

The Advantages and Disadvantages of Low Carb Nutrition

by Charles Poliquin

What are some advantages and disadvantages of a low carb nutrition approach?

There are some many advantages to low carb nutrition, that is why I tend to use it in about 75% of my clients. But it is not for everybody, some genotypes do very poorly on it, and the extent of how badly they do on it is a function of the time they are on it. Before you look at the advantages and disadvantages, as Jonny Bowden would say” You need to approach your fat loss system like you should approach relationships: Daily attention. Nurturing, support, crisis management, intervention, focus, attention, consciousness and mindfulness. It requires good negotiation skills. All the things we don't tend to have when it comes to food.”

Advantages

It promotes muscle gains while reducing fat stores

I am not a believer in the bulk-up/get lean approach in hypertrophy training. For 75% of the population, I strongly believe that if you want to gain lean body mass while losing fat, the low carb approach will do it better than anything, especially if you are taking supplements that enhance insulin sensitivity. Because insulin sensitivity tends to improve on low carb diets, fat loss is more sustained with this approach.

It is a very valuable in treating dyslipidemia

Low carb diets are particularly effective at reducing triglycerides and VLDL. It has a significant effect also on reducing LDL. Its effects on raising the good forms of cholesterol is not as drastic. But overall, it improves the HDL:LDL ratio in a manner that significantly reduces cardiovascular risk.

It reduces inflammation

Many patients will report reduced joint pain while following a low carb diet. High insulin levels are correlated with inflammation markers. Since the insulin output is lower with low carb diets. Another cardiovascular risk marker, Hs-CRP goes down faster than a cheerleader's panties at the high school prom night, when a low carb diet is followed.

Improved glycemia and insulin levels

Blood sugar management is probably on the biggest benefits of low carb diets. 68% of American are pre-diabetic. Insulin is the hormone of ageing and inflammation. Managing insulin is one of the best ways to promote healthy long living. An added benefit of improving glycemia is reduce mood swings and lowered likelihood of engaging in food binges.

Lowered blood pressure

Because low carb diets reduce inflammation, improved blood pressure is a direct benefit of low carb dieting.

Greater energy

Before all the armchair experts lash out and rush out to burn Canadian embassies, hear me out. Greater energy is indeed a very common report of low carb dieters. Psychometric tests always report greater well being of the patient after this dietary approach. It probably has more to do with the better management of one's glycemia. As Robert Crayhon says, you want more energy, take care of your mitochondrias. Lower insulin levels help with mitochondrias energy producing capacities.

Disadvantages

The low carb nutrition tends to be bland

However, there are plenty of resources such as books like *Living the Low Carb Life* by Jonny Bowden that provide you with a wealth of cooking tips (www.jonnybowden.com)

Food prep time is greater

Since the meat content is greater, more time is needed to prepare the food. As simple as cooking a steak takes more time than making a sandwich. But again, there are solutions. If you use salad instead of the pita, you can do low carb wraps in a flash.

Constipation is often an issue

That can be off-set by taking in a mixture of ground flax seed hulls and ground fenugreek seeds first thing in the morning, besides providing the body with many forms of fibers, it detoxifies xeno-estrogens and improves insulin sensitivity.

Possible nutrients deficiencies

Because one abstains from certain foods, I recommend to all my patients to take a quality broad nutrient multi-vitamin supplements. This goes along with a varied plan of anti-oxidants that changes every 8 days. I basically change the nature of multi-anti-oxidant products. To make it simple, I change the color of the anti-oxidants. For example, the first product may have 5-6 flavonoids like limonene (so the base color is yellow), the next 8 days, we switch to purple so we use a formula that have grape seed extract, bilberry etc.