

GETTING STARTED:

The Toward Health Blueprint

**EAT**

Eat under 30g of *total* carbs per day until you are reasonably full and try to eat enough at mealtimes to avoid snacking. This will help stabilize blood sugar and get you into ketosis, a powerful tool in suppressing appetite. While it is not necessary to track your overall intake, if you are unfamiliar with carb counts, consider using a free app to look up their values until you become more familiar with them.

**OBSERVE**

Notice which foods keep you full for long periods of time, and which foods make you hungrier or drive you to eat more and more of them. Observe the people, places, situations, times of day and emotions that drive you to eat so you can strategize ways to prepare for them in the future.



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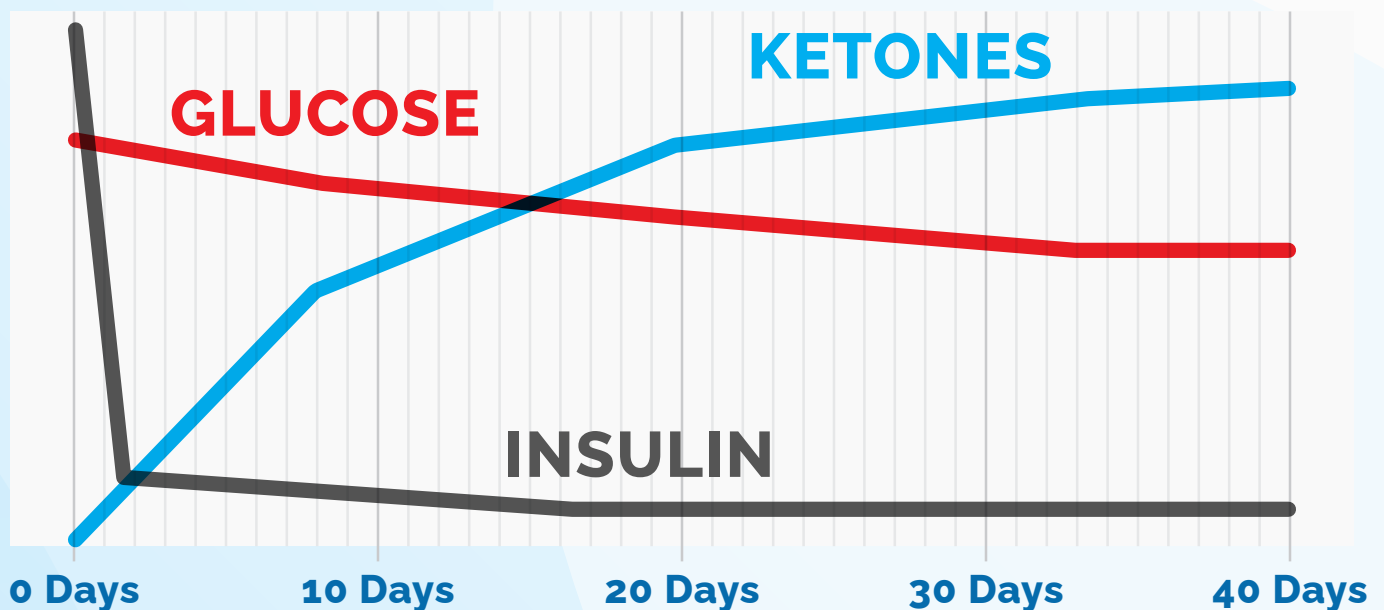
PREPARE

The first few weeks are also about identifying challenges that arise, so you can prepare yourself with realistic solutions for when they show up in the future. Relying on willpower alone will not be enough! This is useful information!

Also, take note of the foods you turn to or give in to when willpower is low. Having a plan and options for these situations will help keep you on track.



How it works



THIS PROCESS TAKES TIME...

When you go on a very low-carb diet, you are asking your body to change the energy source it has been using from sugar to fat. This takes time and patience.

After about a week on a low-carb diet, your fat burning rate will ramp up. In 4-6 weeks, ketones and free fatty acids will begin to peak. This means your body is better able to access its fat stores for fuel.

The goal in the first few weeks is to eat the foods that keep you full, allowing your body to access its fat stores and eventually suppress your appetite.



EAT UNTIL YOU'RE FULL

In addition to keeping your carbs at 30g of *total* carbs or less per day, it is important, especially in the first few weeks, that you eat until reasonably full. This is likely a big shift from every diet you have previously tried!

We do not think it is beneficial to decrease or limit protein or fat intake, but there is no need to go out of your way to add extra fat. Using fat as a weight loss lever may become something to address later on, but weight loss should not be the focus until your appetite is suppressed, typically after 4 to 6 weeks.

The first several weeks should be about eating enough food that you are reasonably full. Stick to meat, fish, eggs, dairy, non-starchy vegetables, low-carb fruits (like berries) and unsweetened Greek yogurt and make sure to eat enough!



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ADD SALT

In the first few weeks you may feel lightheaded, dehydrated and your blood pressure may drop. These are all signs you may need to increase your salt intake.

Salt is essential not only for replenishing and balancing electrolytes during the first few weeks, but it also plays a key role in reducing the risk of kidney stones.

We suggest most of our patients liberally salt their food to taste, particularly in the first several weeks. It may be necessary to add in no-sugar added electrolytes to help you feel your best during this period.

If you have health concerns about adding salt or electrolytes, please check with your medical provider.



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DRINK WATER

When you drastically reduce carbs, your body produces less insulin, the fat storage hormone. As a result of this, your kidneys will release a great deal of salt and water. Make sure to increase your water intake and stay well hydrated! Drink fluids (water, unsweetened tea/coffee, seltzer) until urine is mostly clear.



FAST

Once your appetite is suppressed, usually in 4-6 weeks, slowly incorporate intermittent fasting into your routine. Consider sticking to a 6-8 hour eating window. For many people, this is achieved by delaying your first meal of the day until you are hungry, but stick to the eating schedule that works best for your lifestyle.



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MOVE

Introduce light exercise when your body feels ready. If you have not done any regular movement in a while, start slowly and gently.



RELAX

Long-term success will mean routinely getting adequate sleep, managing stress, and identifying triggers. However, sometimes, despite our best efforts, life happens, and these things get disrupted. If stress is high or you're facing challenges, turn to low-carb/low-sugar replacement foods and live to fight another day. It's all about consistency, not perfection.



Summary



- ▶ Keep your *total* carbs to less than 30g per day. Do not worry about counting the carbs in non-starchy vegetables.
- ▶ Do not restrict fat and protein: eat meat, fish, eggs, dairy, non-starchy vegetables, low-carb fruit (like berries) and unsweetened Greek yogurt. Eat until you're reasonably full.
- ▶ Stay well hydrated and increase salt.
- ▶ Do not focus on weight loss for the first several weeks. You are priming your body to access its fat stores for appetite suppression. Focus on which foods leave you feeling full and satiated and which foods leave you wanting more.
- ▶ Pay attention to the challenges that arise—this is valuable information you can use to prepare for the future. Treat them as learning opportunities, because relying on willpower alone will not be enough!