

The Mechanics of Low Carb Diets

By now the term low carb is practically a household term synonymous with losing weight and getting in shape. This diet seems to be successful and many people rave about it. The idea seems simple enough: eat lower carbs and lose weight. But it's worthwhile to examine the mechanics of low carb dieting and what makes them effective.

For most people, removing carbohydrates from your diet will greatly decrease your overall caloric intake. Simply by decreasing your calories you are eating less will lose weight as a result. In addition to eating fewer overall calories, by abstaining from all of the starchy and sugary carbs that you would normally eat, your body will now have to break down glycogen in the liver and muscles to free glucose for use as fuel. Glycogen the way glucose is stored in the muscles and liver. This glycogen is made up primarily of water. During the process of converting it to glucose, water is released so the initial weight loss is almost entirely from water but this can amount to a substantial change in weight.

In the next two weeks that an individual is on a low-carb diet they will notice that the extreme initial weight loss experienced slows after the initial effects of water being released slows down. It is at this time that your body begins to burn fat instead of releasing water. This will be the case as long as your carbohydrate intake remains below 50 or 60 grams daily. From this point, for the duration of your diet, the body is burning fat as its fuel. When the body burns fat for fuel, ketones are produced as a by product. Ketones are released from the body in the urine, through the kidneys. An elevated ketone level in the kidneys suppresses your appetite, aiding in further weight loss. It is very important to drink increased amounts of water during this phase of your low carb diet in order to prevent dehydration.

Low carb dieting is not for everyone. Not everyone's body can withstand this eating plan. How long you remain on a low carb diet is a personal choice. As with any new diet or sudden change in eating habits, before beginning, it is recommended that you consult a doctor or a physician.