

THE KETO BEGINNING

COMPLETE GUIDE & 30-DAY MEAL PLAN



Creating lifelong health and lasting weight loss
with whole food-based nutritional ketosis.

Leanne Vogel

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PREFACE

I'm in the best (hottest) shape of my life. The kind-of-hot that makes you want to pinch yourself to validate if what you're experiencing is actually real life. I don't count calories, I dip my bacon in mayonnaise and snack on jars of almond butter with zero guilt.

My body has found it's happy place. Weight loss is effortless (I've lost 20lbs in 2 months), my skin is glowing, and I'm not a slave to pack-along snacks, cravings, or energy lulls anymore.

The secret? Switching into a state of nutritional ketosis, where the body goes from burning glucose as energy to burning fat as energy. In nutritional ketosis, the body becomes a fat-burning machine, effectively breaking down fatty acids into ketone bodies that are used, even by the brain, as fuel. And we do this by following an eating style of high-fat, low-carb and moderate protein, also known as "keto" or "ketogenic".

While many keto-goers use dairy as their primary source of fats and rely on processed low-carb foods to reduce their carb intake, The Keto Beginning proves that following a ketogenic eating style can be done without the use of dairy or processed foods. In The Keto Beginning, we focus on benefiting the body, long-term, through paleo-friendly strategies, packed with whole foods and rich nutrition.

MY INTENTION

This book is meant to highlight how easy and effortless living a dairy-free keto life can be.

You may be thinking, but she has only been on this for 2 months, how could she possibly know that this lifestyle can be a lifelong ticket to lasting health? Great question.

My answer, in short, is because everything in The Keto Beginning acts to counteract the issues that get in the way of lifelong health. Blood sugar, especially.

I've experienced more life-altering, positive changes with this next evolution in my eating style than I have with any other pattern. It's the easiest, most effortless, most rewarding approach I've ever experimented with. A double bonus - the medical studies and research I've read points to blood sugar regulation through a high-fat, low-carb diet being the ticket to lasting health. I have no doubt that the 2 months I've spent exploring this whole food-based ketogenic eating style has brought me closer to a life filled with endless happy, healthy days than any other approach I've tried in the past. It's an evolution.

Coupled with my dairy-free, whole foods-loving approach, The Keto Beginning satisfies all of the markers necessary for lifelong health - the natural reduction in calories, boosted saturated fats, blood sugar control, boosted cell health, ample mitochondria action, and more.

I am not a scientist. I am a holistic nutritionist with an outrageous interest in self experimentation. I've listed medical studies, papers and resources in the back. After you've read a couple, I have a strong suspicion that (like me) you'll begin to see the holes in the low-fat, high-carb approach we've been led to believe is best for our health. The science just doesn't add up! The Keto Beginning documents everything that I experienced in the first 30 days of getting into, and maintaining a state of nutritional ketosis. Because my body is different than your body, your experience will likely be different than mine. And that's cool.

I hope this guide will act as a safe and healthy jumping off point for you.

There aren't a lot of "recipes" in the meal plan. Why? This is an introduction to nutritional ketosis. I found that; when I was first getting started, I had no idea what 75% fat, 10% carbs and 15% protein looked like on a plate, let alone what it felt like in my body.

With 30 days of eating very simple meals, I built a strong base (a feeling and an eye) for what my eating pattern looked and felt like - on a plate, and in my body. Getting hung up with fancy recipes, make-ahead meal prep and the combination of oodles of ingredients makes it harder to fully understand what exactly is going on in your body, and how you truly react to the meals you're eating.

If you're looking for a ketogenic guide with endless recipes with combinations of ingredients this way and that, this is not the book for you.

If you are ready to make a lifestyle change by building a solid base of understanding so that you can live your life with nutritional ketosis quietly running in the background, The Keto Beginning is here to support your journey.

You are ready. And I am here to guide you all the way through.



Chapter 1

IT BEGINS HERE

THE BASICS

Though not mandatory (you can skip over this piece if you don't care to know how this all works) understanding how the body functions, fully knowing what's at play here, makes following the ketogenic lifestyle more meaningful. At least, it does for me.

To fully understand what's going on here, we have to start from the very beginning. And the digestive system is the very best place to start.

The Digestive Process

When we consume food...

1. The site of initial carbohydrate breakdown occurs in the mouth. Your teeth and tongue take the first steps in battering food into bits. As they are shredding and grinding, more saliva is squirted into the food to moisten and soften it. The saliva contains chemicals called enzymes, which break down the carbohydrates in food (this enzyme release triggers insulin to start prepping for action).
2. When you have finished chewing, you swallow, and the mouthful of food makes its way down the esophagus, to the stomach. Food does not free fall down to the stomach but is squeezed along by the muscles in the esophagus. This squeezing/pushing action by the muscles is called peristalsis (perry-STAL-sis).
3. The site of initial protein breakdown occurs in the stomach, where food is treated to a

strong acid bath as it's churned around by the stomach's muscular walls. These walls are protected by a mucus lining, which protects the stomach from its own gastric juices (made up of pepsin enzyme and acids.)

4. Up until now, carbohydrates have been broken down slightly in the mouth and proteins have been broken down slightly in the stomach. Fats have not had their turn.

5. Now, for the breakdown of fats and further breakdown of carbohydrates and proteins. Food is now a mashed-up milky liquid, thanks to the stomach. It enters the duodenum (the beginning of the small intestine) where it is treated with a round of enzymes and bile to break the carbohydrates, proteins and fats down even further.

6. From there, the substance enters the small intestine - a 20-foot long, curly tube with a shaggy lining. The walls of the small intestines are lined with millions of tiny finger-like projections called villi. The villi absorb the usable parts of the broken down food into the bloodstream.

7. The non-useful parts of the food continue to move into the large intestines. The large intestines absorb some of the water and salt. The remainder of the material is compacted and then sent out the anus as solid waste or feces.

Carbohydrate Digestion

Carbs are organic molecules that are made up of carbon, hydrogen and oxygen. There are three principal carbohydrates present in foods...

1. Simple Sugars (aka Simple Carbohydrates)
2. Polysaccharides (aka Complex Carbohydrates)
3. Fiber

Simple Sugars (aka simple carbohydrates) have 3 classifications, and several sub-segments below each class. It's a web of sugary confusion! The most simplest of simple sugars are: glucose, fructose and galactose. These are called monosaccharides – this is how all sugars end up in our body when all is said and done.

For instance, if you consume white sugar (sucrose) the body will break it down into glucose and fructose. If you consume a glass of milk (lactose) the body will break it down into galactose and glucose.

Then there are oligosaccharides – simple sugars that consist of several sugars bound together. These unique carbohydrates cannot be easily digested by our regular digestive path and have to go to the large intestine to be eaten up by the bacteria there. Examples of oligosaccharide foods are... onions, asparagus, garlic, banana, and chives.

Polysaccharides (aka complex carbohydrates) undergo substantial digestion before being absorbed. Starch is a polysaccharide – the main carbohydrate source for plant seeds and vegetables grown in the ground. Think potatoes, corn, rice, pasta, and cereal. Starches are broken down into glucose by the body.

Another polysaccharide is cellulose, a carbohydrate that is indigestible in the body, adding bulk to the stool.

Fiber is another form of carbohydrate, one that is present in many polysaccharides. Fiber's main purpose is to aid in elimination.

The body converts digestible carbohydrates (the parts of the carbohydrate that are non-fibrous) into glucose, which our cells use as fuel. Some carbs (simple sugars, aka simple carbohydrates) break down quickly into glucose while others (polysaccharides aka complex carbohydrates) are slowly broken down and enter the bloodstream more gradually.

The major takeaway here is that ALL dietary forms of carbohydrates are made up of sugar (glucose). Sweet potato, white bread, whole grains, candy, potato chips, fruit, kale, all contain components that become sugar in the body.

So that you fully "get the picture" on this carbohydrate thing, perhaps it would be helpful for me to list some sources of carbohydrates, yes?

Okay, here goes...

Bagels, bread, stuffing, buns, croutons, pancakes, English muffins, pita bread, tortillas, corn, waffles, wraps, beans, oatmeal, cornmeal, lentils, flour, hummus, rice, quinoa, pasta, peas, potatoes, squash, sweet potato, cow's milk, rice milk, soy milk, yogurt, apples, cantaloupe, banana, apricots, dates, grapefruit, prunes, raspberries, watermelon, carrot juice, apple juice, tomato juice, cranberry juice, kiwi, alcohol, biscuits, cookies, Danish, donuts, muffins, fruit pie, cupcakes, chocolate, potato chips, pretzels, crackers, sherbet, ice cream, tortilla chips, Jell-O, granola, cereal, French fries, apple butter, barbecue sauce, oats, cranberry sauce, salad dressing, ketchup, jams, jellies, candies, mints, gum, soda, gravy, honey mustard, dipping sauces, plum sauce, hollandaise sauce, maple syrup, honey, agave nectar, coconut sugar, coconut nectar, noodles, lasagna, egg rolls, cream soups, soups, chutney, arrowroot, tapioca, chickpea flour, sorghum, millet, amaranth, muesli, shredded wheat, popcorn, rice cakes, pudding, custard, almonds, cashews, pumpkin seeds, garbanzo beans, lima beans, green peas, carrots, pinto beans, navy beans, beets, onions, parsnips, bell peppers, spinach, greens, turnips, yams, white sugar, dates, date sugar, dried fruit, flour, pizza.

The key here is that, regardless if you are consuming a simple carbohydrate or complex carbohydrate, it will turn into "sugar" in the body.

INTRODUCTION TO A NEW WAY

The “Healthy” High-Carb Approach

Our current high-carbohydrate eating style of whole grains, oodles of servings of fruits and vegetables and minimal intake of fats has been touted as “healthy”. Now you know, from the previous section that all forms of carbohydrate – fruits, vegetables, grains, sugars and anything starchy – are primarily broken down into glucose and stored in your body as glycogen.

When you have more glycogen than what's needed for immediate energy, your body will store excess in the liver, then the muscles and; if everything is full, the excess is converted into triglycerides and stored in your blood. Psst... this is not a good thing.

Relying on carbohydrates for fuel, is...

- Not sustainable, we can only store a couple thousand calories of carbohydrates at any given time.
- Preventing us from getting a handle on our blood sugar, causing endless cravings, oodles of daily eating times and weight gain.
- Leading to triglycerides being stored in the blood, the major risk factor to heart disease.
- slowly killing us.

In Nutritional Ketosis...

Nutritional ketosis is a state where your body is “deprived” of glucose; achieved when carbohydrate intake is decreased and protein intake is moderated. In this state, you switch to using fat as energy instead of carbohydrates. This process – of using fat as fuel – produces ketone bodies that are converted into substrates for the Krebs Cycle (energy production). Once you're in nutritional ketosis, the storage of triglycerides in blood no longer applies. Blood sugar and insulin levels are reduced, levels of HDL cholesterol increase, and the visceral fats around your vital organs are “eaten up” as fuel.

In nutritional ketosis, we're tripping the metabolic switch, leading to so much more than just weight loss.

The Keto Beginning is about finding our body's happy place and using fatty acids and the generation of ketone bodies as a reliable fuel for constant, steady energy. The brain, the heart, our hormones and every darn cell in the body love ketones.

Ketones are a highly renewable energy source that our major organs use effortlessly to promote lasting health in a blood sugar-balanced environment.

This is nutritional ketosis, not to be confused with diabetic ketoacidosis – a dangerous condition where ketones spike and blood sugar increases to alarming rates.

This occurs primarily in diabetic type 1; and sometimes 2, patients who are not receiving sufficient insulin to bring glucose into their cells. Regardless of how low carbohydrate intake is, a person with a normal pancreas cannot enter diabetic ketoacidosis because even a trace amount of insulin will keep ketone levels at a safe level.

Having said that, there are 3 groups people that should NOT play around with nutritional ketosis unless under the care of a professional in a one on one setting – pregnant women, diabetics (type 1) and individuals with kidney disease or a kidney imbalance.

Clarification of “Being in Ketosis” and “Being Keto-Adapted”

Our bodies burn whatever fuel is available - glucose, fatty acids, ketones, alcohol. Whatever there is more of is what the body will burn for energy.

Following a ketogenic eating style puts you into a state of ketosis. What this means is that your body is breaking down enough fat that ketones in your bloodstream. This happens either by fasting or with the support of a low-carb, high-fat, moderate protein eating style. Being “in ketosis” is a normal metabolic state.

One of the goals of the ketogenic eating style is becoming “keto-adapted”. Being keto-adapted means that your body is primed for functioning with very little glucose. This is the END goal of The Keto Beginning.

When you first enter ketosis (a result of following a ketogenic eating style for a couple of days), you are using fat for energy, but it's in limited amounts at first because you don't have as many fat-converting enzymes in your body. Different enzymes are involved in breaking down fat than breaking down glucose. And; up until now, you've been breaking down excess glucose more so than fats, so it takes the body a bit of time to “catch up” and store these enzymes when you first get started. This is one of the reasons many people feel tired at the beginning of following a ketogenic eating style. Once the enzymes are built up, your cells change the way they acquire energy and you become fully keto-adapted.

The process of becoming keto-adapted can take a few weeks to a month, depending on the person.

Once you're keto-adapted, fatty acids and their substrates, ketone bodies, become your body's preferred fuel. Hormone levels change, the energy stores in liver and muscle (glycogen) are depleted, your body carries around less water, and your energy is boosted to normal levels again.

This is why The Keto Beginning outlines sticking with the plan for 30 days before deviation, so that one can become fully keto-adapted.

When the body is keto-adapted and gets an overdose of carbohydrates the process of getting back into ketosis doesn't take as long as the initial keto-adaptation process because the body is primed to use fat as energy. When too many carbohydrates are consumed, the carbohydrates (glucose) still takes precedence over fat for fuel because excess blood sugar is fatal and so your body needs to handle the sugar first.

When the overdose occurs, a couple of things happen: glycogen (the way glucose is stored in the liver and muscles) gets replenished, leading to water retention, insulin rises, and hormone levels are boosted. While this is occurring, you are not burning ketones. Once the glucose is depleted, the body will go back into ketosis.

As you begin your keto journey, the more often you have sugar (or, an abundance of carbohydrates past what your body can manage on a daily basis without spiking insulin release), the longer it takes to become keto-adapted.



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WEEK 1**Day 1**

Intake: Calories: 1700 | Fat: 131g | Fiber: 24.2g | Carbs: 62.4g | Net Carbs: 38.2g | Protein: 70.5g
Ratio: Carbs: 15% | Fat: 70% | Protein: 15%

Blackberry Parfaits

½ cup full-fat coconut milk
 ¼ teaspoon ground vanilla bean powder
 1 drop alcohol-free stevia
 ½ oz. crushed raw pecans
 1 oz. walnuts
 75 grams fresh blackberries

Add coconut milk, vanilla bean powder and stevia to a medium-sized bowl. Whip. Top with pecans, walnuts and blackberries and enjoy!

Hemp Kale Salad

125 grams kale, chopped and washed under warm water
 6 leaves romaine lettuce
 2 soft-boiled eggs
 35 grams avocado, sliced
 2 tablespoons hemp seeds
 ¼ cup nutritional yeast
 1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil
 2 tablespoons balsamic vinegar
 ½ teaspoon spice mixture
 Himalayan rock salt and freshly ground pepper, to taste

Add kale, lettuce, eggs, avocado and hemp seeds to a large bowl. Set aside. Combine nutritional yeast, olive oil, vinegar, spice mixture, salt and pepper to a small bowl. Mix to combine. Drop over salad; it will be a thick paste, mix in and enjoy.

Chicken Curry on Coconut Rice

140 grams raw skin-on chicken thigh, chopped
 1 tablespoon coconut oil
 ¼ cup full-fat coconut milk
 ½ teaspoon [Curry Powder Spice Mix](#)
 Himalayan rock salt and freshly ground pepper, to taste
 250 grams raw cauliflower, shredded
 30 grams raw coconut meat, sliced thin

Add chicken thigh pieces to a medium-sized pan with coconut oil. Cook on medium-heat until no longer pink, about 8 minutes. Add coconut milk, curry powder, salt and pepper. Reduce heat to low and simmer for 5 minutes. Meanwhile, add water to a small pot and bring to a boil. Add shredded cauliflower and boil for 1 minute. Drain completely, add coconut meat and transfer to a plate. Top with curry and serve!

Keto Lemonade and/or Homemade Stock

WEEK 1

Day 2

Intake: Calories: 1766 | Fat: 146.1g | Fiber: 29.7g | Carbs: 50g | Net Carbs: 20.3g | Protein: 63.7g

Ratio: Carbs: 11% | Fat: 75% | Protein: 14%

Blended Coffee

2 cups brewed coffee
1 tablespoon coconut oil
¼ teaspoon ground cinnamon

Add ingredients to the jug of your high-powered blender and blend on high for 1 minute.

Chicken Salad Sandwich

85 grams cooked skin-on chicken thigh meat, chopped
2 celery sticks, chopped
1 tablespoon [MCT Mayonnaise](#)
Himalayan rock salt and freshly ground pepper, to taste
3 romaine lettuce leaves
2 slices [Flax Seed Focaccia](#), sliced

Add chopped chicken to a small bowl with celery, mayonnaise, salt and pepper. Stir to combine. Sandwich chicken mixture between sliced bread and top with lettuce leaves.

Coconut Candies

60 grams raw coconut meat, diced small
28 grams raw pecans, diced small
1 tablespoon coconut oil, melted

Add ingredients to a small bowl. Stir to combine. Divide mixture into a silicone candy mold and transfer to the freezer to chill for 1-hour.

One-Pan Eggs and Bacon with Avocado Fries

54 grams uncured bacon
150 grams broccoli florets
4 asparagus spears
50 grams avocado, sliced
2 eggs
Himalayan rock salt and freshly ground pepper, to taste

Place bacon in a large frying pan and cook on medium-low for 2 minutes, until fats begin to collect in the pan. Place avocado strips into the grease and cook for 2-3 minutes per side, until crisp. Remove the bacon, and cook eggs in the fat that it's rendered. Add asparagus and broccoli florets to the pan, cover and cook until everything is complete. Top with salt and pepper, to taste.

Keto Lemonade and/or Homemade Stock