

Atkins Diet – A small guide by James Little

After reading though parts of the book and sections of the website, I have compiled the following document that gives you the basis of the Atkins diet. I'll planning on doing this diet in the future, so I'll keep the document up to date if I find or create more resources.

1) Resources

<http://tom.cuy.net/atkins/>
<http://www.atkinsdietbulletinboard.com/index.php>
<http://atkins.com/>
<http://www.atkinsdietmenu.net>

2) Phase 1 : Induction Stage

You are given a set of rules that are outlined below. In short, you are allowed 20 grams a day of carbohydrate for your two week induction. You are given an “**Acceptable Foods list**” which you must not stray from.

Full Rules.

This phase of the Atkins Nutritional Approach™ must be followed precisely to achieve success. If you do it at all incorrectly you may prevent weight loss and end up saying, "Here is another weight-loss plan that didn't work." Also, check out "Extra Cautions," below.

Memorize the following rules as though your life depends upon it. In fact, it does.

1 Eat either three regular-size meals a day or four or five smaller meals. Do not skip meals or go more than six waking hours without eating.

2 Eat liberally of combinations of fat and protein in the form of poultry, fish, shellfish, eggs and red meat, as well as pure, natural fat in the form of butter, mayonnaise, olive oil, safflower, sunflower and other vegetable oils (preferably expeller-pressed or cold-pressed).

3 Eat no more than 20 grams a day of carbohydrate, most of which must come in the form of salad greens and other vegetables. You can eat approximately three loosely packed cups of salad, or two cups of salad plus one cup of other vegetables (see Acceptable Foods).

4 Eat absolutely no fruit, bread, pasta, grains, starchy vegetables or dairy products other than cheese, cream or butter. Do not eat nuts or seeds in the first two weeks. Foods that combine protein and carbohydrates, such as chickpeas, kidney beans and other legumes, are not permitted at this time.

5 Eat nothing that isn't on the Acceptable Foods list. And that means absolutely nothing. Your "just this one taste won't hurt" rationalization is the kiss of failure during this phase of Atkins.

6 Adjust the quantity you eat to suit your appetite, especially as it decreases. When you're hungry, eat the amount that makes you feel satisfied, but not stuffed. When you're not hungry, eat a small controlled carbohydrate snack to accompany your nutritional supplements.

7 Don't assume any food is low in carbohydrate—instead, read labels. Check the carb count (it's on every package) or use a carbohydrate gram counter.

8 Eat out as often as you wish but be on guard for hidden carbs in gravies, sauces and dressings. Gravy is often made with flour or cornstarch, and sugar is sometimes an ingredient in salad dressing.

9. Avoid foods or drinks sweetened with aspartame. Instead, use sucralose or saccharin. Be sure to count each packet of any of these as 1 gram of carbs.

10 Avoid coffee, tea and soft drinks that contain caffeine. Excessive caffeine has been shown to cause low blood sugar, which can make you crave sugar.

11 Drink at least eight 8-ounce glasses of water each day to hydrate your body, avoid constipation and flush out the by-products of burning fat.

12 If you are constipated, mix a tablespoon or more of psyllium husks in a cup or more of water and drink daily. Or mix ground flaxseed into a shake or sprinkle wheat bran on a salad or vegetables.

13 At a minimum, take a good daily multivitamin with minerals, including potassium, magnesium and calcium, but without iron.

Acceptable Foods within Induction Stage

These are the foods you may eat liberally during Induction:
all fish all fowl all shellfish all meat all eggs

*Oysters and mussels are higher in carbs than other shellfish, so limit them to four ounces per day.

**Processed meats, such as ham, bacon, pepperoni, salami, hot dogs and other luncheon meats—and some fish—may be cured with added sugar and will contribute carbs. Try to avoid meat and fish products cured with nitrates, which are known carcinogens. Also beware of products that are not exclusively meat, fish or fowl, such as imitation fish, meatloaf and breaded foods. Finally, do not consume more than four ounces of organ meats a day.

OTHER FOODS THAT ARE ACCEPTABLE DURING INDUCTION

Cheese

You can consume three to four ounces daily of the following full-fat, firm, soft and semisoft aged cheeses, including:*

cheddar
cow, sheep and goat cheese
cream cheese
Gouda
mozzarella
Roquefort and other blue cheeses
Swiss

*All cheeses have some carbohydrate content. The quantity you eat should be governed by that knowledge.

Vegetables

You can have two to three cups per day of:

alfalfa sprouts
daikon
mushrooms
arugula
endive
parsley
bok choy
escarole
peppers
celery
fennel
radicchio
chicory
jicama
radishes
chives
lettuce
romaine lettuce
cucumber
mâche
sorrel

These salad vegetables are high in phytonutrients and provide a good source of fiber.

Other Vegetables

You can have one cup per day of these veggies if salad does not exceed two cups. The following vegetables are slightly higher in carbohydrate content than the salad vegetables:

artichoke
celery root
pumpkin
artichoke hearts
rhubarb
asparagus
chard
sauerkraut
bamboo shoots
collard greens
scallions
dandelion
snow peas
bean sprouts
dandelion greens
spaghetti squash
beet greens
eggplant
spinach
broccoli
hearts of palm
string or wax beans
broccoli rabe
kale
summer squash
brussels
kohlrabi
tomato
bean sprouts
leeks
turnips
cabbage
okra
water chestnuts
cauliflower
onion
zucchini

If a vegetable, such as spinach or tomato, cooks down significantly, it must be measured raw so as not to underestimate its carb count.

Salad Garnishes

crumbled crisp bacon
grated cheese
minced hard-boiled egg
sautéed mushrooms
sour cream

Spices

All spices to taste, but make sure none contain added sugar.

Herbs

basil
garlic
rosemary
cayenne pepper
ginger
sage
cilantro
oregano
tarragon
dill
pepper
thyme

For salad dressing, use oil and vinegar (but not balsamic vinegar, which contains sugar) or lemon juice and herbs and spices. Prepared salad dressings without added sugar and no more than two carbs per tablespoon serving are also fine.

Acceptable Fats and Oils

Many fats, especially certain oils, are essential to good nutrition. Olive oil is particularly valuable. All other vegetable oils are allowed, the best being canola, walnut, soybean, grapeseed, sesame, sunflower and safflower oils, especially if they are labeled "cold-pressed" or "expeller-pressed." Do not cook polyunsaturated oils, such as corn, soybean and sunflower oil, at high temperatures or allow to brown or smoke.

Butter is allowed. Margarine should be avoided, not because of its carbohydrate content, but because it is usually made of trans fats (hydrogenated oils), which are a serious health hazard. (Some nonhydrogenated margarines are available in health-food stores.)

You don't have to remove the skin and fat from meat or fowl. Salmon and other cold-water fish are an excellent source of omega-3 fatty acids.

Acceptable Beverages

Be sure to drink a minimum of eight eight-ounce glasses of water each day, including:

Filtered water
Mineral water
Spring water
Tap water

Additionally, you can have the following:

Cream, heavy or light (limit to two to three tablespoons a day; note carbohydrate content)

Decaffeinated coffee or tea*

Diet soda made with sucralose (Splenda™); be sure to count the carbs

Essence-flavored seltzer (must say "no calories" and should not contain aspartame)

Herb tea (without barley or any fruit sugar added)

Lemon juice or lime juice (note that each contains 2.8 grams carbohydrate per ounce); limit to two to three tablespoons

Special Category Foods

To add variety, each day you can also eat 10 to 20 olives, half a small avocado, an ounce of sour cream or three ounces of unsweetened heavy cream, as well as two to three tablespoons of lemon juice or lime juice. But be aware that these foods occasionally slow down weight loss in some people, and may need to be avoided in the first two weeks. If you seem to be losing slowly, moderate your intake of these foods.

Convenience Foods

Although it is important that you eat primarily unprocessed foods, some controlled carb food products can come in handy when you are unable to find appropriate food, can't take time for a meal or need a quick snack. More and more companies are creating healthy food products that can be eaten during the Induction phase of Atkins. Just remember two things:

Not all convenience food products are the same, so check labels and carbohydrate content.

Snack Suggestions

<http://www.atkinsdietbulletinboard.com/viewtopic.php?t=4432>

pepperoni chips

nuke pepperoni slices on paper towels, plate, or parchment paper until color change appears 1-2 minutes. Cool and they will be crispy like chips. carb count will depend on your brand of pepperoni

cheese chips

buy deli sliced cheese about as thick as the ones your mom used when you were a kid. Make sure it is cheese and not cheese food. Ask the counterperson to see the label and get your carb count. cut them in to 4 squares and nuke on parchment paper or a flat plate until bubbling all over. cool slightly and scrape off plate. When cooled completely you will have crisp chips like cheezits if you use cheddar. You can use any cheese you want but it won't work with the soft cheeses like mozzarella. Carb count will vary by cheese type.

3) Phase Two : Ongoing Weight Loss

On the Atkins diet website it says you need "Your Own Private, Personal Number" - Basically what this means is that by the third week you can eat more carbohydrates, but the only person that can tell you how much you intake of these is yourself. On the 3rd week of the diet it is suggested that you

increase your intake of carbs from 20 grams a day to 25 grams a day, adding another salad or something similar. Try this for a week and if you continue to loose weight steadily then increase it to 30 grams – continue this process each week until you find one week where you have lost no weight. This is where you find what is called the CCLL (Critical Carbohydrate Level for Losing) – above it you will put weight on – below it and you will continue to loose.

Once you find your CCLL it is easier to plan and cook more meals, there are lots of resources for “low carb” meals on the internet, here is a few :

<http://www.verybestmeals.com/Recipes/LowCarbRecipes.aspx>

<http://www.carb-lite.au.com/>

<http://www.camacdonald.com/lc/LowCarbohydrateCooking-Recipes.htm>

<http://www.lowcarbohydraterecipes.net/>

<http://www.allrecipes.com/directory/4007.asp>

4) **Keep going!**

The Atkins diet is said to be a “crash” diet, but that’s far from the truth. You choose the amount of time that you wish to do the on going weight loss for – be it the amount of time it takes you to loose a certain amount of weight, or a set time that you said you would do it for at the start of the diet. Once you have reached this target you could not to straight back to a high carbohydrate lifestyle – it is suggested that you keep adding about 10 grams of carbs a week – if you find you a putting weight back on then you should drop back down to your CCLL and try to find a better level again. It’s meant to work, but that remains to be soon – after seeing some of the before and after pictures of the Message Board (link at top of document) then I will certainly be trying this diet and hoping that it will be the start of a more healthy lifestyle.

If you have any comments on this document please send them to james@exwebjunkie.com