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# Low-Fat Diet Better for Reducing Fat Than Low-Carb Diet, Study Concludes

Written by Chuck Green | Published on August 13, 2015



**Researchers say that although a low-carb diet burns more fat, a low-fat diet is better for reducing overall body fat.**



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In a [paper published today](#) in Cell Metabolism, researchers found that — contrary to popular claims — restricting dietary fat can lead to greater body fat loss than carbohydrate restriction.

That's despite the fact that a low-carb diet reduces insulin and increases fat burning.

[Get the Facts on How to Create a Low-Fat Diet Plan »](#)

## Diets Closely Monitored

In the study, 19 obese adult volunteers stayed in a metabolic ward for a pair of

two-week periods. During that time, food intake was closely monitored and controlled.

At the end of the two dieting periods, body fat loss was greater when dietary fat was restricted compared with carbohydrate restriction, even though more fat was burned with the low-carb diet.

Study researcher Kevin Hall, Ph.D., who is also a metabolism researcher at the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases, has been using data from dozens of controlled feeding studies since 2003 to build mathematical models of how different nutrients affect human metabolism and body weight.



Hall said this study shows there are small differences between fat and carbohydrate restriction under controlled conditions.

That goes against the concept that all calories are equal when it comes to body fat loss.

[Get the Facts on Setting Up a Low-Carb Diet »](#)

## Are the Results Significant?

Dr. Frank Hu, Ph.D., professor of nutrition and epidemiology at Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health, thinks there are more important factors for weight loss.

While calling the study interesting and “rigorously conducted,” Hu said it “doesn't really portray real life situations.”

“This was a small study and it was done [under] controlled lab conditions. It doesn't necessarily apply to the way people live,” said Hu, who is also a professor of medicine at Harvard Medical School. “In real life, people make choices and don't always adhere to a diet that fosters weight loss over the long run.”

“*In real life, people make choices and don't always adhere to a diet that fosters weight loss over the long run.*”

Dr. Frank Hu, Ph.D., Harvard T.H.

Furthermore, Hu said a study that lasts only a few weeks might not produce a complete picture and confirm whether one diet is more beneficial than the other for long-term weight control.

“Clinical trials that have been published

Chan School of Public Health

so far show that, in the short term, almost all diets can lead to weight loss,” he noted.

But the question is whether an individual can maintain the weight loss in the long run and that primarily depends upon other factors like behavior, he noted.

[Read More: How Many Calories a Day Should You Eat? »](#)

## Should You Change Your Diet?

The answer isn't that simple.

“It's important that people don't come away with the message that this study shows that low-fat diets are better than low-carb diets for fat loss in the real world. We tried to be very clear about that in the paper,” Hall said.

Rather, the study attempted to understand how the body adapts when people experience significant changes in their diets, he explained.

Other factors, like picking a diet that you can stick to, are far more important Hall noted.

Hall's ultimate advice: Go with what works best for you.

“If you think a low-carb diet is going to give you some sort of metabolic advantage for losing fat, this study shows this is probably not true. But if you think you can better stick to a low-carb than a low-fat diet, more power to you,” he said.

“*Don't feel you're at a disadvantage because of a popular theory that low-carb diets offer some sort of metabolic advantage. Do what you can actually stick to.*”

Kevin Hall, Ph.D., National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases

“Don't feel you're at a disadvantage because of a popular theory that low-carb diets offer some sort of metabolic advantage. Do what you can actually stick to.”

Next Hall and his associates will investigate how reduced-carbohydrate and reduced-fat diets affect the brain's reward circuitry as well as its response to food stimuli. He hopes these results might uncover why people respond differently to different diets.

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**Janet Maggio** · Washinton state university

Guess the low carb diet I was on and not low fat, and lost over 100 pounds in a little over a year must have been a mistake by my body. Guess I should go back to Cheerios, potatoes and bread. NOT.

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**Lillian Johnson**

A balanced diet helps you a long way rather than these different solutions of this diet or that diet.

There is no magic formula for weight loss whether you are looking into protein or carbs. The only easy way to lose weight is to follow a proper diet and you would be able to lose weight.

I tried a high carbs and a high protein diet, both didn't work and the only diet which worked for me, was the diet of lisa plog with which I was able to lose 22 pounds. Google for "lisa plog diet plans" and you would be able to find her diet.

A balanced diet minimizes your over reliance on any of the nutrients and hence has such a positive effect on your body.

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**Windy Safford** · Owner at Self-Employed

Reducing weight is not difficult if you have the correct support and knowledge , i was searching on-line and came upon this site and got to know that many had success in reducing weight, i am seeing awesome results too, here is that site, hope it will help those who really want to lose weight

<https://healthyfatlosss.weebly.com>

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**Triago Cymbalta**

agreed. when people ask me how to lose weight i always tell them the same thing: read, read, read, and read some more about nutrition and how your body works. Its so much easier to diet when you know why you are doing what you're doing.

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**Douglas Linton** · Studying at Self-Employed

How to realistically Burn off Unwanted Body Fat within 3 week's without going to the Gym..

<http://tinyurl.com/ozwcsuy>

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**Patricia Engelhard**

My philosophy on food revolves around moderation being key, and NOT depriving yourself of things you want (and I want carbs). The true low carb diet is, maybe 30 grams of carbs for the entire day. It's low. It's essentially nothing. What I do is going, for example, four days on low/no carbs and then one day on medium carbs and one day on high carbs and then repeat the cycle. The idea is to feed your body carbs, when your body requires it the most, this way you can eat carbs without worrying about it being stored as fat. (great read is: <http://fatburningchallenge.com/carb-cycling-for-...> ). Never hungry, never deprived. Unlike Atkins, you get lots of carbs, vegetables and fruit

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**Ivan Fuentes** · Works at Apple Inc.

5 foods that men should never eat, eating this foods "kill" your testosterone and can cause belly fat: [bit.ly/1TIC5Uy](http://bit.ly/1TIC5Uy)

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