



MISS MAGGIE'S LOW-COST LOW-CARB WEIGHT-LOSS PRIMER



PREFACE

There are so many low or controlled carbohydrate diet plans on the market today that it can be confusing to make sense of them all. In an effort to understand them better myself, and in response to a veritable avalanche of requests, I have endeavored to describe my lowcarb weight loss program to the best of my ability. If you require more specific or in depth information then I recommend any one of the many lowcarb books on the market. *Dr. Atkins Diet Revolution*, *Carbohydrate Addicts* and *Protein Power* are three well known programs. These books are readily available at your local library or can be found inexpensively at used book stores. A bibliography is included at the end of this document, enabling you to conduct further research independently.

The following information should not be construed as medical advice. I am not a professional, and this is not a professionally created program. I'm just an ordinary housewife who read a few books, found myself losing weight for the first time in my life, and decided to share what I learned with others. You should visit your health care professional and discuss your diet before beginning this or any other nutritional program.

INTRODUCTION

My lowcarb weight-loss program is not particularly original. I haven't done any research myself, I've only investigated the available literature and put it together



in a way that makes sense to me. Most lowcarb programs are based on three steps or levels of carbohydrate intake: Very Low, Low and Moderate. Depending on your tolerance for carbohydrates you will use one level to lose weight and one level to maintain weight. I have chosen to identify these levels with biblical terms. *Very Low* carbohydrate intake is called the Genesis Stage. *Low* carbohydrate intake is called the Exodus stage. A *Moderate* level of carbohydrates is called the Promised Land. My reasoning behind these names will be made clear in their detailed explanations, which follow.

THE LOW-CARB ADVANTAGE

Lowcarb diets are not cut out for everyone. I'm the first to admit it. Some folks do just fine on low-fat diets, which I expect is part of the reason behind their former popularity. Others of us though, have tried to lose weight on every diet under the sun and have yet to achieve the success we seek. Those of us who have failed to lose weight on standard low-fat or low-calorie diets may have a condition that Dr. Atkins refers to as Metabolic Resistance¹. He characterizes Metabolic Resistance as an inability to lose weight on standard diets coupled with intense cravings and hunger. In my experience most folks who have tried over and over again to lose weight only to be faced with nearly insurmountable hunger are probably the most likely to see results with lowcarb programs.

For my own part I failed miserably with a low-fat, low-calorie diet. In the past I faithfully followed all of my doctor's weight loss suggestions including a low-fat 1500 calories a day diet combined with walking a brisk 2-1/2 to 3 miles a day, 5 times a week, only to find my weight loss endeavors thwarted. I carefully followed this diet for nearly 6 months and quite literally did not lose a single pound. You can imagine my frustration! I felt better physically, and I had a great deal of support from my dietitian, doctor and nurse-practitioner so it was relatively easy for me to keep up the program despite my lack of success. After 6 months though, frustration crept into my regime and frankly I didn't have the heart to continue. I wanted to see results on the scale or in my dress size and despite my best efforts, I wasn't getting them. Resignedly I thought, "I'm the same size whether I diet and exercise or not. If I'm not getting results, why bother try-

¹ Atkins, Dr. Robert C., *Dr. Atkins' New Diet Revolution* (New York: Harper Collins, Quill, 2002) 41.





ing?" Regardless of my behavior, my weight remained stable. It was a lot easier to stop trying so hard and simply accept my fate as inevitable.

Giving up was the beginning of my salvation. When I was able to write off all of the mainstream diet plans, it gave me the space I needed to research alternative plans. Eventually this led me to the lowcarb lifestyle which as it turns out is the only type of program that will work for me.

For those of us with Metabolic Resistance lowcarb programs offer specific advantages. We are able to eat as much as we need to eliminate our hunger. Because we severely limit our carbohydrate intake, we allow our bodies to go into ketosis/lipolysis (usually shortened to ketosis²) and burn our own body fat for fuel. Normally our bodies burn carbohydrates for fuel. Leftover carbohydrates that aren't needed immediately are stored for later in our fat cells. Insulin is the worker-bee whose job it is to store excess carbohydrates as fat. When we eat too many carbohydrates we drive the little worker-bee into overdrive. He works hard finding all the unused carbohydrates he can and then folds them up neatly and places them in storage, like stacking seldom used sheets in the linen closet. During times of famine this method of food storage was a handy trick. When food was plentiful we could automatically preserve it as insurance against future scarcity. That's all well and good for folks without a reliable food source. For us though, it's the kiss of death. We don't want to store more fat. We've been doing that for years and now we want to burn up all the excess. Our worker-bee Insulin has over stuffed our fat cells until we are bursting at the seams. It would be like continuing to buy sheets for an unused bed and stacking them higher and higher in the linen closet until the contents are spilling onto the floor. When our linen closets are full we know it's time to declutter. When our fat cells are full, we know it's time to use up the reserves we've been hoarding for years.

Low calorie diets allow us to burn our surplus fat by literally starving ourselves until our bodies are so hungry that they have no choice but to use up our fat stores in order to keep going. Most folks will agree with me that this is a particularly uncomfortable way to lose weight.

With lowcarb diets we don't have to starve ourselves. Instead we change what we're eating so that our bodies are forced to adapt. When we don't eat enough

2 Atkins, Dr. Robert C., *Dr. Atkins' New Diet Revolution* (New York: Harper Collins, Quill, 2002) 57-63.





carbohydrates for our bodies to use as fuel, they switch gears and burn fat instead. This is called being in ketosis. We know we are in ketosis when there are ketones in our breath and urine. Ketones in our breath give us the dragon breath sometimes associated with lowcarb programs. Ketones in our urine give us a handy way to test and measure our ketosis with test strips. Ketone test strips or Ketostix can be found in almost any pharmacy along with the diabetic supplies. They come with full information on their use so I won't go into it here. As for cost, I have seen a tube of 50 cost anywhere from \$5 to \$15, so it pays to shop around for a supply.

Ketosis has several side effects besides the presence of ketones in our urine and breath. It also acts as a natural appetite suppressant. When we are in ketosis our cravings go away and our hunger is finally tamed. Since we aren't hungry it's easy to eat less than in times past. When we do eat, if we continue to limit our carb intake, then we continue to stay in ketosis. Our bodies are right where we want them to be. We're burning our body fat for fuel; our appetite is finally under control and our cravings have been eliminated. Holy Buckets! This is what we've been looking for all of our lives. With these three conditions happening simultaneously we are finally able to shed our excess pounds.

For some people the appetite suppression is so significant that they must remind themselves to eat enough. Others may find that moderate portions satisfy them in a way that never seemed possible before. This has been my experience. With all of my cravings for chocolate, sweets and homemade bread eliminated I'm able to focus on the foods I should be eating. Specifically I find I enjoy making vegetables a priority instead of tolerating them as a necessary evil as I did on low-fat diets.

Okay, you may be thinking. Ketosis sounds great. How do I get there, and what do I have to give up in exchange? Well that's where the three stages of this program come along. They will give you the tools you need to get into ketosis and to stay there until your weight has stabilized at a new, lower level.

One more note on ketosis before we get to the three stages. Ketosis is a perfectly safe way for our bodies to lose weight. Years ago ketosis was confused with ketoacidosis, a potentially dangerous condition that usually only affects people with Type 1, or Insulin Dependant, Diabetes. It is characterized by high blood





sugar due to low levels of insulin and an increase in acids in the blood, including, but not limited to, ketones. When you're in ketosis your body produces ketones because you are burning body fat for fuel, not because you are sick. While ketosis and ketoacidosis are similar sounding words, they are entirely different conditions and should not be confused with one another.

THE GENESIS STAGE

This is beginning weight loss phase of this nutritional program. It's named Genesis because it represents a new beginning for you and your health. In the Christian Bible, Genesis is the name of the first book. It describes how God created the world³ and gave Noah permission to eat meat. Since meat makes up the base of the Low-Carb pyramid, Genesis seems the perfect name for the first stage of this program.

And the fear of you and the dread of you shall be upon every beast of the earth, and upon every fowl of the air, upon all that moveth upon the earth, and upon all the fishes of the sea; into your hand are they delivered. Every moving thing that liveth shall be meat for you; even as the green herb have I given you all things. But flesh with the life thereof, *which is the blood thereof*, shall ye not eat. (Genesis 9:2-4 KJV)

On a practical level, the Genesis Stage of this program begins with limiting your daily intake of carbohydrates to 20 or 30 grams per day. I like to split the difference and go with 25. The reason you go so low is to quickly put your body into fat burning mode, otherwise known as ketosis. For most people it takes 2 to 5 days for ketosis to begin. A few folks may take up to 10 days, so be patient if it doesn't happen overnight.

To reduce your carbohydrate intake to this level you must essentially limit your diet to meat, cheese and low-starch vegetables. There is a little bit of leeway for a few extras and you can learn more about that and all of the other foods you should be eating on page 21.

After you've been on the Genesis Stage of this program for a week you will probably notice that you've lost some weight. Some of this is water weight and some is real live fat. As long as you stay in ketosis you will continue to burn fat.

3 God, *The Holy Bible* (Israel: The Beginning of Time) Genesis 1-3.





Some people are happy to keep their carbohydrate intake at 25 grams until they've reached their goal weight. They may go over a few times for special occasions but for the most part they are content with 25 grams of carbohydrates a day. That's fine. If it works for you then stick with it and make yourself happy.

For those of us who become bored with 25 grams a day, it's time to enter the next phase of the program.

THE EXODUS STAGE

So named for the book of Exodus in the Christian Bible, this stage of the program is where we lose most of our weight. It's designed for the long haul and may safely be followed for as long as necessary, or until we reach our goal weight.

In Exodus 12 God delivers the Israelites out of the hands of Pharaoh and sets them forth on their journey to the promised land. To me, the process of weight loss is similar to the journey charted by the Israelites. It was hard for them to leave the land and way of life with which they were so familiar. They had to cast aside the past and willingly embrace the unknown with faith. Losing weight is a process whereby we give up our old way of living and our old way of eating in exchange for the promise of a new beginning. The new method is foreign, it's clumsy and we don't yet understand exactly how it works or how our lives will change. Still, we go forward with faith, trusting that the new way of life will be better than the old one, even though we can't yet see or define what it will be. We are like the Israelites, leaving a life of slavery for the hope of something better. We may not be sure what we'll find when we reach our destination, but we know that it will be better than what we've left behind. This takes a lot of courage. Lots of people don't make it this far. They turn back to the old familiar ways, even if it means they remain in bondage to their appetites.

When I imagine the relief experienced by the Israelites when Pharaoh released them from enslavement I equate it to the relief I've found in a lowcarb lifestyle. I have been in bondage to my metabolism and my obesity for too many years. By following a lowcarb nutritional program I'm able to set myself free from the tight hold that my hunger, cravings and resulting weight gain have held over me for





so long. In essence I am set free from the old body and the hunger that bound me and I am finally able to take control of a once hopeless situation.

The Exodus Stage of this program is meant to allow us to lose weight while enjoying a wider variety of tastes and flavors. We do that by slowly increasing our carb intake until we notice that we go out of ketosis. Dr. Atkins recommends increasing carbs by 5 grams a week⁴. I think this is excellent advice but I have trouble with patience so I leapt forward 10 grams, to 35 grams per day and tested myself faithfully for 3 days. I stayed in ketosis so I leapt forward another 10 grams, to 45. After testing myself for 3 days I noticed I was out of ketosis. Disappointed I scaled back to 40 grams a day and Eureka! ketosis returned within 24 hours. This process worked just fine for me. For others, a slower approach, adding only 5 grams of carbohydrate a week may be a better choice. For matters of convenience I have chosen to refer to this level of carbohydrates as my Exodus Carb Level. Sometimes I call it my Exodus Level for short. It is the highest amount of carbohydrates one can eat a day and still maintain ketosis. When we remain on our Exodus Carb Level surplus fat exits our bodies as it's burned as fuel.

After determining your Exodus Level you are set to play around with all of the lowcarb foods you like. As long as you stay within your carbohydrate limit you will be able to lose weight. The fat will literally melt off of your body as you burn it for fuel. For more information about the foods appropriate for this stage of the program, see page 21.

The Exodus Stage is where you should stay until you reach or near your goal weight. After you lose a significant amount of weight you may find yourself out of ketosis even though you've been faithful to your carb limit. At this point you may need to reduce your Exodus Level because as your body size changes, your carb limit may change too. Some people will be able to eat a few more carbs, but many of us find we must eat a few less. If you are no longer in ketosis, despite your faithfulness to your program, then it's time to take your carb level down 5 grams. After 3 to 5 days, if you are still unable to achieve ketosis, then go down 5 more grams. Keep on like this until you are back in ketosis and then take note of your new Exodus Carb Level. If you have a great deal of weight to

4 Atkins, Dr. Robert C., *Dr. Atkins' New Diet Revolution* (New York: Harper Collins, Quill, 2002) 170-173.





lose, you may need to readjust your carb limit several times over the course of your diet.

As your goal weight approaches, getting down to perhaps the last 10 or 15 pounds, you may need to significantly reduce your Exodus Level briefly until you reach your goal. Some people must go as low as 15 or 20 grams of carbohydrates a day until they reach their final weight. If you've been consuming 40 or more grams of carbohydrates a day, going back to a Genesis level of carbs will enable you to lose those last few pounds more easily. Once again, this is a personal thing and your body may be different. We must each work with the body we have and use our good sense to manage our program and reach our goal weights.

THE PROMISED LAND

So named for the destined home of the Israeli people after Moses liberated them from Egypt, this stage is the end result of all your hard work. In the same way the Israelites wandered in the desert for 40 years⁵, we have battled our obesity with an ongoing determination. Many of us tried every possible cure, only to have our hopes dashed time and time again. Finally, with the help of a low carbohydrate lifestyle we've been able to find the success that eluded us for so long. After 40 years of promise, the Israelites finally arrived in the land they would at last call home. Some of us have struggled with our weight for more than 40 years. Others have been lucky enough to find a solution sooner. Like the Israelites we must adapt ourselves to our new homes, the bodies in which we live. The temporary process of losing weight has ended and now we begin a lifetime of maintenance.

On some weight loss programs we go off the eating regimen once we reach our goal weights and resume our normal eating habits. This is not true of the low carbohydrate plan. Eating white flour, white sugar, white rice and all of the processed junk that caused our weight gain to begin with is still toxic to us. If we ever make this junk a part of our lives again we will regain everything we've worked so hard to lose. Living without that junk for a few months, or for some of us over a year, is one thing, but contemplating a lifetime of lowcarb is a bit

5 God, *The Holy Bible* (Israel: The Beginning of Time) Numbers 14.





overwhelming for some of us. Many of us will try going back to the old way of eating only to experience all of the suffering that we thought we'd left behind. Nausea, headaches, bloating and uncomfortable gas are common reactions to a meal of junk food. For some of us only one meal off our plan will cause us to gain several pounds overnight. On the bright side if we get right back on our maintenance program, these side effects will quickly disappear and we'll be back to our old selves.

A few people may be able to have one meal off of their plan for a special occasion and then jump right back into maintenance. For the majority of us though, the only way we are able to maintain our hard earned weight loss, is to stay on the program for the rest of our lives. When we go off program, even for a special occasion we find ourselves filled with so many cravings that it takes a herculean effort to resist and force ourselves back on track. I am one of those people. I am content to spend the rest of my life in the Promised Land. When I deviate from my program to make room for a little of Aunt Ella-Faye's potato salad, or Cousin Claudine's famous fudge, I am tempting fate. Like an alcoholic in many ways, I am only one bite from a binge that I might not come back from.

Getting to the Promised Land is so difficult that many find the idea of sabotaging themselves back to square one as offensive as stealing or lying. There are some things in life that we absolutely cannot do, not ever, no matter what the circumstances. We don't cheat on our spouses. We don't steal from others. We don't lie to our doctors. We don't murder and for some of us, we simply don't go off our programs.

So how do you figure out your maintenance program? Up until now you've been using your Exodus Carb Level to reduce your weight. It may have been necessary to revise it down a time or two as you approached your goal weight. Well now the time has come to revise your carb limit up! Whoo Hoo!

Begin with the highest Exodus Level you had, when you first started your weight loss. For me that was 40 grams, for you it may have been 60 or perhaps 25. Limit your carbs to this amount for a full week. Notice what happens.

- Do you feel sick from too many carbs?
- Do you feel strong?





- Is your appetite still under control?
- Do you notice any weight gain, even a small amount?
- Are you still in ketosis?

If you find yourself having trouble with this amount of carbs then reduce your daily level by 5 grams. If you were trying 40 grams then go down to 35. Wait another week on this lower level and then reevaluate. Continue on as necessary until you find a level of carbs which doesn't allow you to gain or lose weight, and which allows you to maintain control over your appetite.

If you ask yourself the questions above and find that you feel good or are still experiencing ketosis, then increase your carbohydrate limit another 5 or 10 grams. Go for a week on this higher level and reevaluate. If you still feel fine, your appetite is under control and you aren't gaining weight, then go up another 5 or 10 grams the following week. Continue until you find the level that keeps you out of ketosis and allows you to maintain your weight. Increase and reduce your daily limit as necessary until you find the sweet spot. This is your Promised Land Carbohydrate Level. It represents the grams of carbohydrates you will eat every day for the rest of your life. Some of us may find that 30 carbs is most we can manage while others may be pleasantly surprised with 60 carbs or more.

If you find that your limit is on the high side, then you can afford to indulge in a few new foods that add a lot of variety to your diet. If your Promised Land Level is on the low side, then comfort yourself with the delight of your new, slim body and commit to keeping it by staying within your limits.

In some ways we must be extra vigilant at this stage in our program. Falling off the wagon is only one bite away for some of us. Envy and resentment often creep in unawares. When these feelings crop up say them out loud as much as possible. Pray about them often. Write them in journals, blogs and on message boards. Share these thoughts with your mom, husband and best friend. These are perfectly normal emotions and almost all of us will experience them while we readjust to our new bodies and our new but permanent dietary habits. These feelings usually abate with time, especially when we are careful not to bury them in our hearts. We all have to do a little weeding now and then, and weeding out these feelings is just a normal part of weight loss. The fastest way to eliminate a resentment is to turn it into something for which to be grateful. It's perfectly nor-





mal to feel a little resentful when contemplating a lifetime of no more than 30 carbs a day. On the other hand, how wonderful it is to buy new clothes in a permanently smaller size. Those 30 carbs are the key to staying at your present size so each precious one deserves to be used with joyful indulgence.

A final point to consider at this stage in your program is that as we age our Promised Land Carb Level may change too. At 30 years old, 50 carbs may be our daily limit. Ten years later, at 40, we may find ourselves gaining weight at this level. All this means is that our bodies are fully mortal and that they will change as we age. If you find yourself gaining weight after a few years in the Promised Land then consider reducing your carb limit by 5 or 10 grams for a week and seeing what happens. Our bodies are living, changing organisms. We aren't static, and we aren't supposed to be. As our circumstances change our dietary needs will change too. Most folks at their goal weight keep an eye on the way their clothes fit, or the number on the scale and adjust their carb levels as necessary to accommodate the flow of life.

NET CARBS

Back in the 1960's and 70's lowcarb diets counted all carbohydrates equally, regardless of their digestibility or how our bodies used them. Since then many lowcarb plans have abandoned this method and now count Net Carbs instead. The theory behind Net Carbs, also known as Effective Carb Count and Digestible Carbohydrates, is that fiber doesn't need to be counted towards our daily carbohydrate limits because it isn't digested in the same way as other carbohydrates. Fiber goes through our bodies, provides bulk to our diet and is then excreted out as waste. Since we don't digest fiber, these carbohydrates do not need to be counted towards our daily limits. For instance, a 1/4-cup of peanuts has 4 grams of carbohydrates and 2 grams of fiber. We subtract the fiber (2) from the total number of carbohydrates (4) and wind up with the Net Carb Count (2). Thus when recording our totals for the day we only need record the Net Carbs (2) because our bodies are busy pushing the fiber carbohydrates through our intestinal tracts as waste.

4 grams total carbohydrates – 2 grams fiber = 2 grams Net Carbs





The beauty of this system is that we are only counting the carbohydrates that will actually affect our insulin levels. At the same time we are able to include many high fiber foods that would otherwise be restricted on a lowcarb program.

A variety of brans, soy products, and even unsweetened chocolate, are now healthy additions to a lowcarb diet because after subtracting the fiber from the total carbohydrate level, the number of Net Carbs in these foods is extremely low. An excellent example of this is flax seed. All of the carbohydrates in flax seed come from fiber, so it is basically a carb-free food. With all of its healthy omega-3 oils, it's an excellent addition to a lowcarb diet. Other nuts and seeds are very low in Net Carbs and can add an exciting degree of variety to our menus. Almonds have a low Net Carb Count and when ground make a great substitute for cake or pastry flour. Ground peanuts can be used the same way. By combining nut flours with vital wheat gluten and bran we can even come up with our own lowcarb homemade breads, adding a dimension to our menus that early lowcarb pioneers never even dreamed of.

Net Carbs are a boon to those of us living a lowcarb lifestyle and we owe it to ourselves to solidify our understanding of them. When determining your carb limits, its assumed that you will count Net Carbs instead of total carbohydrates. The food lists which begin on page 21 include items based on their Net Carb level, not their total carb level. Even if a food has 40 grams total carbohydrates, if 35 grams are fiber, then its Net Carb Count of only 5 grams is quite low, and as such is well worth including in a lowcarb diet.

MANAGING PLATEAUS

Argh! Plateaus, we all experience them and we are all frustrated by them. Sometimes they last as little as a few days, but many of us are plagued by them for up to a month or more. Plateaus happen when our weight loss, which may have been steady up to this point, halts unexpectedly and stubbornly refuses to go down. Many women say they can expect them like clockwork the week before their periods. For women with metabolic challenges like PCOS, this is especially true. Other folks may lose steadily for several months in a row, and then find themselves stuck at a certain weight and unable to do anything to remedy the situation.





In your past, if you lived for several years at a certain weight before going on to gain more, then when you lose down to that weight again, your body may stop losing for a little while. It's rather like visiting with an old friend. Your body wants to catch up on things and hear all the gossip before moving on again. While this can be royally frustrating, it will take care of itself after the body has a chance to regain its equilibrium.

Losing weight is stressful because it takes a while for our inner view of ourselves to catch up with the outer changes. I've looked for my face in the mirror of a crowded restroom and missed it because I didn't remember what I looked like. I was looking for my old fat face instead of my thinner, new one. Just like it takes some time for our mind's eye to catch up with our outer selves, our bodies may take a little time to catch up with our new size and shape. When it needs that time, it will stop losing for a little while to take a breather. After a short break, our bodies are rested and ready to move back into weight-loss mode, continuing on down the scale.

While some plateaus are merely time for our bodies to readjust, the majority are not caused by this phenomenon. Most plateaus are caused by carelessness in carb counting. After a few weeks or months on our programs it's easy to get a little sloppy in our record keeping. Whenever we reach a plateau our first response should be to make sure we're still in ketosis and to write down everything we're eating for several days. More often than not we discover that we've been eating far more carbs than we thought. Too many carbs reduces and even eliminates weight loss. If you find yourself in this situation take heart. Simply steer yourself back on track and resolve to maintain a vigilant eye on your daily carb intake.

After a couple weeks of careful carb counting, if you are still plateaued then it may be time to revise your carb limit down 5 or 10 grams. As our bodies shrink they need less fuel. If you've lost enough weight to change a size or two and are struggling with a stubborn plateau then reducing your Exodus Carb Level may be just the ticket to put yourself back in weight loss mode.

Another way to break a plateau is to switch over to the Genesis Stage for a week or two, to push your body back to where you want it to be. This can be





very effective when you are certain your plateau isn't hormonal in origin. Alas, those of us with plateaus every month will not find much comfort in this technique. On the bright side, after our periods start, we generally lose at a faster pace, as if our bodies were making up for lost time.

I haven't talked about exercise yet, but it's a great way to break a plateau. Even if you aren't exercising strenuously enough to burn a lot of calories, the rejuvenating results of getting out and taking a walk can do wonders for your metabolism. I equate exercising with regular sleep or using the restroom. There are some things our bodies must do everyday, whether we want to or not. If we don't sleep, we don't function very well. If we don't use the restroom regularly then our bodies are uncomfortable and could potentially become quite ill. Exercise is like that. If we want to have bodies that work as well as they possibly can, then we really owe it to ourselves to find a simple exercise routine we can practice more often than not. It's a great way to push past a plateau, but even more it's the best way to take care of our bodies. We only get one each after all, so maintaining the one we have is really in our best interest.

Plateaus happen to every dieter. There is no escaping them, no matter how much we wish we could. When a plateau hampers your weight loss effort it's time to take a good hard look at your daily carbohydrate intake and make sure you're not overindulging. It's easy to do, even for the most dedicated dieter. If you've lost a chunk of weight already, then it may be time to revise your Exodus Carb Level down a few grams. If this doesn't do much good then it's most likely that your body is simply taking a little time for itself and readjusting to it's new shape. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, consider exercising to push past a plateau and to keep your body in optimal health.

WATER

On any weight loss program it's important to drink enough water. On lowcarb diets it's vital. Ketosis has a slight diuretic effect. To avoid dehydration, speed our weight loss efforts and keep our kidneys happy we must drink at least 64 ounces or 2-quarts of water a day. The more weight we have to lose, the more water we should drink. Water keeps our skin hydrated and younger looking, it helps our bodies flush out impurities, and keeps us from retaining water which





makes our clothes fit better. Some successful dieters recommend dividing your current weight in half, and then drinking that many ounces of water a day. For instance, if your current weight is 240 then dividing it in half would give you 120. As long as you weigh 240 pounds, you should be drinking 120 ounces of water a day, or nearly a gallon. When you lose down to 200, then your daily water intake can decrease to 100 ounces a day. As you continue to drop weight the amount of water required by your body also drops. No matter how skinny you get though, your minimum water intake should be no less than 64 ounces a day or 4 tall glasses. The best way to drink your water is to sip it constantly throughout the day. Some people fill up a 2-quart pitcher or a 2-liter bottle and keep it in the fridge. As the day progresses they keep pouring the water into their glass and by the end of the day if the pitcher or bottle is empty they know they've drunk their quota. Diet soda pop, iced tea, coffee, light beer, dry wine and fruit drinks do not count as water. Only water counts as water.

LOW CARBOHYDRATE SWEETENERS

Giving up sugar isn't the sacrifice it used to be. Today we have a variety of good quality artificial and non-nutritive sweeteners at our disposal. For those of us who refuse to add anything artificial to our diets, there is even an all-natural lowcarb sweetener named Stevia. It's derived from a naturally sweet herb native to Paraguay where it has been used for centuries. It's not exactly cheap, but if natural foods are a priority for you, then it may be worth the expense.

It's important to note that most sweeteners contain some amount of carbohydrate. Read the nutritional labels and include the carbs in your daily total. Below you will find an assortment of common sugar substitutes and a little information about each one.

Aspartame: Also known as Equal or Nutra Sweet, aspartame sweetener has been around since 1981. It was expensive when it first appeared, but nowadays can be purchased quite cheaply. Most stores market their own personal brand at considerable savings. It's cheapest form is packets, usually 200 to a box. Each packet is equal to the sweetness of 2 teaspoons of sugar. Aspartame is in many commercial products, most significantly diet beverages, sugar-free gelatin and pudding mix. Aspartame is not heat stable. If it boils, bakes or simmers it





loses quite a bit of its sweetness. For this reason it's usually added to mixtures after they are cooked, or more commonly, used in cold products to begin with. It is also be used to sweeten your own fruit drink mix like Koolaid or Flavoraid. One packet of unsweetened fruit-drink mix combined with 12 to 16 packets of aspartame and 2 quarts of water makes a refreshing and inexpensive beverage.

Some people are sensitive to aspartame. When they consume it, they get mild to severe headaches and sometimes other symptoms too. For that reason most official lowcarb programs suggest avoiding it. Personally I like the convenience of sugar-free fruit gelatin mix and Crystal Light type beverage mixes, so I still consume it in moderate amounts. If aspartame isn't for you, there are lots of other sweeteners to take its place. It has no bitter aftertaste, and to many has a flavor quite similar to sugar.

Acesulfame-K: The "K" stands for potassium. Acesulfame-K is heat stable. It has been around in the USA since 1988 and is available in packets as Sweet One under the Sunnette brand. Not all supermarkets carry it, so sometimes you have to hunt a little to find it. When it cooks it has a slightly bitter aftertaste. This doesn't bother everyone but some folks are very sensitive to bitterness in artificial sweeteners. If this is the case for you, then Acesulfame-K may not be your best choice. Adding a packet of aspartame along with the Acesulfame-K, can counteract most of the bitterness. I don't know why this is, but it works. Most Sweet One boxes contain 50 packets of sweetener. Each packet is equal to the sweetness of 2 teaspoons of sugar. On the plus side, Sweet One is usually quite reasonably priced.

DiabetiSweet: I have only been able to find DiabetiSweet at pharmacies, along with other diabetic products. Beware, it's expensive. A 1-pound bag costs about \$5 at Walmart. Some people consider it worth the expense because it can be used for very specific purposes. DiabetiSweet caramelizes beautifully, just like real sugar. Acesulfame-K (see above) and Isomalt, a sugar alcohol, are blended together to create DiabetiSweet. Since Isomalt is derived from sugar. It allows DiabetiSweet to behave like sugar in many instances. In baking DiabetiSweet adds bulk and tenderness to the finished product, the same way real sugar does. This can come in very handy sometimes. DiabetiSweet used to have a slightly bitter aftertaste but seems to have overcome this drawback in recent years. I cannot discern DiabetiSweet from regular





white sugar either in appearance or flavor. DiabetiSweet has about 9 calories per teaspoon, much more than other artificial sweeteners, but still less than sugar. Each teaspoon contains 4.4 grams of carbohydrates in the form of sugar alcohol. Some lowcarb dieters count half of these carbohydrates, or 2.2 grams per teaspoon because our bodies only digest about half of the carbohydrates in sugar alcohols. Other people claim that sugar alcohols don't need to be counted at all since our bodies digest them differently than other carbohydrates. This is an ongoing controversy and one you'll have to decide upon yourself depending on how sugar alcohols affect you personally.

DiabetiSweet is also available in a brown sugar version that tastes just like the real thing. I haven't been able to find it locally so I mail order it instead. Even though DiabetiSweet's high cost limits its uses, under certain circumstances it can go where no artificial sweetener has gone before making it handy to keep on the pantry shelf.

Saccharin: People have been using saccharin for well over 100 years. It was one of the very first artificial sweeteners ever discovered way back in 1879. Saccharin used to taste really bad. It doesn't anymore. Modern saccharin has barely any detectable aftertaste. Two common brand names are Sweet'N Low and Sugar Twin. Sweet'N Low is the concentrated form of saccharin. Follow the instructions on the package for equivalent amounts of sugar. Sugar Twin is made to measure like sugar which can come in pretty handy with certain recipes. Both Sweet'N Low and Sugar Twin are available in brown sugar flavors.

Saccharin is heat stable, although heating it will sometimes bring out a bitter aftertaste. This is usually overcome with strong flavors in the cooked product like extra flavoring extract, citrus peel, or spices. Sometimes adding a packet of another sweetener will reduce the bitterness. Saccharin is calorie and carbohydrate free. It is also very *cheap*. Having stood the test of time, many people use it without reservation.

Sucralose: Also known by the brand name Splenda, sucralose was discovered in 1976, and has been available in the United States since 1998. It is derived from sugar but has undergone a chemical process so that our bodies do not recognize it as sugar. It's heat stable and tastes exactly like sugar even after it has been cooked. This means you can bake with it, boil with it, broil, simmer,





roast and braise with it, and it still tastes like sugar. It is available in small packets, boxes and large bags equivalent to 5 lbs of sugar. In early 2006 sucralose became available in store-brands which has driven the cost down significantly. Granulated sucralose is designed to measure like sugar, so 1-cup is equal in sweetness to 1 cup of sugar. The packets are each equal to 2 teaspoons of sugar. Sucralose does not add the same bulk to recipes that sugar does. This means that it doesn't make the fluffiest cakes, but it does make superb cheese cakes, which only need it's sweetness, not it's bulk.

To achieve a brown sugar flavor with sucralose add a small amount of black strap or regular molasses to the batter or food during preparation. When necessary it can be used in conjunction with DiabetiSweet in baking to achieve better results, especially in cakes. Sucralose is more expensive than some sweeteners but as more and more store-brands become available the price will inevitably continue to drop. Many people find it's quality to be well worth any added expense.

Equal Sugar Lite and Splenda Sugar Blend: These are hybrids that combine sugar with artificial sweeteners. Equal Sugar Lite is used measure for measure to replace sugar in baking. Use 1-cup of Equal Sugar Lite to replace 1-cup of sugar. Splenda Sugar Blend is used in half the quantity of the sugar called for in a recipe. Use 1/2-cup of Splenda Sugar Blend to replace 1-cup of sugar. I have not used either of these products. Despite the pretty pictures on their package labels and expensive marketing campaigns they still contain sugar and as such have no place in a lowcarb diet. For the most part these products seem like marketing gimmicks to me, designed to profit the companies more than the consumer.

Sugar Alcohols: Sometimes called polyols, the most common types of sugar alcohols are Sorbitol, Maltitol, Xylitol, and Isomalt. Polyols are neither sugar nor alcohol, but their chemical structure is similar to both. While sugar alcohols do occur naturally in some foods, specifically fruits and vegetables, or in the case of xylitol, birch trees, the polyols we buy at the store are usually derived from sucrose, glucose and other starches.

The good news about sugar alcohols is that they don't raise our insulin levels much at all. They are digested slowly so our insulin feels no frenzied need to





store it as fat. Our bodies only digest about half the carbohydrate content in polyols, so in that sense they are reduced in carbohydrate. Sugar alcohols taste very good, almost exactly like sugar except for a pleasant cooling sensation on the tongue when eat them. This sensation is subtle so not everyone notices it. Since polyols are similar to sugar in chemical structure they perform very nicely in baking, candy making and caramelizing. DiabetiSweet, already mentioned, is made with the sugar alcohol Isomalt, which is what gives it so much success in baking.

The bad news about sugar alcohols is that if you eat too much of them you will get uncomfortable gas and the bad poops. For anyone who's ever had a baby explode out of their diaper there is no need to go into detail over what the bad poops are, so in kindness I will just leave it to your imagination. Some people are affected more acutely by this phenomenon than others. Personally, I don't have much trouble with sugar alcohols, so I don't mind indulging every now and then. In my experience people who get a lot of gas from dried beans also have trouble with sugar alcohols. Dried beans don't bother me much either, but both beans and polyols are hard on my husband, so he has to limit his intake.

Another problem with sugar alcohols is that no one is really sure how to count the carbohydrates. Some people say that because they are digested slowly and since some of the carbohydrates aren't digested at all (hence the intestinal problems) that we don't need to count any of the carbohydrates towards our daily totals. Other people say this is a bunch of hogwash and that the fastest way to throw them out of ketosis is to eat something sweetened with polyols.

On package labels sugar alcohols are listed separately. Some manufacturers subtract the grams of sugar alcohols from the total carbohydrate to come up with a low Net Carb Count. To me this seems a little sneaky. The American Dietetic Association recommends that those of us on a diabetic or carb-controlled diet "count half of the grams of sugar alcohol as carbohydrates since half of the sugar alcohol on average is digested."⁶ This seems the best compromise to me. If a product contains 13 grams of sugar alcohols per serving, then 6.5 grams should be added to your daily totals.

⁶ Powers M. *American Dietetic Association Guide to Eating Right When You Have Diabetes*. (Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons 2003) 130,139





Stevia: All natural and derived from an herb native to Paraguay, stevia has been around for hundreds, if not thousands of years. It has been safely consumed by pregnant women, nursing women, children, old people, sick people, well people and folks in pretty much all walks of life. In the United States stevia is only allowed to be sold as an herbal supplement. Due to a tangled snarl of red tape, greed and I suspect, lack of sufficient bribery, stevia can not be used as a food additive which means manufacturers can't add it to prepared food or packaged mixes. If you use stevia as your primary sweetener then you must do most of your cooking from scratch because it can't be included in commercially available food products.

It used to be that stevia could only be found in health food or vitamin stores. With it's increasing popularity it's now available in most well stocked super markets. I even saw it on the shelf at Walmart the other day, in the baking aisle with the artificial sweeteners. Stevia is most commonly available in 3 forms: packets, a concentrated powder, and a concentrated liquid. The packets are equal to 2-teaspoons of sugar while the other products vary from brand to brand and have their sugar equivalences printed on their labels. The brand name with which I am most familiar is Stevia Plus which has a bit of inulin fiber added to it for reasons I never understood.

For folks who prefer to use only natural sweeteners, stevia is your best bet. It can be substituted for other sweeteners, including sucralose, by calculating the equivalents using the information on the label. A calculator might come in handy. One packet of stevia can be used to replace one packet of any artificial sweetener, so that substitution is easy enough. Since granulated sucralose is equal in sweetness to the same amount of sugar it should be relatively easy to discern the amount of stevia you would need to replace it. Some cooks use a little less stevia than other lowcarb sweeteners because it seems to have more sweetening power. Like many things in life, it will take some trial and error to figure out what works best for your brand and what tastes best to your tongue.





THE FOOD



INTRODUCTION

Cost is a significant factor to this program. I am on a limited budget as are most of my readers. For this reason I include moderate to low cost foods, but do not include exotic or expensive items. Different areas of the United States and the world supply different foods in abundance. The best way to keep your costs down is to determine which foods are least expensive in your area and resolve to make liberal use of them. This one step will go a long way to keeping your costs down to a manageable level. Since there is no way for me to know which foods are least expensive to you, I have listed the ones that I am able to find at a moderate or low cost. You may not be able to find all of the items I am able to find, but on the other hand, there will be foods available to you that are not available to me. I offer these lists to help you get a handle on what you should be eating. You must do your own leg work to determine the best bargains in your area.

UNLIMITED FOODS

These foods are generally free of carbohydrates or have so few that it's almost unnecessary to count them. Some processed foods have sneaky carbohydrate levels that are at times quite surprising. Be sure to read package labels to ascertain the carb content of all packaged foods before buying them. It's easy to assume that hot dogs or baloney don't have any carbohydrates because they are meat. This would be foolish because both contain fillers and sweeteners which can make a seemingly innocent food have as many as 5 or more carbs per serving. Low-Fat and Fat-Free processed foods are often the worst offenders. Wherever you see these terms you can almost always assume that the fat which was removed has been replaced with carbohydrates instead.



During the Genesis stage of your program it's best to concentrate on these foods, which are mostly made up of protein, and the vegetables listed on page 25. Most hard cheeses contain a minute quantity of carbohydrates so while they shouldn't be a target of overindulgence, they may be consumed in moderate quantities to add variety to your meals.

PROTEIN

Beef

Ground Beef	Corned Beef	Beef Steaks
Beef Roasts	Stew Meat	Oxtails
Liver	Beef Bacon	Dried Beef
Beef Sausage	Beef Lunch Meat & Hot Dogs (check the label)	Veal

Pork

Pork Chops & Cutlets	Pork Picnic Roasts	Smoked Picnic Hams
Smoked Ham	Canned Ham (check the label)	Baked Ham
Smoked Sausage & Kielbasa (check the label)	Sausage Patties & Links (check the label)	Bulk Sausage (check the label)
Bacon (check the label)	Canadian Bacon (check the label)	Italian Sausage

Poultry

Whole Chickens	Chicken Leg Quarters	Chicken Thighs
Chicken Breasts	Chicken Drumsticks	Chicken Wings
Ground Chicken	Ducks, wild or domestic	Cornish Hens
Whole Turkeys	Turkey Breasts	Turkey Pieces
Ground Turkey	Turkey Sausage	Turkey Ham (check the label)
Turkey Bacon (check the label)	Smoked Turkey (check the label)	Turkey Lunch Meat (check the label)





PROTEIN

Lamb

Lamb Chops

Leg of Lamb

Ground Lamb

Fish

Tilapia

Trout

Flounder

Pollack

Ocean Perch

Cod

Whiting

Salmon

Tuna

Sardines

Anchovies

Catfish

Seafood

Crab

Shrimp

Clams

Oysters

Scallops

Mussels

Eggs & Cheese

Eggs

Egg Whites

Egg Yolks

Dried Eggs/Egg Whites

Cheddar

Mozzarella

Colby/Jack

Swiss

Parmesan

Provolone

American

Cream Cheese

Havarti

Feta

Blue or Roquefort

OTHER FOODS

Fats

Butter

Olive Oil

Coconut Oil

Safflower Oil

Peanut Oil

Sesame Oil

Bacon Grease

Chicken Fat

Lard

Specialty Vegetable & Nut
Oils as desired

Canola Oil, if desired

Non-Hydrogenated, Trans-Fat
Free Shortening





OTHER FOODS

Beverages

Water, lots	Diet Soda Pop	Iced Tea
Unsweetened Fruit Flavored Drink Mix like Kool-Aid, store brands are cheaper	Crystal Light type Drink Mix, store brands are cheaper	Sugar Free Orange Breakfast Drink, like Tang, store brands are cheaper
Coffee, Instant or Ground	Black Tea	Herbal Tea

Condiments

Salt & Pepper	True Lemon Packets	True Lime Packets
Herbs	Spices	Extracts & Flavorings
Soy Sauce	Hot Sauce	Mustard
Mayonnaise	Horseradish	Worcestershire Sauce
Apple Cider Vinegar	Wine Vinegar	Plain White Vinegar

Desserts & Snacks

Fruit Flavored Sugar-Free Gelatin	Artificial Sweeteners	DaVinci Sugar-Free Coffee Flavoring Syrups
Stevia	Pork Rinds	

FOODS WITH LOW CARBOHYDRATES APPROPRIATE FOR ALL STAGES

These items are not unlimited, but their carbohydrate content is low, so even though you must count them, they will be easy to accommodate on your daily menus. Vegetables are especially important to focus on during the Genesis Stage of your program. At this Stage it's best to stick with vegetables as much as possible and limit your forays into the other food groups. For salads you'll need salad dressings and a few sugar-free pickles can add a lot of depth to a bun-less burger or tuna salad, but vegetables should make up the bulk of your car-





bohydrate intake during the Genesis Stage. After you enter ketosis and find your Exodus Carb Level then it's time to look at the other foods in this category and explore the variety to the hilt.

LOW-STARCH VEGETABLES

Alfalfa Sprouts	Artichoke Hearts	Asparagus
Avocado	Bamboo Shoots	Broccoli
Brussels Sprouts	Cabbage	Cauliflower
Celery	Chard	Collards
Cucumbers	Dandelion Greens/Roots	Eggplant
Green Beans	Green Onions	Green Peppers
Kale	Lettuce, all kinds	Mushrooms
Mustard Greens	Okra	Olives
Onions	Parsley	Peppers
Pumpkin	Radishes	Roasted Red Peppers
Rutabaga	Sauerkraut	Snow Peas
Spaghetti Sauce, no-sugar	Spaghetti Squash	Spinach
Sugar Snap Peas	Summer Squash	Tomatoes
Tomato Paste	Tomato Sauce	Turnips
Water Chestnuts	Yellow Squash	Zucchini

Frozen Blends

California Style	Italian Style	Oriental Style
Pepper & Onion Blend	Zucchini Blend	Stir-Fry Blend





PROTEIN

Soft Cheeses

Cottage Cheese

Ricotta Cheese

Brie

Soy

Yellow Soybeans

Black Soybeans

Soybean Flour

Soya Powder

Soy Grits

Soy Granules

Soy Protein Isolate

Textured Soy Protein

Tofu

Roasted Soy Nuts

Soy Nut Butter (check the label)

Unsweetened Soymilk

Westbrae Slender Soy Chocolate or Vanilla Soymilk

Soy Yogurt, unsweetened, homemade or store-bought

Tempeh

Wheat & Whey

Whey Protein Powder

Vital Wheat Gluten

Wheat Protein Isolate

Seitan or Wheat Meat

Nuts & Seeds

Almonds

Almond Butter

Almond Flour or Meal

Cashews

Cashew Butter

Unsweetened Coconut

Coconut Milk, canned

Flax Seeds

Ground Flax Seeds

Hazelnuts

Macadamian Nuts

Peanuts

Peanut Butter (check the label)

Pecans

Sesame Seeds

Sesame Seed Butter, Tahini

Sunflower Seeds

Walnuts

DAIRY

Heavy Cream

Sour Cream

Half & Half Cream

Whole Milk Buttermilk

Whole Milk Yogurt

Homemade Yogurt made with Half & Half cream





STARCHES & BRANS

Wheat Bran

Corn Bran

Low Carb Bread

Wheat Germ

Rice Bran

Fiber Rye Crisp Bread

Oat Bran

Low Carb Tortillas

Dreamfields Pasta

CONDIMENTS

Sugar-Free Barbecue Sauce
Salsa

Ranch Dressing

Artificially Sweetened Maple
Flavored Pancake Syrup

Green Olives

Sugar-Free Ketchup

Salad Dressings with 1 Carb
or less per tablespoon

Blue Cheese Dressing

Artificially Sweetened Choco-
late Syrup

Black Olives

Sugar-Free Teriyaki Sauce

Caesar Dressing

Italian Dressing

Artificially Sweetened Jam or
Jelly

Sugar Free Pickles & Relish

BAKING

Baking Powder

Unflavored Gelatin

Guar Gum

Black Strap Molasses, in very
small quantities

Brown Sugar Twin

Vanilla Extract

Orange Extract

Baking Soda

Unsweetened Cocoa

Xanthan Gum

Artificial Honey made from
Maltitol

Sucralose or Splenda

Almond Extract

Peppermint Extract

Yeast

Unsweetened Baking Choco-
late

Sugar Free Pudding Mix

DiabetiSweet sweetener

Stevia Sweetener

Lemon Extract

Maple Extract





ADDING FRUITS TO THE MIX EXODUS STAGE & THE PROMISED LAND

Fruits are pretty high in carbohydrates. Most aren't included in the Genesis Stage of this program because they usually prevent us from reaching ketosis. Once you are in ketosis and have determined your Exodus Carb Level, you may add fruits to your program if you do so judiciously. Keep the servings small. For most fruits 1/3-cup is the largest a serving should be. A few fruits like cranberries, raspberries, strawberries and rhubarb may be increased to 1/2-cup without much problem. Look up the carb counts of specific fruits in your book of nutritional values and take note of your favorites. When planning menus it's usually possible to add fruit to lunch or breakfast. Accommodate your fruit choices by adapting the carb count of your remaining meals as needed. Allow your daily carb limit and the carb count of the fruits you choose to guide you choices and menu plans.

Dried fruits are a concentrated source of carbohydrates. They are allowed in the Exodus stage if you count the carbs towards your daily total and keep the servings very small. For instance, 1-tablespoon of raisins has nearly 7 grams of carbohydrates. As you can see, they add up quickly.

Canned fruit is allowable as long as the fruit is packed in water or fruit juice. There should be no added sugar. Recently canned fruits have become available that are packed in water and sweetened with Splenda. They taste good, are inexpensive in store-brands and at my house have quickly become a staple product. While they have fewer carbohydrates than juice-packed fruit, they are still fruits and should be consumed in moderation.

A great way to make a little bit of fruit go a long way is to add it to sugar-free fruit gelatin. A cup of chopped canned fruit added to lemon gelatin and jelled in four individual serving cups provides only about 5 carbs per serving, and really satisfies the longings for fruit that low-carbers get from time to time. It makes a welcome addition to breakfast or if jelled in resealable containers can be a refreshing part of a packed lunch.





Frozen Fruits are widely available these days and make it possible to afford good quality strawberries even in the dead of winter. As always, read the label and only buy products without added sugar. Frozen raspberries are particularly handy to have on hand because they are quite low in carbohydrates and make an elegant dessert when served with heavy cream. Other frozen goodies are large bags of unsweetened strawberries, blue berries and when you can find it, frozen peaches. Frozen unsweetened pineapple is a good alternative to fresh pineapple. It tastes almost identical and since you only take out the amount you need, there is no waste. When you're only eating 1/3-cup at a time, reducing leftovers becomes a primary concern.

There are a few fruits that can be included at the Genesis Stage. These include lemons, limes, rhubarb, unsweetened cranberries and tomatoes. We usually think of tomatoes as vegetables, but on a lowcarb program they quickly finds their fruit status reclaimed and reinvented. Fresh tomatoes, thickly sliced and sweetened with a little sucralose are divine with breakfast or lunch as a stand-in for other fruit. I prefer them served alongside fried eggs, soy grits and country style ham. Mmm, Mmm, a meal made in hillbilly heaven.

Another fruit product that can be used during the Genesis Stage is the zest or peel from citrus fruit. It can be found dried in the spice section of most grocery stores and adds a burst of fruit flavor without adding any carbohydrates. Fresh zest tastes better, so if you have children to eat the fruit, you can use the peel to your heart's content.

Once you enter the Promised Land you'll be able to consume fruit more often and in larger portions. Until then, consider it a special treat and savor every juicy bite.

FRUITS

Apples	Unsweetened Applesauce	Sugar Free Apple Pie Filling
Apricots	Blackberries	Blueberries
Cantaloupe	Cherries	Sugar Free Cherry Pie Filling
Cranberries	Canned Fruit Cocktail, water or juice packed	Grapes





FRUITS

Grapefruit	Honeydew Melon	Kiwi
Lemon	Lemon Juice	Lime
Lime Juice	Mango	Nectarine
Orange	Papaya	Peach
Canned Peaches, water or juice packed	Pears	Canned Pears, water or juice packed
Fresh Pineapple	Canned Pineapple, juice or water packed	Plums
Raspberries	Rhubarb	Strawberries
Tangerines	Canned Tropical Fruit, juice or water pack	Watermelon
Sugar Free Fruit Juice in moderation	Frozen Fruit Juice Concentrate in moderation	Dried Fruits in moderation

FOODS WITH MODERATE LEVELS OF CARBOHYDRATES, APPROPRIATE FOR THE PROMISED LAND

Dried Beans and Whole grains are often a part of moderate or “smart” carb diets. Some people are able to include them daily with little effect to their weight or metabolism. We aren't that lucky. Every carb, after subtracting the fiber, must be counted towards our daily totals. Going over our Promised Land Carb Level, even if it's with fresh fruits, legumes or whole grains, is not an option. While the carbohydrates derived from these foods are healthy choices, they are still limited on our maintenance plan.

GRAINS

Whole Wheat Berries	Whole Wheat Flour	Whole Rye Flour
Oat Flour	Buckwheat Flour	Whole Grain Cornmeal
Whole Grain Grits	Popcorn	Whole Wheat Pasta
Rolled Oats or Oatmeal	Oat Groats	Brown Rice
Whole Wheat Bread & Rolls	Whole Grain Rye Bread	Whole Grain Tortillas





GRAINS

Whole Wheat Crackers

Barley

Whole Wheat English
Muffins

Bulgur

Spelt

Reduced-Carb English
Muffins

Wheateena Hot Cereal

Wild Rice

Ezekiel Bread, Tortillas, Pita,
Pasta, etc.

DRIED BEANS

Black Beans

Kidney Beans

Great Northern Beans

Black Eyed Peas

Chick Peas

Pinto Beans

Split Peas

Channa Dahl

Lima Beans

Navy Beans

Lentils

Canned Beans with No
Added Sugar

STARCHY VEGETABLES

Beets

Lima Beans

Corn

Sweet Potatoes

Classic Mixed Vegetables

Peas

Winter Squash

DAIRY

Fresh Whole Milk

Powdered Whole Milk

Fresh Skim Milk

Powdered Nonfat Milk

Reduced Fat Cheeses

Low Fat Yogurt





NATURAL SWEETENERS, THEIR USE & ABUSE

If you have a relatively high Promised Land Carb Level then you may have room for concentrated sources of carbohydrates like those found in honey or molasses. While it's probably best to avoid these foods when possible, it's also pleasant to enjoy real cookies made with grain sweetened chocolate chips, whole wheat pastry flour and honey. When you need to indulge your dark side, natural sweeteners are your best choice. We cannot eat processed white sugar, powdered sugar, brown sugar or corn syrup for the rest of our lives, but we can, if we are *extremely careful*, have a brownie or two sweetened with an all natural sweetener. That doesn't mean we can eat brownies every day, and it doesn't mean we can go nuts with baking. What it does mean is that a few times a year when we feel it's appropriate, there is probably room in our maintenance plan for a treat.

Fructose is included here because it's the sugar that is naturally found in fruits. Our bodies digest it slowly when compared to white sugar, and it doesn't send our insulin soaring the way some sweeteners will. In the Sugar Busters books the authors recommend limited use of fructose on their diet⁷. Diabetics have been using it for decades because it's so gentle on our insulin levels.

The other sweeteners are natural foods that God created Himself, or that are minimally processed from whole foods. As natural foods, these sweeteners do not always cause the cravings that processed sweeteners do. Not all of us can eat these foods though, so we must each honestly evaluate our responses to natural sweeteners to see if they can ever be part of our lives again. If honey gives you the same old cravings for "More, more, more . . ." then it obviously cannot be a part of your maintenance plan.

My advice is to err on the side of caution. On a practical level it may not always be possible to avoid these items, but on a personal level, trying to do so will always be worth the effort. Over indulging in natural sweeteners will make us gain weight. There's no getting around that fact, so it's best to face up to it sooner rather than later. If you find natural sweeteners overly tempting, then it's best to avoid them all together. When you think about it, a lifetime of stevia or su-

⁷ Steward, Leighton H.; Bethea, Morrison C.; Andrews, Sam S.; Balart, Luis A. *The New Sugar Busters!* (New York, NY: Ballantine Books, 2003) 194-195





cralose (Splenda) really isn't all that bad. With the artificial honeys on the market these days, made from maltitol, you can even sweeten your tea with the good honest flavor of honey, and still maintain a sugar-free lifestyle.

NATURAL SWEETENERS

Honey

Pure Maple Syrup

Barley Malt

Brown Rice Syrup

Sucanat

Rapadura

Unsulphured Molasses

Black Strap Molasses

Fructose

CONCLUSION

Lowcarb diets have been controversial since the 1960's. The reason they're still around is because they work where mainstream diets fail. I said in the beginning of this document, I'm the first to admit that lowcarb isn't for everyone, and I stand by my statement. For those of us who have tried other programs again and again only to fail repeatedly, lowcarb diets may be the answer. When we've spent what seems like a lifetime battling our weight, we sometimes begin to wonder "What's wrong with me? Why can't I lose weight like 'normal' people? I must be doing something wrong. I must not have enough willpower. I must be morally deficient because nothing I try works. Good Grief! *Why can't I lose any weight?*" It's so easy to go down that path. We don't have to go there though. There is a safe, doctor approved method of weight loss that *will* work for even us. In this program we give up all the old useless diets like low-fat, low-calorie and the cabbage soup diet and we embrace the lowcarb lifestyle like a drowning woman clutches a rope. It really does work.

I hope that I've explained the process clearly and that other people are able to find the relief and satisfaction that I have. I wish you success on your journey.

--Miss Maggie, 2006

Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God. 1Corinthians 10:31





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