

The First Two Weeks on Low Carb

When you start a low carb or keto diet, the first two weeks are quite dramatic. In the blink of an eye, you'll look younger, feel better and burn an amazing amount of stored body fat. These promises are real.

Inside Your Guide

We've put together a very simple, but complete guide for starting a low carb diet. Here's your bare bones easy, step-by-step plan:

- What to do *before* you start a low carb diet
- A simple explanation of ketosis
- Finding the carbs and out-smarting food labels
- Fail-proofing your kitchen and fridge
- How to eat for rapid fat-burning
- Low carb foods list and how to shop
- 2 week meal plan and shopping list
- Adding more carbs after your first 2 weeks

The benefits of keto and Atkins low carb diets are hard to beat. You'll feel energetic and euphoric, sleep better, live longer, prevent disease and reduce inflammation in your joints – *after you adjust*.

This 2 week plan glides you through all adjustments with ease.

The Basics

Starting keto, Atkins (or any low carb diet) means limiting starches and sugars. Most low carbers eat 20-60 net carbs per day. You'll eat a moderate amount of protein, lots of *healthy* fat sources and some carbs from dairy and vegetables.

Fat-Protein-Carbs: How much?

To lose the most stored body fat, a typical *range* for the first two weeks is 65-75% fat, 20-30% protein and 5% carbs (or under 20 net grams).

Yes – you will eat *high amounts* of healthy fats.

Why This Ratio Works

- Getting calories from fat gives your body fuel to operate more efficiently.
- Making sure at least 20-30% of your calories come from protein gives muscles enough nutrition to grow stronger, helping you lose more weight.
- The carbs are for fiber and fun.

Reading Labels Like a Pro

When you start a low carb diet, it's surprising to find out where sugar is hiding. Reading food labels like a pro means finding the hidden carbs and figuring out the number of carbs that come from sugar.

Find the Hidden Sugar

- Start with “Total Carbohydrates.” Subtract the carb grams that come from fiber. You are left with “net carbs” per serving. This is the number you will go by for your totals.
- **RECAP:** Total carbs *minus* the fiber = the carbs you count.

Pay attention to the added sugars/starches in the ingredients list. You may see ingredients you are avoiding. It may be low carb, but still have some corn syrup.

It's a Trap

You may notice food labels list “sugar” separately under the carbohydrate section. When you do the math, the numbers don’t add up. This is because food companies are only required to list *certain types* of sugar grams there.

Do your own math. Don't trust the (deceptive) sugar gram numbers on the labels.

Before You Start

Starting a low carb diet takes planning, but it’s *well* worth it. Just keep it fresh, challenging and enjoyable. There are rough spots, especially during the first few weeks as your metabolism changes over to using fat for energy. The bumps will pass and your new body will emerge.

Track Yourself

Check your weight, take body measurements and body fat percentages – if possible. Use your phone, webcam or camera to take a live video or photographs. It’s amazing to see how much our bodies change during the first two weeks.

If you follow this way of eating, your body *will* change. As your energy levels increase, you may be more active and you may gain muscle density. When this happens (A good thing!), the scale may move slower, but your size still shrinks.

Measuring, photographing and tracking is your insurance policy for motivation. Nothing feels better than watching those numbers go down. Size matters, not necessarily your weight.

Check with Your Doctor

Starting a low carb diet is safe for most people, but it’s always a good idea to talk to your doctor. They can recommend any changes – especially if there are existing health issues or concerns.

Telling Your Family and Friends

Support from family and friends is important. They may not completely understand how a low carb diet works, but they do know you’re trying to make a positive, healthy change in your life. Simply explain you’ll be avoiding sugar, grains and junk food while eating lots of healthy fats and veggies.

What if that explanation doesn't work?

Tell them about all the butter, bacon, whipped cream and cheese sauces you're eating. Then check out the look on their face as you smile with satisfaction and bite that juicy cheeseburger patty, waistline shrinking as you speak.

They don't have to eat your diet – but they should respect your wishes, boundaries and decision to avoid inflammatory sugars.

Clear Out the Dangerous Food

Before you shop, you *must* carb-proof your pantry to make room for all the wonderfully fresh, low carb foods you'll be buying. It's time to clean house.

If your house is full of candy bars, potato chips, cookies, bread, pasta and rice, it will be hard for you to eat healthily. Starting a low carb diet is a big decision. Don't sabotage yourself before you even get started.

Check your cabinets and fridge, read those labels and remove all dangerous foods.

Days 1-2

When to Start Your Diet

Most low carb diets put special emphasis on the first two weeks, when you get used to eating in a more healthy manner. But those first two DAYS are the key – when you break your carb addiction!

TIP: Start your diet on a Thursday night with a lower carb dinner. You'll wake up Friday morning with a 12-15 hour head start. Since you ate lower amounts of carbs at dinner, your body was burning extra glucose (sugar) while you slept.

Start Tips

- It's very important to track carbs during the first 1-2 weeks.
- Eat plenty of food, add salt daily, and drink plenty of water.
- Only eat when you feel hungry. Counting calories isn't necessary.

Feeling the Challenge

The first two days of low carb are challenging.

Your body was using high sugar foods for energy, and storing your fat. Your body will crave sugar at first. You may get cranky, tired or shaky. The worse your symptoms are, the more addicted your body was to sugar.

Don't worry. We only carry enough glucose (sugar) to last for 2 to 3 days in our bodies. Soon, you'll no longer be a "sugar burner." After day two, you'll start burning fat and protein for energy instead. Your brain sharpens and clears, and your metabolism becomes more efficient.

The more healthy fats you eat, the more stored body fat you'll burn for energy – as long as you do NOT overeat. Fortunately, it's difficult to overeat fat, so calorie counting isn't usually necessary.

Give Yourself Time to Adjust

Both you and your metabolism are being introduced to a brand new lifestyle – emotionally, physically and psychologically. All change involves a little stress or even second-guessing.

Take care of yourself and avoid stressful situations if possible. Give your low carb diet a fair chance in the beginning, as early as possible.

- **Get Your Bearings:** Put off dinners, social events or any other situation where the dangerous foods hang out – until you feel more confident.
- **Indulge:** Grab a few new books, magazines or movies to enjoy. Try a bubble bath, hot sauna or massage.

The Best Ratio to Burn Fat

To lose the most stored body fat, make sure to eat a normal / moderate amount of protein (about 25% of total daily calories) and lots of healthy fats. Track your progress and count every last fraction of a carb. Be honest and precise when recording your totals.

If you're not losing significant amounts of fat, simply adjust your ratio. Sometimes, adding or reducing 5 net carbs each day for a few days results in greater weight loss. Everyone has a slightly different experience, so find the net carb amount that works best for you. If possible, keep your net carbs under 20 grams for the day.

Days 3-7

Rapid Fat Loss

On day 3, your body starts consuming any extra fat supply. When you eat, you'll burn those fats as well. Many people lose an average of 7 to 14 pounds in the first two weeks of the low carb diet. If you have a large amount of weight to lose, expect to burn *even more*.

Eating Fat to Lose Fat – Why this Works

Getting 65%-75% of your calories from healthy fat sources gives your body enough fuel to operate at a *maximum level*. Fat keeps you fuller, longer. You'll eat less overall, yet remain energetic and upbeat. It's pretty amazing.

A few days after eating high fat low carb, you'll enter a metabolic state called ketosis, where rapid fat burning happens.

Reaching ketosis simply means you're burning fat for energy instead of storing it.

How to Know You're in Ketosis

Keto Symptoms

During ketosis, low carbers experience bursts of energy and heightened mood.

Some dieters notice a temporary, sweet taste in the mouth or a mild, sweet breath odor - a reliable signal they've reached ketosis. Sugar-free gum remedies the issue, which is typically short-lived and not bothersome.

Keto Flu

Some low carbers feel “off” or achy for a few days. This is also temporary. If you are worried about “not feeling right,” simply eat less carbs the week or two before you start your 20 net gram limit. This eases the transition considerably.

Measuring Ketosis with Test Strips

Another measurable way to know if you've reached ketosis is by testing for ketones with inexpensive strips.



There are literally hundreds of brands, so look at the ratings for the most popular. Check Amazon for the lowest prices: [Keto Test Strips](#)

Test strips are one way to know you've reached ketosis, but if the strip doesn't register the presence of ketones, you can *still be ketosis*.

Why is this?

- Sometimes urine samples are diluted from drinking lots of water.
- It's possible to burn away ketones during exercise.

TIP: Rely on eating the correct amounts of fat, protein and carbs. Use the keto testing strips to “check up” every now and then.

AUTHOR'S NOTE:

Strips aren't for everyone, and many low carbers are adamantly against them for odd reasons, but I've been on a very low keto diet for five+ years and still use them from time to time. Besides being fun, they are extremely useful and cheap.

My Favorite Use: After I've eaten a higher carb meal (special occasion, etc.).

I found out if I eat a meal with 20-30 net carbs (or have 2 glasses of wine), it takes about 15-20 hours to register I'm back in ketosis again. I'm not burning fat during the hours I'm not in ketosis – I'm storing it instead. I usually fast or exercise during that time to help burn off the extra carbs. Everyone responds differently. You may get back into ketosis more quickly, or more slowly.

Check out [Keto Test Strips](#).

Your New Metabolism

The next week or two includes an amazing transformation. While in ketosis, any roller coaster mood swings, hunger cravings, headaches, fatigue, GI upset, indigestion, bloating and stomach puffiness caused by sugar are gone.

You'll feel better, need less sleep and have much more energy. Say goodbye to naps. You're also losing weight rapidly (lots of stored body fat).

You're not hungry all day long. Instead, you're eating delicious, fattening foods and your body is shrinking. Yes, this really happens.

Days 8-14

After the first week, you'll notice a new energy. You'll feel more lively and even-tempered. Your sugar-rush highs and lows will be gone, and any shakiness when you're hungry will go away.

This is a good time to try low carb versions of your old favorite meals. Try meats and seafood with rich cream or butter sauces, or olive oil and spices. Make chicken wings, stuffed bell peppers, jalapeno poppers or bacon cheeseburgers without the bun.

Low carb isn't necessarily about restriction. Low carb recipes just use different ingredients to make the same meals. And by different, we mean healthy.

During your second week, continue eating high fat and tracking your progress. Don't forget to measure to see the inches you've lost during your first week, and again after your second. Prepare to be amazed – especially because it was so easy.

Starting with Atkins Induction

Many low carbers start with a traditional Atkins Induction limit of 20 net grams of carbs per day for the first two weeks. Again, this simply means avoiding sugar and counting carbs while eating healthy fats, meat and veggies.

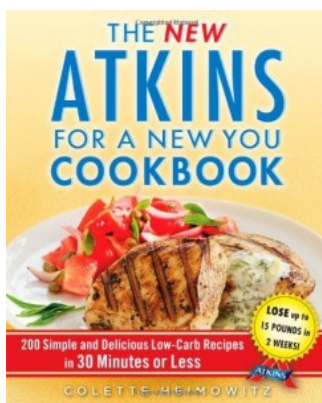
What's different about doing the Atkins version of low carb? You'll also avoid foods known to cause problems during your transition – like alcohol, caffeine, nuts, seeds and fruit. All the fun stuff. But after your first two weeks, these foods are added back slowly, with caution.

Support from Atkins

Having support from family and friends (in real life or online) is a big part of success on a low carb diet, but it's also important to understand the *reasons* for the food choices you're making.

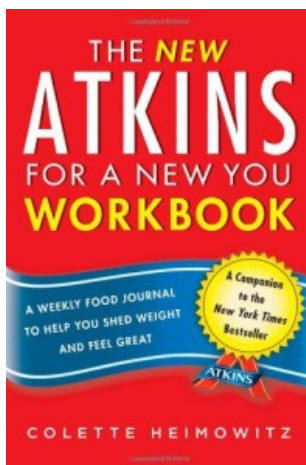
Finding free Atkins resources here and other places online is helpful. But for more details and the science behind the diet, there's nothing better than reading the original books by Robert Atkins or [*The New Atkins for a New You*](#).

The Official Cookbook



[*The New Atkins for a New You Cookbook*](#) features 200 delicious low carb meals, ready in 30 minutes or less.

The Official Workbook



Tracking progress is key for success. [*The Atkins workbook*](#) step-by-step guide makes it easy. It Includes grocery shopping guides, food lists and tracking tools.

2 Week Meal Plan

It's a good idea to plan meals ahead when you're first starting your low carb diet. Having a structured meal plan before you start removes any stress from deciding what to eat while you're learning the ropes. We've seen stress, indecision and panic lead directly to snacking. Let's not go there.

A simple meal plan from Atkins (with a shopping list) takes you through your first two weeks. Using Atkins meal plans are not a requirement for great results, but they do have easy, inexpensive ideas. And this meal plan doesn't require recipes.

Sample Meal Plan week one

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
BREAKFAST	2 small tomatoes 1 Tbsp olive oil 2 Large eggs 2 oz turkey sausage Net Carbs 5.6g	5 oz smoked salmon 2 Tbsp cream cheese ¼ cucumber, cut into sticks Net Carbs 3.5g	¼ cup chopped green bell pepper 2 large eggs 1 oz pepper jack cheese 4 Tbsp Salsa Cruda Net Carbs 4.6g	2 large eggs 2 slices bacon 1 medium tomato 2 Tbsp grated Parmesan cheese Net Carbs 4.7g	5 oz ground beef 1 Tbsp olive oil ½ cup chopped green bell pepper 2 Tbsp chopped onion ¼ cup shred Cheddar Net Carbs 4.1g	1 small tomato ½ Hass avocado 4 oz prosciutto 2 Tbsp Hollandaise Sauce Net Carbs 3.9g	2 cups baby spinach 1 Tbsp olive oil 2 large eggs ¼ cup shred Monterey Jack cheese Net Carbs 3.8g
SNACK	1 stalk celery 2 Tbsp cream cheese Net Carbs 2.2g	5 large black olives 1 oz feta cheese Net Carbs 1.8g	2 celery stalks 2 Tbsp Ranch Dressing Net Carbs 2.9g	2 oz cheddar cheese Net Carbs 2g	½ medium zucchini cut into sticks 2 oz provolone cheese Net Carbs 3.4g	5 large radishes 1 oz Gouda cheese Net Carbs 1.5g	½ Hass avocado 2 Tbsp Ranch Dressing Net Carbs 2.2g
LUNCH	6 oz fillet of salmon 2 cups mixed greens 2 Tbsp Sherry Vinaigrette Net Carbs 3.1g	6 oz chicken 2 cups mixed greens 5 large radishes ½ Hass avocado 2 Tbsp Ranch Dressing Net Carbs 5.7g	5 oz hamburger 1 oz Cheddar 1 small tomato ½ Hass avocado 1 Romaine lettuce leaf Net Carbs 4.4g	5 oz roasted chicken 2 cups baby spinach 2 Tbsp Ranch Dressing Net Carbs 3.8g	6 oz turkey cutlets 2 cups baby spinach ½ Hass avocado 2 Tbsp Creamy Italian Dressing Net Carbs 4.4g	4 oz tuna 1½ celery stalks ½ cup chopped red bell pepper 2 Tbsp mayonnaise Net Carbs 4.5g	5 oz ham 2 cups mixed greens ½ cup sliced cucumbers 2 Tbsp Blue Cheese Dressing Net Carbs 5.5g
SNACK	Roll Up: 1 oz deli meat and 1 oz sliced cheese Net Carbs 2g	1 medium tomato 1 oz Cheddar Net Carbs 3.7g	½ cup sliced red bell pepper 2 Tbsp Ranch Dressing Net Carbs 2.8g	¼ cup sliced cucumber 1 oz Monterey Jack cheese Net Carbs 1.8g	1 celery stalk 2 Tbsp cream cheese Net Carbs 2.2g	½ medium cucumber sliced 1 oz Cheddar cheese Net Carbs 3.4g	5 cherry tomatoes 1 oz Cheddar Net Carbs 2.7g
DINNER	6 oz rotisserie chicken 2 cups baby spinach ¼ cup sliced cucumber ½ Hass avocado 2 Tbsp Sherry Vinaigrette Net Carbs 6.2g	6 oz steak 2 cups broccoli and cauliflower, roasted with 2 Tbsp olive oil Net Carbs 4.8g	6 oz chicken 1 cup green beans 1 Tbsp butter Net Carbs 4.3g	6 oz fillet of whitefish 1 cup broccoli florets 1 Tbsp butter Net Carbs 6.1g	7 oz bone-in pork chop ½ cup Brussels sprouts 1 Tbsp butter 2 cups mixed greens 2 Tbsp Sherry Vinaigrette Net Carbs 5.4g	5 oz hamburger 1 oz cheddar cheese 1 small tomato 1 cup Romaine lettuce 2 Tbsp Ranch Dressing Net Carbs 6.2g	6 oz chicken 1 cup stir-fry vegetables 1 Tbsp olive oil 1 Tbsp tamari sauce Net Carbs 4.9g
	Total Net Carbs: 19.1g	Total Net Carbs: 19.5g	Total Net Carbs: 19g	Total Net Carbs: 18.4g	Total Net Carbs: 19.5g	Total Net Carbs: 19.5g	Total Net Carbs: 19.1g

Sample Meal Plan week two

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
BREAKFAST	<p>2 large eggs 2 cups baby spinach 1 tsp olive oil 1 oz Swiss cheese</p> <p>Net Carbs 5.1g</p>	<p>6 oz turkey sausage 1/3 cup chopped red bell pepper 2 Tbsp chopped onion 1 oz Monterey Jack cheese</p> <p>Net Carbs 4g</p>	<p>2 large eggs ¼ cup shred Cheddar cheese 4 Tbsp Salsa Cruda</p> <p>Net Carbs 2.8g</p>	<p>1 cup coconut milk 1 oz protein powder 1 tsp vanilla ½ -1 tsp sweetener ½ cup ice</p> <p>Net Carbs 3g</p>	<p>2 large eggs ½ Hass avocado 1 oz pepper jack cheese</p> <p>Net Carbs 3g</p>	<p>2 small tomatoes 4 oz sausage 1 oz Cheddar cheese</p> <p>Net Carbs 5.3g</p>	<p>2 large eggs 1 medium tomato 2 oz Canadian bacon 2 Tbsp Hollandaise Sauce</p> <p>Net Carbs 5.2g</p>
SNACK	<p>1 celery stalk 1 oz Monterey Jack cheese</p> <p>Net Carbs 1.2g</p>	<p>Roll Up: 2 oz deli meat and 1 oz sliced cheese</p> <p>Net Carbs 3g</p>	<p>½ medium zucchini cut into sticks 1 oz pepper jack cheese</p> <p>Net Carbs 3.2g</p>	<p>5 cherry tomatoes 1 oz Cheddar</p> <p>Net Carbs 2.7g</p>	<p>5 large black olives 1 oz feta cheese</p> <p>Net Carbs 1.8g</p>	<p>¼ cup sliced cucumber 2 Tbsp Creamy Italian Dressing</p> <p>Net Carbs 1.9g</p>	<p>6 large black olives</p> <p>Net Carbs 1g</p>
LUNCH	<p>6 oz chicken ½ Hass avocado 2 cups mixed greens 2 Tbsp Sherry Vinaigrette</p> <p>Net Carbs 4.4g</p>	<p>5 oz hamburger 1 oz pepper jack cheese 1 small tomato ½ Hass avocado 2 Romaine lettuce leaves</p> <p>Net Carbs 5.4g</p>	<p>4 oz tuna 1 ½ celery stalks 5 cherry tomatoes 2 Tbsp mayonnaise ½ Hass avocado</p> <p>Net Carbs 5.1g</p>	<p>6 oz chicken breast 2 cups Romaine hearts ¼ cup chopped red bell pepper ½ Hass avocado 2 Tbsp Creamy Italian Dressing</p> <p>Net Carbs 5.1g</p>	<p>5 oz ham 2 cups mixed greens 1 small tomato 2 Tbsp Blue Cheese Dressing</p> <p>Net Carbs 6.3g</p>	<p>6 oz grilled chicken 6 stalks asparagus 1 tsp butter 2 cups mixed greens 2 Tbsp Sherry Vinaigrette</p> <p>Net Carbs 5.5g</p>	<p>5 oz hamburger ½ cup sliced mushrooms 1 Tbsp olive oil 2 Tbsp Barbecue Sauce 2 cups mixed greens 2 Tbsp Sherry Vinaigrette</p> <p>Net Carbs 8.2g</p>
SNACK	<p>½ medium red bell pepper, sliced 2 Tbsp Creamy Italian Dressing</p> <p>Net Carbs 2.6g</p>	<p>¼ cup sliced cucumber 2 Tbsp Creamy Italian Dressing</p> <p>Net Carbs 1.9g</p>	<p>2 celery stalks 2 Tbsp Blue Cheese Dressing</p> <p>Net Carbs 2.7g</p>	<p>2 oz ham 2 Tbsp cream cheese 2 dill pickle spears</p> <p>Net Carbs 2.2g</p>	<p>¼ cup sliced cucumber 2 Tbsp Ranch Dressing</p> <p>Net Carbs 2.6g</p>	<p>½ cup sliced red bell pepper 2 Tbsp Ranch Dressing</p> <p>Net Carbs 2.8g</p>	<p>1 celery stalk 2 oz Monterey Jack cheese</p> <p>Net Carbs 1.4g</p>
DINNER	<p>5 oz Italian sausage ¼ medium onion, sliced 1 tsp olive oil 2 cups mixed greens 2 Tbsp Blue Cheese Dressing</p> <p>Net Carbs 6.4g</p>	<p>6 oz chicken 6 stalks asparagus 1 Tbsp butter 2 cups mixed greens 2 Tbsp Ranch Dressing</p> <p>Net Carbs 6g</p>	<p>6 oz salmon 2 cups broccoli and cauliflower, roasted With 1 Tbsp olive oil</p> <p>Net Carbs 4.8g</p>	<p>7 oz bone-in pork chop 1 cup cauliflower florets 1 Tbsp butter 2 cups mixed greens 2 Tbsp Ranch Dressing</p> <p>Net Carbs 6.8g</p>	<p>5 oz hamburger 1 oz cheddar cheese 1 small tomato 2 Romaine lettuce leaves 2 slices bacon</p> <p>Net Carbs 8.4g</p>	<p>6 oz steak 2/3 cup sliced zucchini 1 Tbsp olive oil 2 cups Romaine hearts 2 Tbsp Blue Cheese Dressing</p> <p>Net Carbs 4.6g</p>	<p>6 oz chicken ½ cup green beans 1 Tbsp butter 2 Tbsp sliced almonds 2 cups arugula ¼ cup sliced cucumber 2 Tbsp Creamy Italian Dressing</p> <p>Net Carbs 4.7g</p>
	Total Net Carbs: 19.7g	Total Net Carbs: 20.3g	Total Net Carbs: 18.6g	Total Net Carbs: 19.8g	Total Net Carbs: 22.1g	Total Net Carbs: 20.1g	Total Net Carbs: 20.5g

Meal Plan shopping list

WEEK 1

Meat & Proteins

- Bacon (2 slices – 1/4 lb)
- Chicken breast (29 oz)
- Eggs (1 dozen)
- Ground beef (16 oz)
- Ham (5 oz)
- Pork chops (bone-in) (7 oz)
- Prosciutto (4 oz)
- Salmon (6 oz)
- Smoked salmon (5oz)
- Steak (6 oz)
- Tuna (4 oz)
- Turkey cutlets (6 oz)
- Turkey Sausage (2 oz)
- White fish (6 oz)

Vegetables

- Avocado (3)
- Baby spinach (8 cups)
- Black olives (5 large)
- Broccoli (2 cups)
- Brussels sprouts (1/2 cup)
- Cauliflower (1 cup)
- Celery (6 stalks)
- Cherry Tomatoes (5 each)
- Cucumber (2 medium)
- Green beans (1 cup)
- Green Bell Pepper (1 medium)
- Mixed greens (8 cups)
- Onion (1 medium)
- Radishes (10 large)
- Red bell pepper (medium)
- Romaine lettuce (2 cups)
- Stir-Fry veggies (1 cup frozen)
- Tomato (2 medium, 4 small)
- Zucchini (1 each)

Sauces & Dressings

- Blue Cheese Dressing
- Creamy Italian Dressing
- Hollandaise Sauce
- Ranch Dressing
- Salsa Cruda
- Sherry Vinaigrette

Cheese & Dairy

- Butter or Olive Oil
- Cheddar (5 oz)
- Cream cheese (3 oz)
- Feta (1 oz)
- Gouda (1 oz)
- Monterey Jack (2 oz)
- Parmesan (1 oz)
- Pepper Jack (1 oz)
- Provolone (2 oz)

WEEK 2

Meat & Proteins

- Bacon (4 slices – 1/2 lb)
- Canadian Bacon (2 oz)
- Chicken breast (30 oz)
- Eggs (1 dozen)
- Ground beef (16oz)
- Ham (7 oz)
- Italian Sausage (5 oz)
- Pork chops (bone-in) (7 oz)
- Salmon (6 oz)
- Steak (6 oz)
- Tuna (4 oz)
- Turkey Sausage (10 oz)

Vegetables

- Arugula (2 cups)
- Asparagus (12 stalks)
- Avocado (3)
- Baby spinach (2 cups)
- Black olives (5 large)
- Broccoli (1 cup)
- Cauliflower (1 cup)
- Celery (6 stalks)
- Cherry Tomatoes (10 each)
- Cucumber (1 medium)
- Dill pickle spears (2)
- Green beans (1/2 cup)
- Green Bell Pepper (1 medium)
- Mixed greens (14 cups)
- Mushrooms (1/2 cup sliced)
- Onion (1 medium)
- Red bell pepper (2 medium)
- Romaine lettuce (4 cups. 2 large leaves)
- Tomato (1 medium, 4 small)
- Zucchini (2 each)

Sauces & Dressings

- Barbecue Sauce
- Blue Cheese Dressing
- Creamy Italian Dressing
- Hollandaise Sauce
- Salsa Cruda
- Sherry Vinaigrette
- Coconut milk (1 cup)
- Protein Powder (whey, less than 2g net carbs per serving)

Select sauces & condiments without added sugar.

Cheese & Dairy

- Butter or Olive Oil
- Cheddar (4 oz)
- Cream cheese (1 oz)
- Feta (1 oz)
- Monterey Jack (4 oz)
- Pepper Jack (3 oz)
- Swiss (1 oz)

30 Day Meal Plan

If you're not quite ready to eat less than 20 net carbs per day, or you'd like a softer transition before you go full-tilt, *The Keto Beginning* is an excellent choice.

[The Keto Beginning program](#) goes a step beyond the usual low carb approach. This affordable 30-day meal plan is an allergen-free, paleo-friendly, low carb, hormone-balancing solution - excellent for women.

This plan does all the prep work for you, using sound nutrition practices and vibrant foods to create high fat recipes that are also dairy-, gluten-, sugar-, grain- and legume-free. And it costs less than \$1.00 per day.



AUTHOR'S NOTE:

I bought a copy of [The Keto Beginning](#). I love using it to vary my routine and break pesky stalls. Leanne (the author) writes easy recipes that are uniquely flexible. I wasn't paid for my opinion. I discovered this and started using it. I keep using it because it truly works.

Low Carb Grocery Foods

Starting a low carb diet means reworking your grocery store strategy and updating your list with brand new options.

Here's a general run-down of how to eat low carb from each food group.

Poultry, Meat and Fish

Almost all poultry, meats and fish are zero carb. Avoid deli meats, processed meats and hot dogs during the first two weeks – these have added starch and carbs.

Cheese

Most natural, unprocessed cheeses (no added flavors or ingredients) are 0 to 1 net carb per serving. Hard cheeses will be the lowest; softer, creamy cheeses will be the highest.

- Cream cheese, hard and full-fat cheeses are best. Shredded cheeses are coated with starches and are higher carb.
- Mascarpone cheese is an excellent zero carb dessert cheese.

Serving size: 1 oz = 1" cube = 1/4 cup grated (approx.)

- Asiago .9
- Blue .6
- Brie .1
- Camembert .1
- Cheddar .3
- Colby .7
- Edam .4
- Fontina .4
- Goats .6
- Gouda .6
- Gruyère .1
- Havarti .7
- Mexican Blend Cheese .5
- Mascarpone 0

- Monterey .1
- Mozzarella .6
- Muenster .3
- Neufchatel .1 to .8
- Parmesan .9
- Provolone .6
- Ricotta .8

Dairy and Eggs

- Use heavy cream or half-and-half instead of milk. Count .4 net carbs per tablespoon of heavy whipping cream.
- Eggs are naturally very low carb – less than 1 gram per egg. Count .7 net carbs per egg.

Healthy Fats

Fats are zero carb. Choose organic, grass-fed butters and creams if possible. Focus on coconut, MCT, avocado and olive oils - the richest in omega 3 fatty acids.

Coconut Oil

Coconut oil is one of the healthiest sources of fat for your low carb diet. It's also your new fat burning secret. Coconut oil helps burn *even more* fat while in ketosis. It's used immediately for energy – *not* stored as fat.



[Carrington Farms Organic Coconut Oil](#) is inexpensive, gluten free, non-GMO, free of hydrogenated and trans fats, Kosher and zero carb.

Avocado Oil



[La Tourangelle Avocado Oil](#) is all-natural, non-GMO and Kosher. La Tourangelle has a fruity roundness – great for both sweet and savory recipes, or if you don't eat avocados.

Performance MCT Oil



[Left Coast's pure MCT oil](#) is identical to the 'Bulletproof' brand. MCT converts into energy faster than other oils, ignites your body's metabolic rate and helps maintain healthy levels of cholesterol.

Veggies

Veggies with 2 Net Carbs or Less

(Veggie, Serving Size/Prep, Net Carbs)

- Alfalfa Sprouts, 1 cup/raw, 0.4
- Argula, ½ cup/raw, 0.2
- Artichoke Hearts, 1/in water, 1.0
- Bamboo Shoots, 1 cup/boiled, 1.1
- Bok Choy, 1 cup/raw, 0.8
- Broccoli, ½ cup/raw, 1.0
- Broccoli, ½ cup/boiled, 1.6
- Broccoli Rabe, 1 ounce, 1.3
- Broccoflower, ½ cup, 1.4
- Cauliflower, ½ cup/boiled or raw, 1.0
- Celery, 1 stalk, 0.8
- Chard, ½ cup Swiss/boiled, 1.8
- Chicory Greens, ½ cup/raw, 0.6
- Chives, 1 tbsp, 0.1

- Cucumber, ½ cup, 1.0
- Daikon, ½ cup, 1.0
- Eggplant, ½ cup boiled/raw, 1.8
- Endive, ½ cup, 0.2
- Escarole, ½ cup, 0.2
- Hearts of Palm, 1 heart, 0.7
- Iceberg Lettuce, ½ cup, 0.1
- Leeks, ¼ cup/boiled, 1.7
- Mushrooms, ½ cup, 1.2
- Olives, black, 5, 0.7
- Parsley, 1 tbsp, 0.1
- Radicchio, ½ cup/raw, 0.7
- Radishes, 10/raw, 0.9
- Romaine Lettuce, ½ cup, 0.2
- Rhubarb, ½ cup, unsweetened, 1.7
- Sauerkraut, ½ cup canned/drained, 1.2
- Spinach, ½ cup/raw, 0.2

Veggies with 2-5 Net Carbs

These vegetables are slightly higher in carbohydrates than the lowest carb veggies above, but if you measure carefully, it's simple to add them to your diet.

(Veggie, Serving Size/Prep, Net Carbs)

- Artichoke, ¼ of medium/boiled, 4.0
- Asparagus, 6 spears/boiled, 2.4
- Avocado, 1 whole/raw, 3.5
- Beets, ½ cup/canned, 4.7
- Brussels Sprouts, ¼ cup boiled, 2.4
- Cabbage, ½ cup/boiled or raw, 2.0
- Collard Greens, ½ cup/boiled, 4.2
- Fennel, 1 cup, 3.6
- Jicama, ½ cup, 2.5
- Kale, ½ cup, 2.4
- Kohlrabi, ½ cup, 4.6
- Okra, ½ cup/boiled or raw, 2.4
- Olives, green, 5, 2.5
- Onion, ¼ cup/raw, 2.8

- Peppers, ½ cup/raw, 2.3
- Pumpkin, ¼, cup/boiled, 2.4
- Peas, ½ cup edible podded, 3.4
- Spaghetti Squash, ½ cup/boiled, 2.0
- Summer Squash, ½ cup/boiled, 2.0
- Tomato, 1 raw, 4.3
- Turnips, ½ cup/boiled, 2.2
- Zucchini, ½ cup sauteed, 2.0

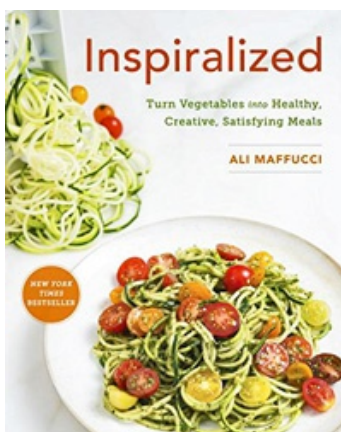
Making Zoodles

This inexpensive wonder creates uniform, curly noodles from zucchini, cucumbers, carrots, sweet potatoes, turnips and other round or long vegetables.



[The veggie spiralizer](#) is great for making curly fries, frittatas, salad garnishes, cucumber ribbon strands, and zoodles – low carb “pasta” made from zucchini.

Inspiralized Cookbook



[The Inspiralized cookbook](#) transforms 20+ veggies into delicious meals that look and taste just like your favorite originals.

Foods to Avoid (During the First 2 Weeks)

Avoid fruits, berries, pasta, rice, milk, nuts, alcohol and artificially sweetened soft drinks. If possible, avoid deli meats, processed meats and hot dogs.

No chips or candies- even if they are “low carb” versions. There are lots of great low carb chocolates and ice creams, but avoid these during your first two weeks.

Eating the Right Type of Sugar

A low carb diet *does* allow natural sugars found in fruits and veggies. We avoid products that have *refined* sugars, like high-fructose corn syrup.

Sweeteners

If you’re craving sweet foods or desserts, artificial sweeteners are one solution. Dr. Atkins prefers sucralose (Splenda), but in small amounts (2 to 3 servings). Erythritol and stevia (natural sweeteners) are also allowed.

(Type, Serving Size, Net Carbs)

- Splenda: (sucralose) 1 packet, 1 net carb / liquid is zero carb
- Stevia: (all natural) 1 packet, 1 net carb / liquid is zero carb
- Erythritol (all natural) trace net carbs per serving

Erythritol Sweetener



[Now Foods erythritol powder](#) is a natural sweetener with a low glycemic impact and zero calories.

Sucralose Liquid Sweetener



[EZ-Sweetz sucralose sweetener](#) is very popular, and has no bitter aftertaste. Zero carb, zero calories and zero glycemic impact.

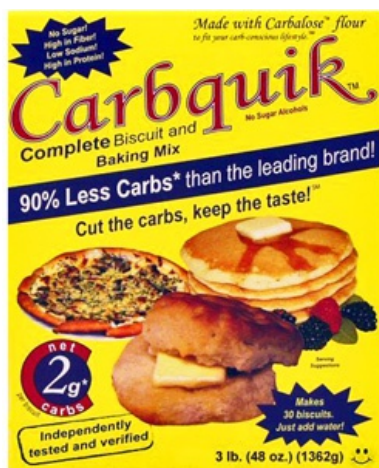
De-Bittered Liquid Stevia



[EZ-Sweetz's de-bittered stevia](#) has no unpleasant aftertaste. EZ-Sweetz's blend is not bitter like most stevia sweeteners.

Baking Mixes

CarbQuik



[CarbQuik baking mix](#) has 90% less carbs than Bisquick. High fiber, high protein.

A 3 pound box makes 90 biscuits. Just add water. (2 net carbs per biscuit.)

Low Carb Baking Mix



For bread machines and hand-baked breads. [Bob's Red Mill Low Carb Baking Mix](#) is all-natural and Kosher, with only 5 net carbs per serving.

Protein Powder



[Nature's Best isolate whey protein powder](#) is available in small 1 pound sizes and larger bulk sizes (most economical). Available in 19 flavored varieties.

The unflavored version is zero carb and preferred for making [low carb Soul Bread](#).

All-Natural Xanthan Gum



[Kiva all-natural xanthan gum](#) is non-GMO, vegan and gluten-free. Kiva's twin pack costs less than a single shaker of the other brands.

Xanthan gum thickens soups and sauces naturally. It adds volume, elasticity, and structure to bread and baked goods.

Herbs

Most herbs have only trace amounts of carbs, so use these liberally. If you're feeling ultra-liberal, count 1 net carb per tablespoon.

Miscellaneous

- Pork rinds (crushed, these are a good substitute for bread crumbs) are usually zero carb or 1 net carb per serving.
- Beef jerky or sticks are (usually) zero carb or 1 net carb per serving.

Condiments

- Sugar-free dill pickles or relish (use in tuna or egg salad)
- Mustard (any except sweetened mustard, *especially* honey mustard)
- Cider and wine vinegar (use balsamic vinegar sparingly)
- Most bottled hot sauces (like Tabasco)
- Most salsa (check the label)
- Soy sauce (avoid soy sauce if you are gluten sensitive)
- Mayonnaise (look for full fat brands with the lowest carbs)
- Full fat salad dressing (like Blue Cheese or Ranch)
- Capers
- Horseradish
- Olives
- Lemon or lime juice (count 1 net carb per tablespoon)

After Your First Two Weeks

We start a low carb diet with two weeks of intensive training. By the third week, we are pros at the basics:

- Our kitchen is clear of junk food and high carb foods.
- We're drinking 8+ glasses of water a day. (*We are, right?*)
- We know which foods are good for us and which *pretend* to be nutritious.

Track and Measure

Check your progress every few weeks - you'll be quite impressed. Keep taking photos, videos or measurements. The scale is a good tracking device, but *inches* tell the whole story.

Setting New Goals

It's a good time to set *realistic* weight loss goals based on your first two weeks.

Losing it Quickly

If you're enjoying the food choices from the first two weeks, you may stay at Induction levels (20 net carbs or less/day) to keep losing weight quickly – although not quite as fast as your first two weeks (where our loss included excess water).

Full-Tilt Rapid Burning

You may choose to go even lower, reaching deep ketosis and *seriously* accelerating your fat loss. This method usually involves eating less than 10 net carbs per day (or up to 5% of your total daily calories). Keep protein amounts in the normal-moderate range, while increasing the amount of fat you eat.

Many ketoers focus on coconut and MCT oils to increase their fats. These oils are used immediately for energy and aren't stored in the body.

Relaxed Pace

If you're ready to add back some old favorites (lower carb versions of course) like fruit, chocolate or alcohol – do so very slowly. Don't flip out one day and eat 20+ carbs during a meal. We weren't raised by wolves. Instead, add 5-10 net carbs to your **daily total** each week.

If possible, don't eat those extra 5-10 in one sitting. Add a few extra carbs throughout the day. We are trying to avoid spiking our blood sugar, which leads to hunger and fat storage.

TIP: A small, 3-5 net carb dessert after a very low carb dinner is a nice way to reward yourself for sticking to your plan all day. If you start to experience sweet cravings, you may have to drop the dessert.

When to Eat More Carbs

Once you've reached your healthy target weight, you're ready to start maintenance. This is the fun part: Each week, add 5-10 net carbs to your daily allowance. If you're eating 20 or less net carbs, try 25 each day for a week.

As you raise your daily carbs, weight loss slows down. Eventually, your body reaches a “balance point” where you aren’t losing any more weight, *but you aren’t gaining it either.*

This is where you want to stay – eating some carbs, but not so many that you start to gain weight or notice a decrease in your mood / performance.

The number of daily net carbs is different for everyone. Some low carbers stay on Induction levels (under 20 net carbs per day) because they feel better while eating very few carbs. Others maintain their goal weight while eating higher amounts. Where you land is totally up to you.

Checklist

Before You Start

- Measure / Take Photos, Videos / Weigh
- Check with Your Doctor
- Tell Your Family and Friends
- Clear Out Bad Foods
- Stock Up with Low Carb Groceries

Days 1-2

- Track and Count Every Net Carb
- Stay Under 20 Net Carbs/Day
- Drink Water / Add Salt to Meals
- 2/3 - 3/4 of Total Daily Calories from Fat
- Eat Moderate Protein

Days 3-7

- Test for Ketosis
- Enjoy the Feeling of Ketosis
- Measure / Reward Yourself

Days 8-14

- Keep Eating Healthy Fats
- Gather Resources from Atkins or Online
- Measure / Reward Yourself

After Your First 2 Weeks

- Plan Long-Term Goals
- When / How to Eat More Carbs

