

"Rest a moment less. Endure a fraction more. Make peace with whatever your pain may be."
- ***Sgt. Kirstie Ennis (Ret.)***

Sergeant Ennis lost her leg, suffered facial, cervical and lumbar spine trauma, traumatic brain injury and bilateral shoulder damage in a helicopter crash in Afghanistan in 2012. As you can imagine, she went through severe depression from the accident and subsequent 46 surgeries. But rather than wallow in misery, she started a foundation whose mission is improving the quality of life of individuals and families and providing education, opportunity and healing in the outdoors. For her work, she received the Pat Tillman Award for Service at the 2019 ESPY awards. She is truly inspirational and a great reminder that no matter how bad you think things are in your own life, someone else has it much worse. Yet these special people carry on and do positive things for others. Her story resonated with me because the outdoors has always been my healing place. So like Sgt. Ennis, choose to be positive and make peace with whatever your pain is. Let me know if you need some suggestions on how to get there.

Yours in health,



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Should You Go Keto?



I'm not a fan of diets because they don't work. What actually works to get you to your long-term weight goal is a lifestyle change. But that's often easier said than done. You have to ultimately WANT to make a change to be successful. You can't lose weight because your significant other wants you to lose it. You can only lose if it's YOUR choice. Once you make that decision, simple changes can truly make the difference.

A lot of so called "experts" still tell people that the only way to lose weight is to count calories and eat a low-fat diet. But the problem is the fat is replaced by sugar, which is MUCH worse. Sugar is empty calories with NO nutritional value. In fact, it's more harmful than you know. Not only does it spike blood sugar, but cancer thrives on sugar. So if you have any form of cancer, sugar is the LAST thing you should be consuming. But I digress. When most people try to reduce their caloric and fat intake, they end up consuming more carbohydrates ("carbs"). When you eat sugar or carbs, your body releases insulin. Too much insulin and the resulting high glucose levels are bad news, leading to diabetes and other health issues. In addition, you gain weight because your body starts converting the all the carbs you ate, but can't process, into fat on your body.

Where am I going with all this? The Keto diet is all the rage today, so I wanted to dig a little deeper into it. Supporters say it's not so much a diet, but a lifestyle...and it's working for a lot of people. Going Keto is effective because you're eating foods low in carbs, high in fat and moderate in protein. But isn't fat bad

for you? Absolutely not! That's one of the biggest myths out there. Fat is actually good for you, as long as you're eating the right kind. Surprisingly, it's one of the best things you can consume.

You're probably thinking this sounds like the Adkins Diet popular decades ago. The difference is with Adkins, people went crazy eating protein without regard for how much or what type. With Keto, your protein intake is MUCH more moderate. Here are 3 important things to know about going Keto.

1. **Your fat intake should be 70% of your calories.** Seems like a lot, right? But fat is one of the healthiest things you can eat. It helps brain function and increase energy, moves nutrients through your body and helps regulate body temperature. Here are some of the best fats for you:
 - a. **Mono-Unsaturated** – these come from plants and plant oils such as olive, avocado (which is great for high-heating cooking) and sunflower. Nuts are also a great source.
 - b. **Poly-unsaturated** – these come mainly from plant oils such as safflower, sesame, corn, soybean, as well as many nuts and sunflower seeds.
 - c. **Omega-3s** – I talked about this last month in my article about flax seeds, which are full of them. This fat comes from animals, fish and plants. Grass-fed beef is a great source, as is salmon, sardines and mackerel.
 - d. **Medium-chain oils** – the best source is coconut oil. I add a little bit to my morning coffee and use it in cooking.
2. **Your carb intake should be only about 5%-10% of your calories.** Did you know your body can make carbs from protein and fat, so you don't need to eat many? The more carbs you eat, the more insulin that builds up in your blood. If you eat too many carbs, your body's insulin receptors can get overwhelmed, making it harder for insulin to push glucose into your cells. We weren't designed to eat the amount of carbs we eat daily. So all those extra carbs end up being converted to fat.
3. **Your protein intake should be selective and about 20-25% of your calories.** Protein is critical for gaining muscle mass and losing weight. One of the best things about eating protein (and fat), is you get a feeling of being full, which makes you want to eat less. Protein increases your sensitivity to a hormone called leptin, which tells you when you're full. This doesn't function properly in obese people, so they never get the signal. Because they THINK they're still hungry, they eat way more than their body needs. Protein also transforms your body from being a "fat storer" to a "fat burner". But you must eat the right kind of protein. Choose grass-fed organic beef, wild fish and eggs from free-range chickens. Other excellent sources are organic chicken and turkey, as well as all kinds of nuts and seeds.

The reason Keto and other types of high protein diets work so well is that they put your body into ketosis, which is a fat-burning mode. One of the most important things to remember when your body is in ketosis is to drink plenty of water. If you don't, it's very hard on your kidneys and stones can form.

I've also read that choosing foods with a low Glycemic Index ("GI") helps improve the success of the Keto lifestyle. The GI measures how quickly foods break down into your bloodstream. High GI foods quickly convert to sugar in your body, so the lower the GI, the better. Potatoes, bananas, corn and peas are examples of high GI foods. Proteins, fats and oils have a GI of zero. A sweet potato has a much lower GI than a baked potato. Almonds are lower than cashews.

The bottom line is this: everyone's body is different. No one plan works for everyone. Am I endorsing a Keto diet? I don't believe in diets. Personally, I believe everything in moderation is the key to long-term health and wellness. But for those of you looking to lose weight and keep it off, it's my opinion that going Keto is probably one of the best choices out there. But keep in mind it's really restrictive, including limited fruit, which certainly has its own important health benefits. But for Keto, it has too many carbs. Plus, it's really hard for most people to completely cut out the foods they love. But there are others who need a specific and restrictive plan to help them shed unwanted pounds.

Whatever your desires and goals are, I can help you get there. The best part is that I can do it without putting you a strict diet. It'll take longer, but at the end of the day won't it be worth it to learn how to eat the foods you love in a healthy way? But if you need a strict plan, Keto may be for you. Have a wonderful month.