

KETO DIET AND DIABETES

A ketogenic diet, a low carb, moderate protein, and a high- dietary fat diet almost like other low carb diets and the Atkins, has recently gained popularity and even became a lifestyle for some people. This is because of the perceived benefits such as weight loss, a decrease of LDL Cholesterol, feeling energized, and even blood sugar control for diabetics.

This kind of diet involves a total reduction of carbohydrates intake and replacing it with natural fat. The heart-healthy fats are key in sustaining the body's general health. Some of the healthy foods included in the ketogenic diet are avocado, eggs, salmon fish, olives and olive oil, nuts, among others. Following this diet places the body into a metabolic condition referred to as ketosis, a natural process where the body produces more ketones out of body fat and uses them as a source of energy.

Most people consider keto as the next fad diet, but researchers are yet to establish any long-term effects or health risks on the human body associated with this diet alone. People may experience mild symptoms like dizziness, insomnia, nausea, lack of energy, constipation, and headaches during the introductory stages of the diet as the body will naturally try to fight back, but all these tend to go away within a few days/ weeks.

The diet was formed in 1920 as a treatment of epilepsy, but later it was discovered that the effects of this eating pattern were helpful to type 2 diabetes.

Is the Keto diet beneficial for diabetics?

This will depend on the type of diabetes. Research has been done on how it impacts patients with type 2 diabetes but very little is known for type 1 diabetes.

A lot of diets recommended for type two diabetes patients focus on the reduction of weight. This is also true for a keto diet. This diet plays a big role in changing the way the human body uses and stores its energy. Due to a reduction in carb intake, the body is forced to burn fat as the main source of energy and thus reducing the liver fat content. Just by doing this, the diabetic symptoms are eased.

Studies also show that this diet impacts cholesterol levels. For some people, the diet leads to weight loss and healthy levels of cholesterol (decrease of LDL Cholesterol) in the body. This then improves glycemic control which is beneficial to diabetes patients.

In a nutshell, a reduced carb diet can help lower blood sugar levels even without losing weight. This is because the body will make less insulin during ketosis. Studies show that when this is done well, type 2 diabetes patients may need less on no medication to control their blood sugar.

Should you try the Keto diet?

More research needs to be done to establish possible long-term effects of a ketogenic diet. So before starting this diet, talk to your doctor to establish any possible side effects if you have other health conditions, prepare your body and mind, and take a lot of water. If you go for it, regularly check your blood sugar levels and body cholesterol levels to establish if the diet is working in your favor. Because it is not a one size fits all.

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