

The Veronica Atkins Foundation

Getting started on the Atkins Lifestyle

The beginning of a weight loss plan is often exciting as you take charge of your health and your weight. Motivation is often high but can soon pale as you try to fit your new way of eating into other aspects of your life.

There are strategies you can use to keep yourself on track better than ever before to be sure to succeed this time.

- Change your mindset along with your food choices. Give up dieting and adopt a permanent lifestyle change.
- To increase your chances of success educate yourself thoroughly by reading *Dr. Atkins' New Diet Revolution*. Return to it again and again. There is always more to learn.
- Clean out your kitchen of those foods that are no longer a part of your lifestyle. If you live with others who still eat high carb foods, put them in a separate cabinet or section of the fridge.
- Stock up on foods you can have. Experiment. Try new things. Check out recipes on the many low carb sites and in the Atkins cookbooks. At first include only those recipes that contain Induction ingredients.
- Atkins is about eating whole foods. Avoid low carb products the first 2 weeks.
- Take baseline labs tests as described by Dr. Atkins in his book. You will want to get repeat labs in the future. When making a lifestyle change it is important to define success by something other than numbers on the scale. Feeling better, losing inches and seeing your risk factors get better will go along way to sustain your motivation over any tough times in the future.
- Expect ups and downs and I don't just mean on the scale. Anything worth doing can have rough patches so include them in the process. There is a learning curve. When you make a mistake learn from it rather than give up or get sloppy.
- Take and record baseline weight and body measurements. Resolve to weigh yourself only once a week—no more. Watching the scale is a surefire path to failure for many. Retake body measurements and record them every 2 weeks along with your weight.
- Since you will always need to control your carb intake (even on maintenance) set realistic goals. This is not a race. It takes time to instill new habits.
- Avoid comparing your weight loss now to how you lost years ago or to anyone else. Your body changes over time and you are unique. Remember that many medications can affect weight loss.
- Set a weight and size goal. Size is more important. You can lose inches and not lose weight or even temporarily gain. Just hang in there.
- Follow Atkins correctly. There is decades worth of experience behind Dr. Atkins advice.
- Create a support system. There are low carb chat rooms that can be very helpful if you don't have support from someone close to you. Just keep in mind that occasionally you will get incorrect info on the Internet. For checking facts refer back to Dr. Atkins' books or to a reputable site.
- Eat a good breakfast including protein. Since protein helps to control hunger be sure to have protein at each meal and snack.
- Eat enough to be pleasantly full but never stuffed.
- If you're not hungry at mealtime, have a protein snack rather than skip a meal.
- When you're close to your goal read *Atkins for Life* to learn the finer points of Lifetime Maintenance.
- Remember that when losing just 5 to 10 percent of the weight you need to lose you are already decreasing your risk factors and are getting healthier.
- Resolve never to give up.

Note that there are several medical conditions that require particular guidance when following the Atkins Lifestyle.

People with kidney disease must be monitored when increasing protein intake. Because it may be inappropriate for you to do so, be sure to consult with your physician before making any dietary changes.

People with type 2 diabetes will improve their blood sugar control when decreasing carbs in their diet. This can quickly necessitate a change in diabetes medication to avoid a dangerous overdose. *In advance* plan with your physician how to manipulate your medications as your blood sugar levels improve.

Many overweight people have elevated levels of uric acid in their blood that can increase their risk of gout especially during weight loss. Be sure to have a baseline uric acid level drawn prior to beginning Atkins. Stay well hydrated, avoid rapid weight loss and include a repeat uric acid level with your follow-up labs due about 6 weeks into the program.

Weight loss is not recommended during pregnancy or breast feeding. Avoid the weight loss phases of Atkins. It is quite healthy to follow Lifetime Maintenance.

For more important information be sure to review the following presentations:

[Low Carb 101](#)

[Controlling Carbs and Preventing Disease](#)

The information presented on this site is in no way intended as medical advice or as a substitute for medical treatment. This information should be used in conjunction with the guidance and care of your physician. Consult your physician before beginning this program as you would any weight loss or weight maintenance program. Those of you on diuretics or diabetes medication should proceed only under a doctor's supervision as changing your diet usually requires a change in medication dosages. As with any plan, the weight-loss phases of this program should not be used by patients on dialysis or by pregnant or nursing women. As with any weight-loss plan, we recommend anyone under the age of 18 follow the program under the guidance of their physician.

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