

What is a Low Fat Diet?

A low fat diet, according to its biggest proponent, the American Heart Association, follows these rules for a 2000 calorie/day diet:

- 6-8 servings of grains, with at least half from whole grains
- 4-5 servings of raw or cooked vegetables
- 4-5 servings of fruit
- 2-3 servings of non-fat or low-fat dairy products
- 6 ounces of lean protein
- 2 servings of fat and oils
- 2-3 servings of nuts, seeds or legumes per week
- 5 servings of sweets/sugar per week

If you analyze this diet for carbohydrate, protein and fat grams and then divide by calories, it works out to about:

- 68% carbohydrate
- 12% protein
- 20% fat

By any standard, low fat diets are also very high carbohydrate diets, and as such, they have a major impact on blood sugar and insulin metabolism.

The Scientific Evidence

Shockingly, the low fat diet our nutritional experts recommend has no scientific evidence to back it up. The whole point of a low fat diet is to lower cholesterol, but no evidence exists to link the two factors.

[But the Federal Government and just about all doctors and nutritionists will tell you that eating a diet low in fat, especially saturated fat, will lower your risk of death from coronary heart disease.](#)

Researchers call this "low fat-low cholesterol-low heart disease risk" idea the "lipid hypothesis".

Although most "official" healthy eating guides endorse it, **no randomized research study has ever been able to link a low fat diet and lower cholesterol to a lower risk of coronary heart disease.**

Yet our entire health care system's focus, the American government's nutritional and health advice, and the healthy eating advice from anyone who buys into the lipid hypothesis is directed toward the consumption of a low fat diet and the achievement of low cholesterol levels.

Consider all the energy, time and money that drug companies, the USDA, the American Heart Association, the National Institutes of Health, the American Dietetic Association, the CSPI, health care workers and your own doctor put into the goal of convincing you to eat low fat so that you can lower your cholesterol levels as much as possible. And if that doesn't work, they'll prescribe dangerous drugs like statins to force your cholesterol levels down.

Over the past 40 years, the message to avoid saturated fat and lower blood cholesterol has been repeated so many times, it has become **deeply embedded in the American psyche.**

The majority of us believe that eating saturated fat causes atherosclerosis and heart disease, and no alternative message, no matter how much evidence is behind it, can dislodge that belief. To those who believe in the mythical lipid hypothesis, healthy eating is synonymous with a low fat, low cholesterol diet.

Our fanaticism in the pursuit of the lipid hypothesis has **blinded us to the truth that after almost 30 years of following this low fat message, the mortality rates from coronary heart disease, cancer and diabetes are rising in America**, not declining as they should be if the lipid hypothesis were true.

One quote says it all:

"The diet-heart hypothesis has been repeatedly shown to be wrong, and yet, for complicated reasons of pride, profit and prejudice, the hypothesis continues to be exploited by scientists, fund-raising enterprises, food companies and even governmental agencies. The public is being deceived by the greatest health scam of the century." --
George Mann, ScD, MD, Former Co-Director, The Framingham Study

The Facts

- A recent meta-analysis study published in the American Journal of Clinical Nutrition could find no correlation between saturated fat consumption and heart disease.
- The low fat diet hypothesis was not based on scientific evidence, but on misinterpreted data and the personal agendas of a few influential scientists.
- Billions of our tax dollars have been spent on research in an effort to establish a link between heart disease, saturated fat and cholesterol. No direct link between them has ever been found.
- The low fat diet recommended by nutrition experts is essentially a high carbohydrate diet, and there are now huge volumes of evidence which reveal that high carbohydrate diets are directly related to elevated insulin levels and coronary heart disease.

Still, the US government, most health professionals, clinical nutritionists, the mainstream media, and the average person on the street will insist that eating red meat, butter and eggs will kill you, while a low fat diet will extend your life. It just ain't so.

The French, Spanish and East African Paradox

Here's another low fat diet fact that our nutritional experts have ignored. In France and Spain, the levels of saturated fat intake are much higher than they are in the US, yet the French and Spanish have much lower rates of death from cardiovascular disease.

The French paradox refers to the fact that the French eat four times more butter, 60 percent more cheese and nearly three times more pork than Americans.

Although the French eat only slightly more total fat, they eat much more saturated fat because Americans consume more vegetable oil, with most of that being soybean oil.

However, according to data from the British Heart foundation, in 1999, rates of death from coronary heart disease among males aged 35–74 years was 115 per 100,000 people in the US, but only 83 per 100,000 in France.

The Spanish Paradox was brought to light in Volume 61 of the American Journal of Clinical Nutrition.

This 1995 study reviewed and compared trends in coronary heart disease (CHD) and stroke mortality in Spain from 1966 to 1990. Changes in food consumption at national and regional levels were also reviewed.

The researchers found that since 1976, there has been a decrease in cardiovascular disease (CVD) deaths in both men and women in Spain. During the same period that coronary heart disease and stroke death rates fell, the national intake of meat, dairy products, fish, and fruit increased in Spain, and the intake of olive oil, sugar, and carbohydrates decreased. Hmmm, how could that be if saturated fat causes heart disease? Hence the Spanish paradox.

The East African paradox refers to the Masai tribes in Kenya, Africa.

Their diets consist of full fat milk and cream, large amounts of beef, and blood from their cattle during dry season. **The Masai men consume almost a pound of saturated fat on a daily basis.**

When Western doctors examined the Masai, they found that their blood cholesterol levels were extremely low, and autopsies of deceased Masai found almost no evidence of arterial plaques.

These findings are in direct contradiction to our belief that eating saturated fat causes high cholesterol levels which results in hardening of the arteries. They contradict the "a low fat diet is best" advice.

Bottom Line

The low fat diet endorsed by the AHA and other nutritional experts has completely failed as a health enhancing advice.

In Vol 43, No. 5, 2004, the Journal of the American College of Cardiology (JACC) published a paper by Sylvan Lee Weinberg, MD, MACC. Dr. Weinberg was a past president of the ACC. The paper was titled: The Diet-Heart Hypothesis: A Critique. The abstract reads as follows:

The low-fat "diet-heart hypothesis" has been controversial for nearly 100 years. The low-fat-high-carbohydrate diet, promulgated vigorously by the National Cholesterol Education Program, National Institutes of Health, and American Heart Association since the Lipid Research Clinics-Primary Prevention Program in 1984, and earlier by the U.S. Department of Agriculture food pyramid, may well have played an unintended role in the current epidemics of obesity, lipid abnormalities, type II diabetes, and metabolic syndromes.

This diet can no longer be defended by appeal to the authority of prestigious medical organizations or by rejecting clinical experience and a growing medical literature suggesting that the much-maligned low-carbohydrate-high-protein diet may have a salutary effect on the epidemics in question. (J Am Coll Cardiol 2004;43:731-3)

The United States population has followed the low fat diet advice for almost 30 years, and the result has NOT been better health.

In fact, this advice has potentially compromised the health of those Americans who followed it.

Current research is revealing that in fact, a low fat diet, which is naturally high in carbohydrates, increases the risk of heart disease.

The increased consumption of carbohydrates results in increased levels of blood glucose, blood insulin and triglycerides. These three factors are strongly associated with coronary heart disease.

Dr. Ron Rosedale, an authority on diabetes and insulin discusses this in an article from DiabetesHealth.com:

"High insulin is a major contributor to cardiovascular disease. It results in the inability to properly store magnesium, causing blood vessels to constrict, elevated blood pressure, and coronary arterial spasm, all of which can result in a heart attack. Also, with low magnesium you can't properly metabolize important fatty acids such as EPA and DHA, which are vital to your heart and health in general.

Excess insulin causes retention of sodium, fluid retention, elevated blood pressure and congestive heart failure. Studies have shown that if you drip insulin into the artery of an animal, the artery will become blocked with plaque. Heart attacks are much more likely to happen after a high carbohydrate meal than after a high fat meal. The immediate effect of the rise in blood sugar after a high-carb meal is to raise insulin and leptin; that, in turn, triggers a "stress response" that can cause arterial spasm, constriction of the arteries, irregular heartbeat and even sudden death."

Given the seriousness of the health effects of elevated blood glucose and insulin levels, a low fat, high carbohydrate diet is not the best choice for long term health.

Yet this is the diet our national experts want you to follow.

Closing Thoughts

In contrast to the current "low fat is healthy" dogma promoted by the American Heart Association, the American Diabetes Association and the National Institutes of Health, it is the high carbohydrate consumption and the associated elevations of blood sugar, blood insulin and inflammation that are at the root of our health issues today.

American rates of obesity, and diabetes have risen in direct relationship to our consumption of a high carbohydrate, low fat diet.

It's mind boggling to me that doctors, dietitians and other nutrition experts use the argument that low carb diets have not been "tested" enough to make a positive determination about their health effects and safety.

How ironic - the low FAT diet was NEVER tested in any controlled, scientific study before it was sold as gospel to the whole of the US citizenry, yet somehow to these "experts" the lack of testing isn't a problem because as they have been brainwashed to believe, the low fat diet is safe and healthy.

And what has been the national health result of this "eat low fat" advice? In the time period between 1971-2000, as the percentage of calories consumed from saturated fat decreased from 13.5% to 10.9% and carbohydrate consumption increased significantly:

- The rates of obesity in the US increased by 16%.
- The rates of diabetes mortality increased 45%, with most of the increase happening in the years since 1987.

The USDA's Food Pyramid with its 11 servings of grain based foods came out in 1984. Easily understandable, it made the message to eat more carbs and less fat very easy for everyone to understand.

The correlation between our obesity and diabetes rates and a high carb diet are obvious, and scientific research is confirming it with each study that looks at that correlation.