

Eat This, Not That!

GOOD FATS GALORE

Keto Diet for 10 Days and Here's What I Learned

Going low-carb and high-fat transformed my body into a fat-frying machine—but not without consequences.

BY APRIL BENSHOSAN February 22, 2018



What if we told you that indulging in all the butter, cheese, and steak you want can help your [energy levels soar](#), crush cravings, and melt inches off your frame? Well, those are the lofty results the ketogenic (or keto, for short) diet promises—and the actual outcomes aren't that far off.

Here's a digestible rundown of how the diet works: Eating no more than 10 percent of your calories from carbs, about 20 percent from protein, and about 70 percent from healthy fats causes the liver to produce ketones, or byproducts of breaking down fat for energy, allowing your body to enter ketosis. (I religiously logged my macros on MyFitnessPal.) Sticking to this low-carb, moderate protein, high-fat diet allows your body to burn fat for fuel rather than glucose—our primary source of energy.

And who doesn't want that? I sure did, and therefore decided to give it a whirl.

Naysayers swore I'd be irritable, hungry, and wouldn't last three days. Yet regardless of the doubtful outpouring, my will to enter the magical state of ketosis remained unsullied.

1 I Gained Energy



After reading countless blog posts about fellow dieters reporting exhaustion and fatigue during the first few days, I actually noticed my energy levels soar. In fact, I felt as if I had downed three cups of coffee sans cream. At one point, the restlessness and jitters were a bit overwhelming. Though, after a few days progressed, my energy levels began to balance, and I felt more productive and clear-minded. Brain fog, begone!

2 My Stomach Became Flatter



You know when you wake up with a noticeably flatter stomach and wish it would remain that toned all day? Well, that normally transient state became quite permanent on keto. My bloating subsided, and I was convinced my [abs would uncover](#) after just a few more days on the diet—and it wasn't just all in my head. "Often times, if someone has GI issues from too much fiber, reducing it can lead to less bloating," Jim White, RD, ACSM, and owner of Jim White Fitness Nutrition Studios, shares with us. "In addition, one gram of carbs

holds onto one gram of water. When you [significantly] decrease carbs, you can lose water weight, hence a flatter stomach."

3 Bulletproof Coffee Isn't as Magical as it Seems



You may have heard all the buzz surrounding bulletproof coffee and its claims to supercharge brain power and bless you with newfound mental clarity. Unfortunately, lacing my morning cup of joe with unsalted grass-fed butter and [MCT oil](#) didn't result in the wondrous effects Silicon Valley execs and Hollywood stars report. The best benefit, personally, was that the brew provided some serious lip moisturizing benefits with every sip.

4 My Cravings Became Nonexistent



This must've been the most striking side effect of them all. My once-ravenous appetite decreased dramatically. Enter: I stopped incessantly snacking at my desk, quit pouring bowls of cereal after dark, and remained unscathed by my colleagues spooning [Ben & Jerry's new low-cal ice cream](#) right in front of my face. The self-proclaimed Carb Queen has been officially dethroned.

5 Meal Prep Is Key



Prepping your meals in advance is one of the essential tactics to maintaining ketosis. Allowing your willpower to make food decisions when you're hungry will seriously increase your chances of grabbing any grub in sight, potentially kicking you out of ketosis. If you're serious about sticking to this diet and experiencing all of its miraculous effects, remember to devote some time to meal prepping.

6 I Discovered a Bunch of New Foods



In the process of learning how to make time for meal prep, I also discovered a handful of new favorite foods. Because let's face it, I couldn't live on eating whole avocados in one sitting and dousing everything in cheese and butter for 10 days. I had to get creative in the kitchen. To boost my daily fat intake, I experimented with foods I've never thought I'd love before going keto. Low-carb picks such as [House Foods' tofu noodles](#) (pictured above) and Keto Carne (zero-sugar beef jerky), as well as high-fat snacks such as Cacao

Vita's single-origin cacao nibs, became my go-to kitchen staples. For breakfast, I found myself munching on two squares of 90-percent cacao with some almonds (see below) or two tablespoons of [Kite Hill Chive Cream Cheese Style Spread](#) (this stuff will make you forget about real cheese!).

For lunch, I often fried turkey and beef meatballs or packed a tofu scramble. Dinner was usually a piece of salmon with veggies or two-egg omelet with cheese. Eating out was by far the hardest. But if you must hit up your local sushi joint, go with the Naruto roll, which wraps fresh fish in cucumber instead of rice. Remember, you can always ask your waiter to modify your meals.

7 The Heart Healthiness of Going Keto is Still Up in the Air



Consuming so many animal products had me questioning whether or not the keto diet is detrimental to [heart health](#), so I spoke with **cardiologist Adam Splaver, MD, clinical cardiologist and co-founder of Nano Health Associates**, who reassured that "as long as you are consuming good fats, [the diet is] not a problem." On the contrary, "bad fats can promote atherosclerosis," he said, adding that hydrogenated fats are to be avoided and healthy fats such as monounsaturated fats and polyunsaturated fats are highly recommended

for keto... as I spooned my way through an entire avocado, again.

8 It's Hard to Maintain Ketosis



Using ketone testing strips, which measure your levels of ketone bodies via urine, I noticed how my level of ketosis fluctuated after each meal and time of day. Forking into just half a sweet potato would kick me out of ketosis, so I resolved to avoid high-glycemic produce, no matter how healthy they may be. By day seven, the strips informed me that I had reached a deep level of ketosis—aka, my self-inflicted carb deprivation was definitely paying off. If you're planning to try this diet, I highly recommend

purchasing test strips to determine your individualized upper carb limit and get an idea of how certain foods affect your ketosis levels.

Day nine was my downfall. I regretfully binged on chocolate frozen yogurt and microwaved stroopwafels. Cutting my net carbs to 10 grams the next day had me feeling extra moody and groggy, and by the end of day 10, I completely succumbed to all of my favorite carb-laden vices. Whoops.

Final Thoughts

My first week on the keto diet went remarkably well—as in, I wasn't swearing like a sailor or drooling over every whole-wheat roll my friends popped into the toaster. However, the influx of cravings and insatiable hunger I experienced toward the end of my experiment made me realize that this diet isn't very sustainable.

"Any time you drop entire macro or food groups you once loved, you will start to crave it," White informs us. "I say be flexible with it. I know keto is all about getting into ketosis, but it won't kill you to tailor it a little and increase the carbs. What's the point of going on a diet that is short-lived and you eventually gain all your weight back?"

Moving forward, I definitely plan to adopt a low-carb diet. Personally, cutting carbs—especially processed, refined carbs—completely alleviated the occasional bloating and abdominal pain I suffered from and endowed me with long-lasting energy. And by the end of the ten days, I had lost about a pound and a half and few centimeters off my waist—not enough to fit into my enshrouded pair of AG jeans, but a sufficient amount to feel some sense of pride.

<http://www.eatthis.com/keto-diet-results/>