

KetoGenius



The Jump-Start Guide
Exclusively for Carb Manager Premium Members

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Congratulations on taking an important step for your health. Adopting a low-carb diet isn't just about weight loss, it is also about achieving and maintaining optimal health and preventing future disease and degeneration. A low-carb diet done the right way can be the key to truly feeling your best, each and every day.

This guide aims to get you started with a jump-start guide that will teach you the ins and outs of how to plan your low-carb diet, and help you to understand the "why" behind it. While eating a low-carb diet has become somewhat trendy these days, there are many approaches you could take, and choosing the safest and healthiest one is key. Here, we will provide you with the research behind why a low-carb diet model is the best approach for so many people, and how to properly and easily execute it.

What is a Low-Carb Diet, Exactly?

On the surface, a low-carb diet is pretty self explanatory. A diet that is low in carbohydrates. However, there are many ways to put into practice this sort of diet, and the way you choose will depend on your goals, lifestyle, activity level, body composition, gender, age and nutritional needs. What constitutes a low-carb diet is a bit tricky, as what is low-carb for one person might not be for the next, but all have been shown to be the most effective way to lose weight (more on this later), along with providing a myriad of other benefits.

What is a Carbohydrate?

Before moving into the bulk of this eBook, let's make sure we have a solid understanding of what a carbohydrate is, and the difference between different types of carbs.

There are 3 macronutrients: protein, fat and carbohydrates. Out of the three, fat is the slowest burning macronutrient (meaning it takes the longest to be broken down by the body), followed by protein and then carbs. Carbohydrates are naturally occurring in foods and include sugars, starches and fiber. They are most found in vegetables, fruits, grains and processed foods such as breads, pastas and baked goods.

It is important to remember that not all carbohydrates are created equal. Vegetables and (moderate amounts) of fruits are incredibly nutritious, and are almost 100% carbohydrate. These are known as **complex carbohydrates**. Whole grains are also complex carbohydrates, but offer less nutritional value than vegetables and fruits. **Simple carbohydrates** are refined carbs that have had their fiber, vitamins and minerals largely stripped through processing. Simple carbs are the ones widely linked to a variety of diseases such as type 2 diabetes, obesity and heart disease.

Let's take a look at the most common ways of going about the low-carb diet:

100-150 grams of carbs

This is certainly the most moderate way of adopting the low-carb diet, and could be a good place to start. Simply omitting refined grains and sugar will largely get you to this point, and will go a long way in supporting overall health and helping you to maintain your current weight, and maybe lose a bit. This will generally be best for those who are fairly active and don't need to lose a lot of weight.

With this option, you can still eat pretty much as many vegetables as you'd like, moderate amounts of fruit (about 2 pieces per day), and even some starchy veggies such as sweet potatoes and winter squash. While you can probably make whole grains work on this option, we generally recommend avoiding them.

30-100 grams of carbs

The second option is more restrictive, but will allow you to lose weight more easily and quickly. It still allows for some carbohydrate (especially at the top end of the range), such as most vegetables and 1-2 pieces of fruit per day, but you will have to limit starchy carbohydrates.

Under 30 grams of carbs (Keto)

Eating under 30 grams (some health experts would say under 50), is where the most impressive benefits of the low-carb diet kick in. If you are overweight/obese and want to lose weight safely and quickly, this is your best option (remember, you ease into this). Eating under 30-50 grams of carbs per day will put your body into a state of ketosis, which basically switches your brain's energy source from glucose to ketone bodies. This will usually naturally work to lower your appetite and you will lose weight.

On this low-carb model (also referred to as the keto diet), you can eat meat, fats, low-carbohydrate vegetables, small amounts of low-carb fruits (like berries), and some trace carbohydrates found in foods like nuts, seeds and avocados. Starchy veggies will be prohibited. Another great aspect of this option is that you will end up eating a lot of non-starchy veggies, which supports your health in more ways than just weight loss.

How to Choose

Choosing which option is best for you might take some experimentation, as everybody is biochemically unique. Adjusting to a low-carb diet will likely take some adjustment (mentally and physically), so give it some time before concluding that it's not right for you, or that you

need to up your carb count. It's also not a bad idea to start with a slightly higher count and then work down to the under 50 or 30 carb/day level, as this will allow your body and mind more time to effectively handle this adjustment.

Last but certainly not least, talk with your doctor or a trusted healthcare practitioner (like a qualified Nutritionist or Naturopathic Doctor) before starting a new diet, especially if you have any pre-existing medical conditions.

What are the Benefits of a Low-Carb Diet?

The key to success with a low-carb diet is thinking of it as a lifestyle change, not a temporary diet. In beginning the transition from eating a higher carb diet containing more processed and less nutrient dense foods, your body will slowly but surely become a fat burning machine that loses weight more easily and without the constant battle that comes with “dieting.” Here are some impressive benefits you’ll experience on this plan to stay motivated:

Out with the “Bad” Carbs and in with the “Good” Carbs

In taking on a low-carb diet, many people wonder if all carbs are bad. The answer is a definite “no.” The beauty of a low-carb diet is that you will naturally eliminate the “bad” carbs such as refined flour in the form of bread, pasta and baked goods and all refined sugar. On the flip side, you will likely eat far more “good” carbs such as dark, leafy greens and other non-starchy vegetables, and the starchy foods you do eat will come from nutrient dense sources such as sweet potatoes, winter squashes and fruits.

You Will Lose Weight Quickly, Safely, and Especially Around Your Mid-Section

Multiple studies show that people lose weight much faster and more effectively on a low-carb diet than on a low-fat diet, without the same amount of calorie restriction (aka, you can eat more calories on a low-carb diet and still lose weight than on a low calorie, low fat diet).

[Research](#) shows that dieters following the low-carb model actually lose 2-3 times the amount of weight as compared to low-fat dieters. And, they experience far less hunger.

In the first 1-2 weeks, [studies](#) have found that many people experience rapid weight loss due to the fact that the kidneys shed excess sodium due to lowered insulin levels, leading to a loss of water weight.

Visceral fat is fat that accumulates around the organs, giving us that excess belly pudge (aka, muffin top). Not only does visceral fat make it hard to zip our jeans, but it actually puts us at much [greater risk](#) for heart disease, diabetes and inflammation. A low-carb diet especially works to decrease mid-section fat, so our clothes fit better and we prevent a myriad of serious health conditions.

The Keto Diet Can Reverse Chronic Health Problems

Low-carb diets (especially keto diets) have been shown to both prevent and treat metabolic disorders and neurological conditions. The ketogenic diet has been extensively [studied](#) for its ability to improve and even cure epilepsy in children, and is also being studied for its use in supporting Alzheimer's and Parkinson's diseases.

Low-carb diets are also the [best known](#) diet model for treating metabolic syndrome, which is characterized by high blood pressure and blood sugar levels, high triglycerides, low HDL cholesterol levels and excess abdominal fat. This syndrome is linked to heart disease and diabetes, and can be dramatically improved with a low-carb diet.

“Good” HDL Cholesterol Will Go Up and “Bad” LDL Will Go Down

HDL is often referred to as “good” cholesterol, and LDL as “bad.” This is a slight misnomer, as HDL and LDL actually refer to the lipoproteins that carry cholesterol in the body, and all cholesterol molecules are the same. HDL lipoproteins carry cholesterol molecules from the body to the liver, where it can be excreted or reused, while LDL carries it from the liver to the rest of the body.

High HDL levels are [associated](#) with decreased risk of heart disease, while raised LDL levels are associated with increased risk. Eating plenty of good fat sources (more on what these are, later) is the best way to increase your HDL levels, and the low-carb diet is rich in healthy fats.

Craving and Appetite Control

Nobody sticks to a diet that leaves them hungry, plain and simple. The low carb diet model is the best way of eating to both lose weight and experience a naturally decreased appetite and cravings. Both fat and protein are slower to digest than carbohydrates and work to regulate blood sugar levels and keep us feeling much more satiated than carbohydrates. Once your body adjusts to a low-carb diet, calorie counting will probably become unnecessary.

Getting Started

Before diving in, you'll want to make sure you're prepared before your low-carb diet makeover. This includes stocking your kitchen with the right tools and foods, as well as setting the stage mentally to overcome initial challenges that might occur.

Physical Challenges

As with any dietary change, switching to a low-carb model of eating can take a few days of getting used to. Physically, you might experience symptoms such as a foggy brain, fatigue, increased hunger and cravings and irritability. This is completely normal, and is simply your body adjusting to switching its fuel source from carbs to fat. Some health experts even refer to this as the "low carb flu," but the good news is, it will pass.

During this "induction" period, go easy on yourself. You might cut down your workouts (instead, indulge in restorative yoga, walking and meditation), and you'll certainly want to ask your family or roommates for support. Again, if this period for you is extremely rough, ease into your low-carb diet with several days of 100-150 carbs, and then work your way down.

Mental, Emotional and Social Challenges

Unfortunately, mainstream eating is high-carb, high-sugar and little tolerance for variation. Whether it's because people think you're strange for veering so much from this norm or they are envious that you truly are taking the reins on your health and weight, you might feel a bit mentally, emotionally and socially ostracized at first.

Feel free to share with your friends and family why you are taking on this dietary change, and all of the benefits (maybe they'll even get on board). Being prepared for strange looks or people pushing foods on you that you don't want to eat will make it easier to say no, and stay confident in your choice. After all, you doing your body some incredible favors and there is no reason to be ashamed of that.

Also, see below for how to eat out on the low-carb diet, as that can make eating out much less stressful.

Yes and No Food Lists

Here are some basic “yes” and “no” food lists. See the one of our Premium meal plans for more detail on which foods to eat, but these two lists will set you in the right direction.

FOODS TO INCLUDE

- Meats (preferably grass-fed, organic and pasture raised) including beef, pork, lamb, bison and chicken
- Salmon and other fish – preferably wild-caught
- Eggs
- Fruits
- Vegetables
- Nuts
- Greek yogurt and whole, plain yogurt
- Butter and ghee (grass-fed, if possible)
- Coconut, olive and flax oils
- Avocado
- Dark chocolate – that contains a minimum of 85% cocoa (1 ounce)
- Beverages include coffee, tea or water

FOODS TO AVOID

- Soft drinks/sodas
- Commercial baked goods (cakes, cookies, etc)
- Ice cream
- Candy
- Fruit juices
- Breads and pasta
- Any Processed Food with Trans Fats – hydrogenated or partially hydrogenated oils
- All vegetable oils (canola, soy, grapeseed, corn, safflower)
- Artificial sweeteners
- “Low-Fat” or “Diet” foods

BEST LOW-CARB VEGGIES

- Broccoli
- Cauliflower
- Brussels sprouts
- Kale and Swiss chard
- Cabbage

- Cucumber
- Bell peppers
- Asparagus
- Mushrooms
- Green beans
- Celery
- Spinach

In Your Kitchen

While it's not completely necessary, it can be helpful to have a few tools on hand to prepare creative and tasty low-carb meals. Consider investing in a julienne slicer to make zucchini noodles, a food processor for making cauliflower rice, a slow-cooker for stews and soups, a digital scale for weighing portion sizes (especially if you are doing the diet option under 30 grams of carbs/day), and a cast iron pan for cooking meat. Again, all of these are optional.

What to Expect

Assessing Your Progress

Upon beginning your low carb diet, there are several helpful ways to assess your progress. While the number on the scale will likely drop, remember that this is not the only (or best) marker of success. Body composition changes (your percentage of muscle versus fat) is an excellent indicator of progress, and the simplest way to assess this is by simply noting how your clothes fit. You can also keep body measurements yourself (just use a tape measure), or work with a personal trainer or other health care professional that have the tools to actually measure your body fat percentage. We always encourage you to take several “before” pictures to have for comparison.

Quick note on scales: remember that your weight tends to fluctuate quite a bit, even within the same day. Depending on the foods and liquids you’ve consumed, your weight can fluctuate up to four pounds in a day, and [studies](#) show that water retention in women due to hormonal changes also has a big impact. Weigh yourself at the same time each day (usually in the morning) and you certainly don’t need to weigh in every day. Once a week is plenty.

Other very important assessments of progress are blood markers such as triglycerides, cholesterol, blood pressure and blood glucose. Try and get some basic lab work done before you start, this way you know where you stand and can see very real changes in your health upon beginning the low carb diet.

Is My Body in Ketosis?

Remember, reaching a state of ketosis usually occurs for people when they eat less than 50 (and definitely less than 30) carbs per day. You will be eating a diet high in fat, moderate in protein and very low in carbohydrates. Your body will begin the process of turning fat into ketone molecules that supply energy to your brain. Depending on the individual, the process of relying on fat for fuel instead of carbohydrates takes anywhere from a few days to a few weeks.

As your body works through this change you will probably feel a bit fatigued and experience carb and sugar cravings. [Studies](#) show that once your body reaches a state of ketosis, you will likely feel a naturally decreased appetite and far fewer cravings.

Working Through Difficulties

Again, the process of burning fat for fuel on the low carb diet model can present some initial challenges. However, if you are mentally and physically prepared for them, they are much

less likely to deter you from sticking with this plan that you know holds so many health and weight loss benefits.

As mentioned earlier, the “**keto flu**” can include nausea, sleep difficulties, carb and sugar cravings, fatigue and digestive issues. Definitely take it easy and give your body the rest it requires. This might mean cutting down on intense workouts, and that’s perfectly fine. This definitely doesn’t happen to everyone, but it’s best not to be caught off guard.

Make sure to **have a solid plan** in place before beginning (how many carbs you’re shooting for, how you will track (more on this below), adequate kitchen supplies, grocery shopping done and whatever else you need to work through the initial change. Some people like to print out the “yes” and “no” food lists and stick them to the fridge. The grocery lists included in this guide make shopping extremely easy, but if you prefer a little more creativity/flexibility in the kitchen, be sure to stock up on low carb staples such as meat, fish, eggs, raw cheese, nuts and seeds, avocado, olive and coconut oil, grass-fed butter and/or ghee.

Low carb does not mean low veggie and; in fact, you’ll need to **eat a lot of low starch veggies** to fill up and reap the many health benefits of this diet. Half of your plate should always be filled with vegetables, if not more.

Consistency is key. Be sure to stick to your decided carb intake, as if you “cheat” the process of switching fuel sources will be longer and more difficult, in the end.

You shouldn’t fear salt, and will actually need to **salt your food** perhaps more than you did before, as ketosis changes your fluid mineral balance. You might also consider supplementing with electrolytes or magnesium, but see our supplement guide below for more details.

Don't Fear Fat

Low carb diets are much higher in fat than the diet you are probably eating now, but rest assured that you don't need to fear fat. Trying to do a low carb and low fat diet simultaneously is a bad idea. You will be extremely hungry, lose out on many of this diet's benefits, and probably give up.

[Multiple studies](#) have firmly debunked the myth that fat is the cause of heart disease and other common diseases in the modern day diet, as long as you're eating the right kinds of fats (as you will be doing on this plan). During your low-carb diet, you will be reaping the many health benefits of monounsaturated, saturated, and omega 3 fats and be eliminating unhealthy fats such as rancid vegetable oils and trans fats. Your fat intake will be at least 50% of your diet, and this is great.

Benefits of Healthy Fats

- Fat is necessary for cognitive (brain) function. The brain needs fat to make the protective myelin sheath that insulates your neurons to make cell membranes.
- Fats protect our vital organs.
- Fats regulate our body temperature.
- Fats are essential for proper hormonal balance, especially for women. In fact, insufficient dietary fat can be a cause of infertility.
- Omega 3 fatty acids are essential for controlling inflammation and are a precursor to hormones and chemicals produced in the brain that affect our mood and behavior.
- Without enough fat, we experience increased cravings for sugar and carbohydrates, as fat provides satiety (the feeling of fullness).
- Fats are necessary to absorb and assimilate fat-soluble vitamins A, E and D, along with other essential nutrients.

Trouble Shooting

Low-Carb and Eating Out

Eating out is probably one of the toughest challenges of the low-carb meal plan at first (it will get easier with practice), so consider the following tips to continue enjoying the occasional meal out:

Read the menu beforehand

[Studies](#) show that when we are hungry and/or distracted, we consistently make poor(er) food choices. If we familiarize ourselves with the menu online before arriving to the restaurant, we've already chosen the option we know to be healthiest, and therefore can relax and know we are not ordering impulsively.

Eat a healthy snack before you arrive

For the same reason that it's a bad idea to go grocery shopping on an empty stomach, try to not arrive to a restaurant starving, as this will make self control significantly harder. Opt for a low-calorie, high protein snack such as nitrate free deli meat with a couple of avocado slices, as this can greatly prevent overeating.

Substitute Side Dishes

Many people feel uncomfortable asking for substitutions, but it's okay to be a little bit annoying. As long as you are polite about it, it is completely acceptable to ask how dishes are prepared, and to request substitutes. For example, if a dish is served over rice, ask that it be served over steamed vegetables. Ask for your salad dressing on the side. Instead of bread, ask for a side of fruit or veggies. Most all restaurants can easily provide these alternatives.

Order a cup of coffee instead of dessert

It can be tough to skip dessert if you're surrounded by dessert-eaters, but this can truly derail a low carb diet if you are eating out regularly. If this is the case, order a coffee (regular or decaf) and add a touch of honey or stevia as a sweetener (carry your own green leaf stevia). This will help quench your sweet tooth, and seriously cut high-carbohydrate calories. Plus, [research shows](#) that coffee alone can boost weight loss.

Stick to Meat and Veggie Options

Stick to orders that are made up of real foods, such as meat and vegetables, whenever possible. Depending on where you live, the restaurant might boast organic and grass-fed meats. If this is the case, don't be afraid to order red meats such as beef or pork. However, if the meat quality is questionable, it is best to stick for leaner options (all animals store toxins in our fat cells), such as fish, chicken, and turkey. The veggie option might be a salad, roasted, steamed or stir-fried vegetables.

Avoid the Bread Basket

Certainly one of the hardest parts to resist is the bread basket that comes before the meal is served. You could easily eat an entire meal's worth of empty calories in bread before the actual food even arrives. Empty calories mean that the calories consumed offer little to no nutrient benefit. Bread is a carbohydrate, and high-carb diets are top contributors to weight gain and an array of other health problems over time.

Are You Eating Too Much Protein?

Protein is an extremely important macro-nutrient (the three macros being protein, carbohydrates and fat), that plays a huge role in fat burning and satiety (the feeling of fullness). Adequate protein intake is connected to weight loss among other health benefits.

However, a low carb diet does not necessarily mean a high protein diet. Instead, you will be eating high fat and moderate protein, and there's a scientific reason for this. [Research](#) shows that if you eat more protein than your body needs, certain amino acids will be turned into glucose by the process of gluconeogenesis. Therefore, eating too much protein can actually kick your body out of ketosis, which (obviously) is not the goal.

This concept is a bit more advanced and you don't need to worry too much about it right now, but keep this in mind if, after a couple of weeks, you are not losing any weight and/or are still experiencing extreme symptoms of the "keto flu" that we discussed above.

Don't Shy Away From Salt

We did talk about this earlier, but it bears repeating. One huge benefit of the low carb diet is that it lowers your insulin levels, which is the hormone that communicates with your cells to store fat (think of it as a "fat storage" hormone).

Another role insulin plays is telling your kidneys to store sodium, so naturally on a low carb diet your body will shed excess sodium and water (this is the mechanism that causes you to lose water weight so quickly on this diet plan).

To make up for this, liberally salt your foods (sea salt is a great option) and/or drink bone broth each day (you can easily find some great broth recipes online). In fact, making sure you get enough sodium can dramatically help ease some of those nasty side effects you might feel initially, such as fatigue, headaches and lightheadedness.

What About Low-Carb for Vegetarians?

Conventional low-carb diets do rely heavily on meat, which can make it seem impossible to follow this diet model and reap the benefits discussed in this guide if you are a vegetarian. Undoubtedly, it is more of a challenge, but not impossible. It will be nearly impossible to follow the lowest carbohydrate diet model (the keto diet) if you are vegan, but you can certainly cut down your carb intake considerably.

If you are a lacto-vegetarian (one that eats dairy products), eating a low carb diet will be easier. Excellent dairy sources of protein that are low in carbs include eggs, grass-fed butter, ghee, greek yogurt (higher in fat and lower in carbs than regular yogurt), and cheese. These foods are also higher in vitamin B12 than plant foods, so should definitely be included in the low carb diet for vegetarians. Vegans will usually need to supplement with this important vitamin.

Aside from dairy, you'll need to include (relatively) high protein, high fat and low carb veggies and fruits, such as tomatoes, cauliflower, onions, eggplant, bell peppers, broccoli and brussels sprouts. Berries are an excellent addition (especially strawberries), along with avocados, olives, and high protein nuts and seeds such as walnuts, almonds, macadamia nuts, chia seeds and pumpkin seeds. Including plenty of healthy fats is key, especially coconut oil.

Other protein sources such as tempeh (superior to tofu, as it is fermented) and beans can also be included, but you should be sure to count your carb intake.

Supplement Guide

While it is always best to receive the vast majority of your nutrition via whole foods, certain key supplements can support a low-carb diet that is rich in a variety of nutrient dense foods. Always consult your doctor or healthcare professional if you are concerned about any potential drug-supplement interactions, or with any individual questions you might have. In general, these supplements are considered safe for most people.

MCT Oil

Medium chain triglycerides (MCTs) are fats found in certain foods such as coconut oil, and are metabolized differently than long chain triglycerides. Using MCTs as a supplement has been touted for its many health benefits, particularly those of weight loss. It works to increase your satiety (fullness) factor, improve your body's ability to burn calories and fat and produce ketones, which means you can eat (slightly) more carbohydrates while still staying in ketosis. Dosages vary, but a generally accepted, safe dosage is between 1-3 tablespoons per day.

Caffeine

You coffee drinkers out there are probably happy to hear that caffeine (in moderation) actually makes for a great supplement to support your low-carb diet. According to a [study](#) published in the Journal of American Clinical Nutrition, caffeine consumption can actually increase our metabolic rate by up to 11%. Furthermore, Due to its adrenaline-boosting properties, coffee has been [shown](#) to boost exercise and sports performance in both athletes and gym-goers alike. Having a cup of coffee about a half hour before a workout or an event can increase your performance.

Whey

A high quality whey protein supplement can be a good way to get more protein into your diet (especially for vegetarians), and it has a high nutritional value. Whey has been shown to support muscle growth, reduce inflammation and promote weight loss.

Minerals and Salt

Due to changes in mineral and water balance when beginning a low carb diet (especially a keto diet), you might want to add a mineral supplement. You should always be eating a wide variety of brightly colored vegetables (and lots of dark, green, leafy veggies), but adding into a multi-mineral can also be helpful. Don't be afraid to liberally salt your foods with Himalayan or Celtic sea salt, as you are cutting out all sodium from processed and packaged foods.

Low Carb Meal Ideas

Following our one of our Premium meal plans can make planning out your days easy. However, we understand that some people might not love the idea of strictly following a meal plan. Here are some basic, low carb meal ideas to keep in mind as you get started:

10 Breakfast Ideas:

Eggs and Vegetables – heat one tablespoon of olive oil in a skillet on medium heat. Add your favorite vegetables and cook for at least 1-2 minutes. In a bowl, add one whole egg and $\frac{3}{4}$ cup egg whites. Season with Himalayan Pink Sea Salt and pepper to taste – pour into skillet and scramble together.

Pasture Raised (or Turkey) Bacon, 2 Eggs And Cooked Tomato – this is a quick and easy breakfast to make any day of the week. Cook 2 slices of bacon in a skillet on medium heat. In another skillet, cook sliced tomato seasoned with Himalayan Pink Sea Salt and pepper to taste. Cook 2 eggs in the skillet with the tomato until cooked through.

Eggs and Turkey Sausage – Keep turkey sausage in the freezer and cook with an egg for a quick low-carbohydrate breakfast.

Morning Smoothie - Mix unsweetened almond milk, vanilla whey protein and $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of fresh berries.

Greek Yogurt and Berries - Mix one cup of plain Greek yogurt with $\frac{1}{4}$ slice of avocado with fresh squeezed lemon juice.

Cottage Cheese And Berries – cottage cheese works well in the blender with some berries for a quick low-carbohydrate meal on the go.

Hard-boiled Egg – always keep hard-boiled eggs on hand for a quick breakfast.

Omelet – with goat cheese and herbs – goat cheese adds some tangy flavor that will spice up your omelet.

Crustless Quiche – whisk together 2 eggs with steamed broccoli and cheese. Bake in the oven without the crust.

Gluten-Free, Grain-Free Oatmeal – this is actually a mixture of $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of chia seeds, $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of ground flax seeds, and $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of shredded coconut that you add to 1 cup of boiling water.

Add some cinnamon for added flavor. It's admittedly not all that similar to the real deal, but it's delicious in its own right.

Lunch Ideas:

Lettuce-Wrap Grass-Fed Cheeseburgers With Mushrooms and Swiss Cheese – keep frozen beef (preferably grass-fed) or turkey patties in your freezer for quick low-carbohydrate lunch or dinner. Cook patty seasoned with onion or garlic powder or both, sea salt and pepper to taste about 3-4 minutes on each side – add a slice of Swiss cheese and let melt. In another skillet, cook sliced mushrooms in 1 tablespoon of olive oil. Use Romaine lettuce leaf and place hamburger patty in lettuce – top with mushrooms and fold over lettuce.

Grilled Chicken Salad With Toasted Walnuts In A Mustard Vinaigrette – Chop one head of Romaine lettuce and place in bowl. Add cooked grilled chicken breast – sliced. Toast a handful of walnuts in a skillet on medium heat for about 2-3 minutes. Add to salad. For Vinaigrette – whisk together the juice of one lemon, 1/8 cup of Rice Wine Vinegar, 1 tablespoon of Dijon mustard, 1/2 teaspoon of Cayenne pepper, 1 teaspoon of onion powder, Sea salt and pepper to taste and 1/4 cup of olive oil. Toss with salad and enjoy.

Tuna Fish - mixed with mustard and wrapped in endive.

Baby Bel Cheese - with a handful of almonds.

Cooked Shrimp Salad – take advantage of pre-cooked, chilled shrimp available in most grocery stores for a quick lunch. Cooked shrimp can be tossed with your favorite vegetables and a vinaigrette dressing.

Crab-Seafood Salad – mix cooked crab and shrimp for a delicious salad – look for mayonnaise made with olive oil and season with seafood seasoning.

Dinner Ideas:

Buffalo Patty With Balsamic Portabella Mushrooms And Spinach – grill buffalo patty seasoned with garlic powder, sea salt and pepper. Marinate large portabella mushrooms in balsamic vinegar and olive oil – season with sea salt and pepper. You can add these to the grill or cook on medium heat in a skillet. Steam or sauté spinach in olive oil and chopped fresh garlic and serve immediately with buffalo patty and mushrooms.

Shrimp with Asparagus – toss cooked shrimp with asparagus tips in a teaspoon of olive oil

Beef and Broccoli – you can toss lean roast beef with steamed broccoli with toasted sesame oil and low-sodium soy sauce for a quick dinner. Switch up beef for lamb, pork or bison, if you'd like.

Pork Tenderloin – roast pork tenderloin with vegetables for a delicious low-carbohydrate dinner.

Tilapia – is readily available in most grocery stores and fish markets.

Salmon – is always a healthy choice for a quick dinner. You can top it with mustard and roast it in the oven or broil it.

Turkey Tenderloin – look for turkey tenderloins that are marinated in flavorful sauces.

Steak – a lean cut of steak can make a delicious meal with vegetables.

Eggs – they are not just for breakfast. Feel free to make any of the egg dishes listed in this guide for a quick dinner that is high in protein and low in carbohydrates.

Low Carb Snack Ideas

Eventually, you will probably feel satisfied enough by your meals that you won't feel the need to snack. However, in the beginning you will likely feel hungry, so here is a list of low carb friendly snacks to keep you going, and to curb cravings.

- 1 ounce of cheese (raw, if possible)
- 1-2 hard or soft boiled eggs
- Grass-fed beef, turkey or salmon jerky with a small handful of nuts
- 1 small handful of nuts and/or seeds
- Olives
- Dark chocolate (85% or higher)
- Berries with cream
- Celery with avocado and homemade salsa
- 2 oz. leftover meat or fish with avocado
- Berries with 1 tbsp. nut butter (like almond)

Basic Low Carb Shopping List

Make sure to stick to the perimeter of the grocery store as much as possible, as this is where the real, whole foods live. When choosing red meat, always opt for grass-fed and pasture raised whenever possible. Choose wild fish over farmed and organic chicken, along with pasture-raised eggs. If these options are not available to you, don't worry and simply do your best. Clean out your pantry of all processed foods, breads, candy, flour, sugar, cereals, chips, etc.

Here is a sample, low carb shopping list:

- Fish like wild-caught salmon
- Beef
- Chicken
- Pork
- Bacon
- Eggs
- Butter and/or ghee
- Virgin coconut oil
- Extra-virgin olive oil
- Cheese (white cheeses)
- Plain Greek yogurt
- Berries (strawberries are especially low carb)
- Olives
- Nuts
- Fresh and frozen vegetables
- Himalayan Pink or Celtic Sea Salt
- Pepper
- Mustards
- Garlic
- Vinegar