

The Most Popular diets on the market in 2018

(Are they really healthy diets?)

Mediterranean Diet



A [recent study](#) found this diet alone, which is primarily made up of olive oil, nuts, vegetables, fruits, whole grains and fish, lowered the likelihood of developing diabetes among people at high risk of the disease — without the need to cut calories or exercise more. And previous studies documented a long list of possible health perks including lowering the risk for heart disease and memory loss. “Research shows that people with many types of health issues, including diabetes, heart disease, and depression could benefit from following a Mediterranean diet,” says Rachel Greenstein, the communications and licensing manager of Oldways, a non-profit group that encourages healthy eating and keeps a [database of studies](#) on the benefits of the Mediterranean diet.

According to the folks at Oldways, the diet is best for someone who is looking for a lifestyle change, rather than simply lowering calorie consumption. The diet welcomes a variety of foods, include red wine, in moderation. But people who follow the Mediterranean diet do limit their intake of red meat and sweets. “A person that would enjoy the Mediterranean diet appreciates flexibility in building their meals and prefers cooking as a part of their lifestyle, says Greenstein. A [detailed look at the Mediterranean diet](#) here.

Weight Watchers



Weight Watchers is a point-based diet system that allows users to log their foods and physical activity in order to meet a daily number that should put them on a path toward weight loss. Users are also able to attend meetings, where they share their weight loss journey with fellow dieters, and receive support and motivation from the meeting leader, who is someone who successfully used Weight Watchers to reach their weight loss goals. One of the attractive elements of the system is that it allows for indulgences, and helps users find alternative ways to make their favorite meals, or keep ice cream in their diet.

Weight Watchers is designed as a plan that fits easily into dieters’ lives, so they don’t have to abandon the foods they love or give up eating out. The plan promotes small, manageable goals over lofty ones that are difficult to reach. For Weight Watchers to work, you do need to be organized and willing to stay on top of your daily eating habits. Keeping a food diary is a proven method for shedding pounds, and the Weight Watchers method incorporates that strategy. But if you don’t want your diet to be something you think about with every bite, it might not be for you. [A detailed look at Weight Watchers](#) here.

Gluten Free Diet



The people who should be on a gluten-free diet are those who have celiac disease or gluten intolerance. But for whatever reason, the diet has become popular as a weight-loss plan, which is confusing for both people who suffer from the disease, and those who treat them. “These are not really low calorie products,” says Jacalyn See, a registered dietitian who works with celiac patients at the Mayo Clinic, in Rochester, Minnesota. “The [substitution] products often have more calories, and lack nutrients like B vitamins, iron and fiber.”

People with celiac disease develop an immune reaction when they eat gluten, a protein found in wheat, barley and rye. This damages the inner lining of the small intestine, causing diarrhea and bloating. If not treated, and patients simply avoid eating the irritating foods, they can develop deficiencies in key nutrients that compromise the brain to the nervous system and bone. While not all cases are severe, the reactions are enough to make dietary restrictions important.

If you think you have a gluten allergy, you should contact your doctor so you can be tested and diagnosed properly. Unless you have an allergy to glutes, there is really no reason to go gluten-free. Some people use it as an excuse to stay away from many breads, but end up substituting higher calorie foods instead.

Paleo Diet



The Paleo Diet is about getting back to the basics. The premise is that hunter-gather societies did not eat many of the processed foods we chow down on today, but instead filled up on meat and fish and fruits and vegetables grown without antibiotics and hormones. Most people who follow the diet avoid carbohydrates and processed grains. The scientific community is split on the benefits of the diet, many acknowledging that there are perks to eating lean meat and plant-based

foods, and others complaining it is too restrictive. For some, it's a way to lose weight, but for others it's about the sustainability and lifestyle. Either way, it's a commitment.

Atkins diet



The [Atkins](#) diet, or Atkins nutritional approach, focuses on controlling the levels of [insulin](#) in the body through a low-carbohydrate diet.

If people consume large amounts of refined [carbohydrates](#), their insulin levels rise and fall rapidly. Rising insulin levels trigger the body to store energy from the food that is consumed, making it less likely that the body will use stored fat as a source of energy.

Therefore, people on the Atkins diet avoid carbohydrates but can eat as much protein and fat as they like.

Although popular for some time, the Atkins Diet comes with certain risks. Individuals considering the Atkins Diet should speak with their doctor. [A detailed look at the Atkins diet](#) here.

The Zone diet

The Zone diet aims for a nutritional balance of 40 percent carbohydrates, 30 percent fats, and 30 percent protein in each meal. The focus is also on controlling insulin levels, which may result in more successful weight loss and [body weight](#) control than other approaches.

The Zone diet encourages the consumption of high-quality carbohydrates - unrefined carbohydrates, and fats, such as olive oil, avocado, and nuts. [A detailed look at the Zone diet](#) here.

Ketogenic diet

The ketogenic diet has been used for decades as a treatment for epilepsy and is also being explored for other uses. It involves reducing carbohydrate intake and upping fat intake. It sounds contrary to common sense, but it allows the body to burn fat as a fuel, rather than carbohydrates.

Healthy fats, such as those in avocados, coconuts, Brazil nuts, seeds, oily fish, and olive oil are liberally added to the diet to maintain an overall emphasis on fat.

The diet causes the breakdown of fat deposits for fuel and creates substances called ketones through a process called ketosis. This diet has risks including ketoacidosis for people with type 1 diabetes, however,

and may result in diabetic coma and death. Although most studies are 2 years or less, there is some promising research in relation to diabetes management, metabolic health, weight loss, and body composition change. [A detailed look at the ketogenic diet here.](#)

Vegetarian diet



There are various types of vegetarian: lacto-vegetarian, fruitarian vegetarian, lacto-ovo vegetarian, living food diet vegetarian, ovo-vegetarian, pesco-vegetarian, and semi-vegetarian.

The majority of vegetarians are lacto-ovo vegetarians, in other words, they do not eat animal-based foods, except for eggs, dairy, and honey.

Studies over the last few years have shown that vegetarians have a lower body weight, suffer less from diseases, and typically have a longer life expectancy than people who eat meat.

[A detailed look at vegetarianism here.](#)

Vegan diet

Veganism is more of a way of life and a philosophy than a diet. A vegan does not eat anything that is animal-based, including eggs, dairy, and honey. Vegans do not usually adopt veganism just for health reasons, but also for environmental, ethical, and compassionate reasons.

Vegans believe that modern intensive farming methods are bad for our environment and unsustainable in the long-term. If everybody ate plant-based food, the environment would benefit, animals would suffer less, more food would be produced, and people would generally enjoy better physical and mental health, vegans say. [A detailed look at veganism here.](#) Various recipe books and guides are available to purchase [online](#).

South Beach diet

The [South Beach diet](#) was started by a cardiologist, Dr. Agatston, and a nutritionist, Marie Almon. It focuses on the control of insulin levels, and the benefits of unrefined slow carbohydrates versus fast carbohydrates. Dr. Agatston devised the South Beach diet during the 1990s because he was disappointed with the low-fat, high-carb diet backed by the American Heart Association. He believed that low-fat regimes were not effective over the long-term.

[A detailed look at the South Beach diet here.](#) South beach diet books are available to buy [online](#).

Raw food diet

The raw food diet, or raw foodism, involves consuming foods and drinks that are not processed, are completely plant-based, and ideally organic.

Raw foodists believe that at least three-quarters of a person's food intake should consist of uncooked food. A significant number of raw foodists are also vegans and do not eat or drink anything that is animal based. There are four main types of raw foodists: raw vegetarians, raw vegans, raw omnivores, and raw carnivores.