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Low-carbohydrate Diet

Low-carbohydrate diets limit grains, bread, pasta, white rice, baked goods, and soda. While carbohydrates are a major fuel source for the body and a necessary part of a balanced diet for some people, extra carbohydrates that are not used for energy are stored as fat. Therefore, consuming more carbohydrates than the body is able to metabolize will lead to weight gain.

Low-carbohydrate diets focus predominantly on healthy sources of protein and fat such as meat, poultry, dairy, eggs, and non-starchy fruits and vegetables. Generally, grains, beans, starchy fruits and vegetables, bread, sweets, and pasta are limited or excluded. This style of eating often leads to weight loss – first in the form of quickly-lost water weight – reduced appetite, reduced calorie consumption, and an increase in satiety for some.

Foods to include:

- Meat
- Fish
- Eggs
- Low-starch vegetables
- Low-starch fruits
- Dairy
- Nuts
- Seeds
- Oils

Foods to avoid:

- Bread
- Pasta
- Rice
- Barley
- Beans
- Starchy desserts
- Processed foods
- Refined sugar

Pros:

- May jump-start weight loss
- Promotes whole foods
- May become a lifestyle approach
- Includes healthy fats

Cons:

- Some thrive on carbs
- Restricted carb intake may lead to cravings and binges
- May be hard for some to avoid carbohydrates

Sources:

Low-carb diet: Can it help you lose weight? www.mayoclinic.com <http://www.mayoclinic.com>

Low Carb Foods www.lowcarbfoods.org <http://www.lowcarbfoods.org>