reduced calorie diet, is that fat curbs hunger. Eating adequate amounts of fat satisfies hunger and maintains this feeling far longer than other foods. So by choice, people often tend to eat less when on a high-fat diet simply because they are satisfied with fewer calories. They don't suffer the constant nagging hunger pangs that always accompany low-fat dieting.

**A More Satisfying Way to Eat**

On a high-fat diet you are allowed to eat a variety of rich, flavorful foods such as steak, chops, roasts, eggs, butter, cream, and cheese, as well as a variety of vegetables prepared with tasty meat drippings, gravies, butter, and sauces that are far more delicious than bland steamed vegetables with a squirt of lemon. You can eat this way and lose more weight than if you refrained from eating any food at all. You eat until you are satisfied and because the foods are filling, they will sustain you until your next meal. In fact, you will often not be hungry for your next meal and will tend to skip meals simply because you do not feel the need to eat.

The ideal weight loss diet would be one that limits total carbohydrate intake yet allows all the fat you want. The source of carbohydrate should come from non-starchy, low-carb vegetables, fruits, and nuts. A low-carb, high-fat diet will trigger the liver to produce ketones—a type of high-energy fuel the body makes from stored body fat. When a person produces ketones, he or she is said to be in a state of ketosis. Ketosis is a sign that stored body fat is being broken down and removed from the body. It is an indication that you are losing excess body fat and becoming thinner and healthier.

The weight loss effects of a low-carb, high-fat ketogenic diet can be enhanced when the primary source of fat in the diet comes from coconut oil. The reason for this is because coconut oil has certain properties that enhance weight loss—it increases energy thus promoting greater physical activity, stimulates metabolism to burn off calories at an accelerated rate, satisfies hunger better than other fats reducing calorie intake, and stops sugar cravings dead cold to help keep you from eating the wrong types of food (see the article The Fat That Can Make You Thin). This type of diet is called the Coconut Ketogenic Diet or simply the Coco Keto Diet.

If you tried losing weight with low-fat dieting and failed, it is now time to try the Coco Keto approach.

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