



Everything Zen Nutritional Consulting Newsletter

Low-Carb Craze is Getting Ridiculous!

I can no longer keep quiet on this never-ending dietary trend that has people going silly trying to live the low-carb lifestyle.

Although I will admit, that **NOT ALL CARBS** are **GOOD CARBS**, certainly the high-protein diets that abound are **NOT** ideal either, and definitely **NOT** for everyone!

So, in this issue, let's explore this dietary trend, the good, the bad and the dangerous...

Before embarking on a **HIGH** protein diet **PLEASE** talk to a professional!!

Why the Body NEEDs Carbs

- Carbs are the body's main energy source as they are quickly converted into energy (glucose). High protein diets, restrict carbohydrate intake in order to get the body to switch from burning glucose to fat for energy. In theory this is great, *however* it takes between 30 & 120 minutes of steady, yet moderate aerobic activity, in order for the body to burn fat for energy
- If the body needs energy quickly, and is deprived of carbs, it will begin to break down protein (as it can break it down faster than it can break down fat) ~ which means muscles and other tissues are broken down in order to fuel the body
- This means that the majority of weight loss that is lost on high protein diets is **MUSCLE** rather than fat! Muscle weighs 5 times as much as fat which is why some quickly 'shed' 20-30lbs in just one month
- Even those with **HIGH** metabolisms, can only lose up to 2lb of **FAT** per week (any more, and muscle is being wasted) or dehydration is setting in

- What's more, the body **NEEDS** **MUSCLE** to burn fat, so the less you have, the slower your metabolism will be
- The 3 macronutrients that **EVERY** body requires are: proteins, fats & Carbohydrates ~ if any one is restricted over a prolonged time, deficiencies develop and the body will **NOT** be able to function optimally
- This explains why those on high-protein diets have **INTENSE** cravings for sugar and alcohol, as the body is craving glucose (and they are ready sources of it ~ although **NOT** ideal sources)
- The moodiness and irritability that affect those on high protein diets is also a result of low glucose intake, as the brain requires glucose to function ~ Mental clarity will decrease & lethargy will take over.

NO diet that eliminates one of the macronutrients is balanced enough to produce sustained results. Balance is the key to life and **HIGH** protein diets are **NOT** balanced!

The Down-Side of High Protein Diets

- High protein diets are not good for everyone, in fact, for some people they simply don't work, while for others they are downright dangerous and can lead to kidney & cardiovascular problems. Roughly 1/3 of the population benefits from being on some form of high-protein diet
- The **kidneys** become **overworked** as they try to keep up with eliminating the by-products of protein digestion
- High protein diets **acidify the body** ~ and if the body pH changes, minerals will be leached from the bones and tissues to neutralize these harmful acids. This **increases the risk of degenerative diseases** such as: arthritis, heart disease, stroke, & osteoporosis
- The first mineral affected by acidic pH is **IODINE** which the **THYROID** requires to function ~ the thyroid sets the **METABOLIC** rate of the body, which means **metabolism will s-l-o-w** down
- The **immune system is weakened**, increasing one's susceptibility to colds, flues & infections, as well as lengthening recovery time
- Often times, with the types of foods that are deemed 'acceptable', this diet turns into a high-fat rather than high-protein diet, or else, unnatural, engineered foods are recommended, such as aspartame and synthesized meal-replacement protein bars & shakes

Not ALL Carbs are BAD Carbs...

- The best are **COMPLEX** carbohydrates as they do **NOT** raise blood glucose levels too quickly, unlike **Simple Carbs**
 - Choose from: starchy vegetables ~ sweet potatoes, squash, carrots, beets, turnips ...
 - Whole grains, (ideally sprouted): amaranth, barley, brown rice, buckwheat, kamut, millet, quinoa, spelt, teff. Best eaten in grain form or as sprouted breads
 - **AVOID** refined, processed & simple carbs such as: white flour products (bread, cakes, cookies, muffins, pasta), white rice and **SUGAR**
- Also, it is best to combine carbs with healthy fats (EFAs) to further slow down their digestion

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