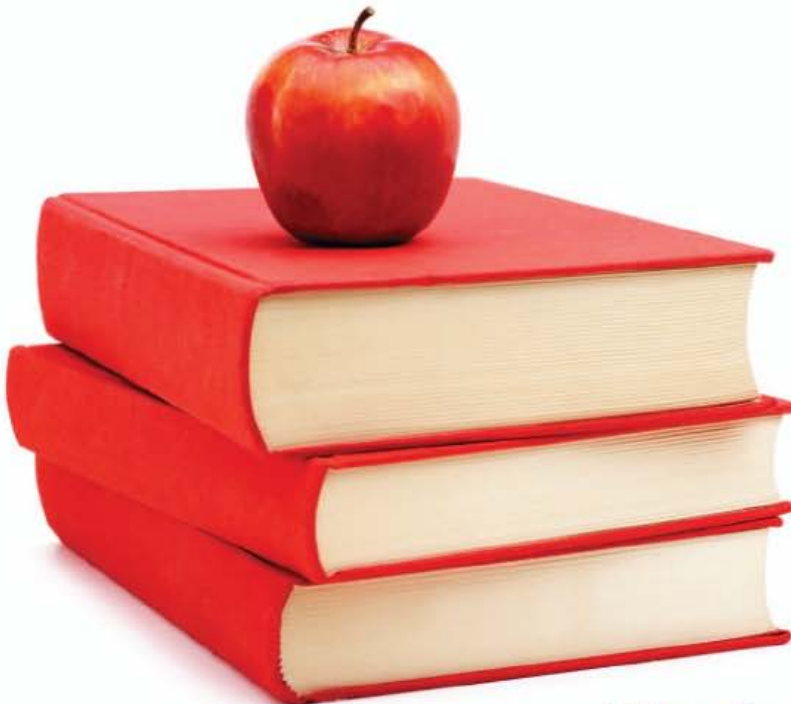


# The Modern Diet Review

- ✓ Low Fat
- ✓ Low Carb
- ✓ Detox
- ✓ Balanced Nutrients
- ✓ Intermittent Fasting
- ✓ Cleansing
- ✓ Blood Type



**Find out what works  
and what doesn't.**

By: John Barban

# **The Modern Diet Review**

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By: John Barban

# Introduction

This is your guide to the most popular diet programs and weight loss eating styles you see in today's marketplace. The first four eating programs all have some mass appeal and many people have tried them with varying degrees of success. The diet that is right for you largely depends on where you are in your current dieting journey as well as your lifestyle preferences.

We'll get to the point in a quick and dirty fashion so you can decide which one is right for you. These four programs all have had enough influence and success to merit a good look.

- 1) Traditional Low Fat
- 2) Low Carbohydrate style
- 3) Intermittent Fasting
- 4) Balanced Nutrient ratios (carbs, protein, fat)

The following two eating programs can only be described as gimmicks that have no scientific backing whatsoever. They are poor attempts at impressing the non scientific customer with science-like sounding concepts that seem to make sense. Unfortunately when put to the test these diets are simply full of hot air, anecdotes, factoids and vague sounding ideas that hold no water when faced with real scientific scrutiny.

- 5) Cleansing and Detox
- 6) Blood Type Diet

*Note: Eating styles like the “paleo diet” have not been put under as rigorous scientific scrutiny as of yet as the above mentioned diets, therefore it will not be reviewed here. It is however useful to note that the concept of the paleo diet seems to fit well with both intermittent fasting and some form of balanced macro nutrient dieting. In this case using whole foods and minimizing processed foods seems to be the focus, however that is beyond the scope of this review.*

# Low Fat Diets

## History:

Dietary fat has been public enemy #1 for decades spanning back to the early 1950's. The renowned researcher Ancel Keys suggested that an excess of dietary fat was a likely cause for increased risk of heart disease and pioneered the 'low fat' movement. Keys was a great researcher and was definitely on to something when he first started researching dietary fat and the effects it can have on the body when it is *consumed in excess*.

## Basic Theory:

Of all 3 major macro nutrients (fat, carbohydrates and protein) dietary fat is the most easily stored as fat on your body and is potentially the most damaging to your health when eaten in excess.

Another reason fat was the target of the weight loss movement is because fat has more than double the amount of calories per gram compared to carbohydrates or protein. Fat has 9 calories per gram, whereas carbs and protein only have 4. This means it doesn't take too much extra dietary fat to cause you to gain weight.

This is the simplest explanation for the evil reputation dietary fat has managed to garner for itself.

All fats are not created equal however and the old theory of limiting all fats has since been refined to lowering specifically saturated fats and trans fats. These are the fats that are commonly referred to as the 'bad' fats. And it does make good sense to try and at least limit their intake when you can.

So if saturated and trans fats are the 'bad' fats, then what are the 'good' fats?

Unsaturated fats are the 'good' fats. The most notable are mono unsaturated fat (found in olive oil) and poly-unsaturated fats such as fish oils. These are the good guy fats that have been shown in many studies to be good for overall health and specifically heart health.

Poly unsaturated fats like omega 3 fats are actually essential for proper healthy functioning and you must get them from your diet, you're body cannot create these types of fats on its own. This is why the latest versions of low fat dieting specifically keeps mono and poly unsaturated fats in the diet as the 'good' fats. This is also why the old school style of getting rid of all fats at all costs isn't the best idea.

## Points To Consider:

The major flaw of focusing on fat alone as the reason for weight gain adds stress when eating socially and guilt when eating anything with fat in it. There is also a tendency to overeat carbohydrates to compensate for the lack of satiation provided by dietary fats.

- 1) Many people who follow a strict low fat diet end up over eating carbohydrates for one of a few reasons.
  - a) Fat tastes good. If you remove too much fat you might overcompensate with carbohydrates and sugar in an effort to regain the missing taste and flavor the a small amount of fat would have provided.
  - b) Fat provides a feeling of satiety that neither carbohydrates or protein can provide. Therefore people might overcompensate with more food to try and get the same feeling fat used to give them.
  - c) Many people tend to over eat low fat or fat free foods assuming they will not gain weight. This is false. As a result when eating a very low fat diet some people give themselves the green light to eat as much carbohydrates and protein as they can fit into their mouth thinking it will not cause them to gain wait. This is a big mistake as any food you eat in excess will be stored as fat no matter what it starts out as, this includes carbohydrates and protein.

- 2) Eating and choosing food becomes stressful and a source of guilt. If you are following a low fat diet you may quickly find that shopping becomes stressful as well as eating out and eating socially. You become the person who is always opting for the low fat option on the menu and many social eating situations turn into a balancing act between your desire to enjoy a tasty meal and the guilt you will feel after you eat it. By labeling some fats as 'bad' you are setting yourself up for stressful eating situations and dealing with feelings of guilt after eating any form of fat. Increasing your stress level and negative emotions like guilt can very well contribute to things like cardiovascular disease which is one of the reasons many people try a low fat diet in the first place. Not a good cycle to be caught in.

## Does it Work?

Following a low fat diet doesn't seem to cause any measureable amount of weight loss from simply changing the amount of fat you eat, unless it causes you to eat fewer total calories.

Let me repeat that, it only works for weight loss if you are eating less total calories.

There is no magic in eating less fat. In other words if your regular metabolism burns off 2000 calories today, and by the end of the day you have eaten 2000 calories, your weight won't change. It wouldn't matter how many of those calories come from fat.

In reality people who cut fat out of their diet simply end up overeating carbs instead.

Eating low fat could be an effective way to lose weight in the short term. However scientific research shows that diets centered around a bad guy ingredient like fat eventually fail due to a lack of food variety, added stress to events like social eating and grocery shopping, and new feelings of guilt about many foods that you like to eat. In the end most people give up on low fat diets for these reasons.

# Low Carbohydrate Diet

## History:

Low carbohydrate diets have been in and out of vogue more than once over the past 100 years. The latest push for low carbohydrates started in the early 1990's.

By the end of the 80's dietary fat was well established as the root of all dieting evil, and the low fat message was ingrained into the mentality of the population through wide reaching information campaigns from the American medical association, the American heart association, the FDA and the entire food industry.

Low fat or fat free versions of all kinds of foods were available. The message was clear and the entire population responded.

There was just one major problem; people still weren't losing any weight.

How could this be? Wasn't fat the bad guy? Like we already said in the low fat diet section people simply cut some fat out of their diets and started overeating carbohydrates. So the net result was no reduction in calories.

This opened the door for a new bad guy food to blame because fat surely wasn't it. Enter carbohydrates, or carbs for short.

## Basic Theory:

Carbohydrates are the main source of fuel we get from fruits, vegetables and grains. Dairy products like milk and yogurt also have some carbs. All baked goods, rice, and anything made with flour including pasta and bread are also high in carbs by weight. They are cheap to



produce, easy to store, they last a long time, and easy to cook and bake with. From an industrial stand point they're great for making food products, but what about our bodies?

Carbs are the preferred fuel source of your central nervous system and your brain. There is an essential amount of approximately 100 grams per day that is deemed the minimal amount needed for proper brain and central nervous system functioning.

When you eat carbs your body produces a hormone called insulin to store the carbohydrates in your muscle cells, liver and fat cells. This is necessary because leaving the sugar in your blood for prolonged periods of time is dangerous and causes severe cellular damage to all kinds of tissues around your body and eventually death.

The low carb diet theory makes the assumption that high sugar and high carbohydrate foods cause an abnormally high amount of insulin to be released into your blood stream and therefore causes you to gain and store fat. Extreme forms of low carb dieting set an upper daily limit on carb intake in the range of 30-80 grams and assume you can and will eat all the rest of your calories from fat and protein.

The foundation of all low carb diets is the concept of controlling or reducing insulin release by eating very little or no carbs which in theory is supposed to limit the amount of fat you can gain. This theory isn't very sound scientifically as protein causes a similar insulin release as carbs, therefore one of the main tenets of the low carb diet theory is already flawed at its fundamental basis.

## Points to Consider:

Low carb theory presents a few problems that cause it to be very difficult to follow for any length of time as well as raising some potential health problems and even social problems.

- 1) Tendency to overeat fat and protein: Just like the low fat diet causes people to overeat carbs, a low carb diet can cause people to overeat fat and protein. Even if you only eat fat and protein your body will still store the excess food as fat.

Your body also produces insulin when you eat protein therefore the low carb theory makes a critical error assuming that fat and protein does not cause insulin release and will not be stored as fat if you don't eat carbs.

- 2) Nutrient Deficiency: Eating a very low carb diet will also cause you to be eating a much lower fiber diet. You may also be missing out on some of the nutrients found in fruits, vegetables and grains that you simply cannot get from other foods.
- 3) Strict low carb diets can start having an impact on your social life as social eating events become a challenge. Stressful eating and awkward situations arise when you are sitting at a restaurant asking the server to bring you a burger with no bun and instead of rice on the side you ask for a few more slices of cheese.
- 4) If people become adjusted to a very low carb eating habit they may start to eat more and more fat to compensate for the lack of carbs. This could increase cardiovascular disease risk and eventually a massive excess of fat consumption.

## Does it Work?

Low carb diets are useful for short term weight loss strategies from 6-8 weeks. In many cases carbohydrates are the one nutrient that gets eaten in excess therefore reducing carbs can cause a dramatic weight loss result in the short term. In many cases the carbs aren't being reduced to drastic levels and taught by atkins, but rather they are simply brought back to normal levels from a previously elevated and unhealthy level.

Research also shows that over a 3 month period low carb diets do show some weight loss. The weight loss however has nothing to do with insulin control and everything to do with a lower total amount of food consumed.

In reality following a low carb diet makes you eat less food. This is largely due to lack of food choice and variety.

When compared head to head with a standard reduced calorie diet, or even a low fat diet, the weight loss results for a low carb diet are the same as both the low fat or the standard low calorie diet.

In other words, the only factor that ever matters for weight loss is total calories.

People following a strict low carb diet will end up over eating fat and protein.

Low carb diets are typically not sustainable for more than a few weeks and in some cases a few months. They are effective for quick short term weight loss but should only be used for a maximum of 8 weeks.

Most people find these diets too restrictive and not very socially compatible either. Eventually the lack of food variety and choice along with the awkward social eating situations it creates causes people to give up on eating low carb over the long haul.

# Intermittent Fasting Diet

## History:

Fasting has been a part of almost every culture since the beginning of recorded history. Many of the world's religions have some form of fasting built into their traditions including Christianity, Buddhism, Hinduism, Muslim, Judaism, and many others. In these traditional forms fasting is not meant to be used as a weight loss strategy, rather it serves many purposes such as to aid in meditation, spirituality, appreciation, thanks, and personal reflection among other things.

Medical fasting is a very common practice that is used extensively in western medicine to prepare patients for surgery and many forms of testing. This kind of fasting is also used in many scientific studies to prepare a person for experiments involving drugs, nutritional and food interventions, supplements and exercise.

Medical fasting can be as short of a period as 12 hours and as long as 24-72 hours depending on the study and what the researchers are examining or the types of blood testing required.

For the purpose of weight loss intermittent fasting has been used medically as a way to induce rapid weight loss.

## Basic Theory:

Intermittent fasting programs correctly assume that weight loss can only be achieved by consuming less calories than you burn off. The simplest way to achieve this is to abstain from eating any food at all, in other words "fasting".

In most cases the fast itself should only be sustained for short periods of 24-48 hours. However some research studies had people abstain from food for 90 days achieving massive weight loss results approaching 100 pounds.

This is an extreme example of what is possible but is only conducted in medically supervised settings and only used in cases of severe morbid obesity requiring dramatic weight loss. For most people this is not necessary or advisable. A scaled down version called 'intermittent fasting' is becoming a popular method of weight loss.

Intermittent fasting is the practice of fasting on a semi regular schedule. In its strictest definition people who following an intermittent fasting program take every second day off from eating. For example, if you decide to eat on Saturday, you would then abstain from eating on Sunday then resume eating again on Monday. This is the purest definition of true intermittent fasting of 'one day on, one day off' of eating.

The exact time you start and stop your fasts with this kind of eating may also vary. You may choose to start and stop your fast based on a particular time of day, or perhaps time it with your sleep cycle, or even the rise and fall of the sun. There is no hard and fast rule with intermittent fasting. The purpose is to simply eat less calories over the course of the week or month by adding in prolonged periods of abstaining from eating food.

## Points To Consider:

Strict Intermittent Fasting will produce weight loss however it may be too restrictive for many people to follow. A strict intermittent fasting schedule such as one day on /one day off style can easily become far too cumbersome to follow. The lack of flexibility with the choice of fasting days will quickly interfere with social, family and even work events.

Traditional fasts such as the ones taught by many religions are typically outlined to happen on specific dates or times of year. The presence of a community of people who are also following this schedule makes it much more tolerable socially however it would be very difficult if you

were the only person following this regime. This lack of flexibility can make fasting difficult to maintain as a long term diet strategy.

Allowing people to choose when they would like to fast allows for flexibility and would increase the likelihood that these people would be able to stick to an intermittent fasting routine indefinitely.

## Does it Work?

Intermittent Fasting has been shown scientifically to produce lasting weight loss when compared to other diets such as low fat or low carb. In fact when compared head to head to head, over the course of one year, only people on an intermittent fasting diet managed to keep the weight they lost off whereas people on the low carb and low fat diets regained all the weight they had lost within a year.

When the researchers asked the people on the low fat and low carb diets why they gained the weight back the people said that the diets were too difficult to follow and gave up, simply returning back to their old ways of eating.

When researchers asked the intermittent fasting people how they kept the weight off for the whole year the people said that every time they felt like they were starting to over eat and gain a bit of weight they simply added in a fasting day to burn the extra calories off. This is a good example of how the simplicity of a diet is the most important factor to its effectiveness.

While most other diet styles have multiple rules and entire categories of foods they recommend you avoid eating (like low carbs or low fat), fasting allows you to eat whatever you like whenever you like on your 'eating' days. The only rule in an intermittent fasting program is the fast itself. True intermittent fasting of one day on/one day off is too strict for many people, however flexible intermittent fasting that allows you to choose your fasting days according to

your social eating schedule makes intermittent fasting much more sustainable for long term weight loss success.

Another main reason why other diets fail is because they get in the way of food culture and many of the rituals that surround food. Intermittent fasting can be incorporated into your life without removing you from the food culture and social traditions you enjoy.

For an Intermittent Fasting Program See: [Eat Stop Eat](#)

# Balanced Nutrient Ratios Diet

## History:

Balanced nutrient ratio diets hit the scene in the mid to late 1990's. Instead of cutting out fat or carbs completely this theory suggests that you eat each major macronutrient at approximately the same ratio. The most common style was to consume 30% of your calories from fat, 30% from protein and 40% from carbs.

This was a drastic change from the mainstream diet advice of approximately 70% carbohydrate diet mixed with 10% protein and 20% fat. Considering this as the guideline at the time you can see how changing the ratios to 30-30-40 would be a big shake up.

This theory borrowed from the insulin control concept from the low carb theory but threw away the notions of the low fat theory which had proven to be a bust by at this point. Proponents of the balanced nutrient ratio diet teach the consumption of the good fats that helped reduced heart disease risk.

Increasing protein consumption from 10% to 30% of the diet was an easy recommendation to make as nobody could find anything wrong with eating more protein, and compared to carbohydrates proteins cause slightly more calorie burning and satisfy hunger better.

## Basic Theory:

The balanced nutrient ratio diet theory correctly assumes that people will not want to eat very low carb or very low fat for too long until they give up. This style of eating borrows from the insulin controlling aspect of low carb theory as well. In this case the reduction in carbs is not as



big as the reduction called for in low carb theory. This would allow people to still eat a healthy amount of fruits, veggies and grains without feeling deprived of carbs.

By now most people are well aware that there are good fats and bad fats and that we still need the good fats in a healthy diet. Increasing the recommended fat content from 20% to approx 30% of total calories isn't that big of a jump. The increased fat is also meant to be 'good fats' which makes it much easier for people to accept.

This dieting style started the rise of protein as the 'golden child' macronutrient. Increased protein helps with satiety, reduces hunger, and makes you feel full for a longer period of time. It also has a small but measureable effect on calorie burning as well.

## Points to Consider:

Balanced nutrient ratio diets are very solid from a scientific standpoint. Here are a few points to consider when starting this type of diet.

- 1) This kind of diet trains you to view food in ratios of nutrients instead of simply food. This is actually a good thing because you will become more aware of what each type of food is that you are eating. You will however need to resist the urge to start labeling foods as good or bad.
- 2) Following this style of dieting will require a well designed meal plan to show you how to structure your meals. Once you get the hand of creating balanced meals at home you will easily be able to recognize how to balance meals when you eat away from home. This might require some creating ordering every now and then, but for the most part restaurants try to provide some form of balance with their offerings.

- 3) You will invariably become a savvy grocery shopper as creating meals becomes a simple task of fitting together 3 puzzle pieces. There is a learning curve involved here, but you will be better off for it.
- 4) At first you might need to do a bit of measuring and learning how much carbs, fat and protein are in certain foods. You might be a bit shocked to learn what you've been eating but knowing what is in your food is the first step to building balanced meals.
- 5) Resist the temptation to obsess over specific nutrient ratios. As long as your dinner plate is roughly a third of each nutrient you'll be doing fine. The point of the balanced nutrient ratio diet isn't to make food more complicated, rather to allow you a guilt free way to eat all of the different foods but in sensible proportions.

## Does it Work?

A balanced nutrient ratio diet can produce weight loss by causing you to feel more satisfied with less food. In other words if you are a chronic over eater you it may be because you are simply eating too much of one macronutrient while your body is still craving the others.

Fat and carbs are both fair game in this kind of eating style and therefore it is much more satisfying than low carb or low fat diets.

Because of the potential variety in this style of eating with relatively few rules and no foods that are strictly off limits balanced macronutrient diets are also a sustainable style of eating for weight loss.

In order to make this style of eating effective you need a guide and diet plan that builds the meals for you in this pattern. This is tough to do on your own, but luckily there are good meal plan system already out there that have all of this covered for you.

# Cleansing and Detox

I'm covering cleansing and detox in the same section because they come from a similar marketing principle and are equally unscientific. Let's start with cleansing.

## Cleansing

The cleansing story seems to be rooted in the concept that undigested food can accumulate in your digestive tract and that even dieting and exercise cannot remove this kind of weight. Companies that promote cleansing products will sell you a diet book as well as an elaborate concoction of herbs in some form of juice that is supposed to 'cleanse' and remove all of this supposed undigested food.

For those of you who don't already know, this is a complete and total lie. Anyone who has studied human anatomy and physiology knows that your digestive tract fully breaks down all the food you eat. Your body absorbs all of the absorbable nutrients and whatever indigestible fiber you eat your body will excrete. End of story. You can easily validate what I am saying by checking out something called an "Endoscopy" online.

An Endoscopy is a procedure that involves putting a tiny camera inside your body so doctors can look for things like ulcers and tumors. Endoscopies of the intestinal tract are very common and they will clearly show you that there is no undigested food building up in the intestines. If you have trouble believing this you can go on google video or youtube right now and type in endoscopy. I guarantee you will find videos of perfectly clean colons with zero food built up inside them. This concept of built up undigested food is a complete and total lie. If the videos you find don't convince you then I urge you to go and talk to a doctor and specifically a gastroenterologist (doctors who specialize in treating diseases of the gastro intestinal system) they will tell you that there is no way food builds up in your intestine.

'Cleansing' diets are a complete scam and have no place in your diet routine. In reality most 'cleansing' systems simply get the customer to do a short term fast of a day or two. The fast is what makes people feel awake and 'light' after a cleanse, it has nothing to do with any herbs or products.

## **Detox**

Detox is a similar concept to cleansing however in the case of detox the culprit is not undigested food rather it is various undefined 'toxins'. The way that a detox diet or supplement is supposed to 'detoxify' these 'toxins' is also undefined. There are in fact medical definitions of various toxic substances to the body, however there is nothing can detoxify your body better than your proper functioning kidneys and liver. Special diets and ingredients can't add to the job your kidney's and liver are doing.

The liver and kidneys are responsible for detoxifying your blood. They do this 24 hours per day every day. There is no magical pill, potion or collection of foods that can detox your body any better than the job your kidneys and liver are currently doing. In fact any new product you ingest in an effort to 'detox' your body will itself need to be filtered through your liver and kidneys to detox it.

The only thing you can do to further 'detox' your body is abstain from putting anything including food into your body for some short length of time such as a short term fast. Other than that, there isn't anything you can do to detox your body.

# Blood Type Diet

The blood type diet showed up in the mid 1990's. The theory is that each person needs to eat according to their blood type. The author explains that each blood type has a different chemistry to their stomach and gastrointestinal system and that this has something to do with their blood type, and thus each blood type has a specific category of foods they will be most efficient at eating. This however is not consistent with the known scientific make up of the human body. Your blood type has nothing to do with the way your body reacts to or processes food.

He goes on to build a story about evolution and why he thinks each type has a specific set of foods and how eating out of your blood type will cause all sorts of gastrointestinal diseases. This also is easily invalidated by the millions of people around the world who have never read this book and are not eating according to their blood type and have no incidence of the disease he is mentioning.

The blood type diet sounds like an interesting story for those who have never studied human physiology or anatomy. But a closer examination reveals that this concept is simply clever marketing and has no scientific evidence to back it up.

First of all the blood type diet has never been scientifically studied or proven to work as the author says. This is not surprising because there is no physiological reason for this type of diet to work. There are approximately 30 different subcategories of blood types which are found all around the world in all races of people. However there are hundreds of different cultural types of diets. This inconsistency alone disproves this diet strategy all together.

For example india has over 1 billion people who are for the most part vegetarians. However all of the different blood types will be found across india. Therefore all Indian people who do not fall into the supposed blood type category for vegetarianism should be expressing all of the

ailments the author suggests. This clearly does not happen, and is a simple example of how absurd this diet idea is.

Another reason this diet does not make sense is the fact that human blood type can spontaneously mutate and change. Bone marrow transplant patients can end up with the a new blood type as well. However they are not instructed to radically shift their diets, and there is no scientific documentation of an onset of diet related illnesses with marrow transplantation.

Even if there was a grain of scientific truth or support to this concept (which there isn't) actually living by these rules would be totally incompatible with modern life. Imagine a family of 4 people with 4 different blood types, how would you ever cook a meal in this house. How would you explain to your child that they don't get to eat the turkey at thanksgiving dinner because you've determined that their blood type means they are vegetarian and they should only get salad and vegetables. This example is a bit ridiculous, but so is this diet concept.

The type of blood you have has nothing to do with the way your body digests food. All people on earth can eat the same foods for the most part. There are small individual variances such as lactose intolerance or allergies to certain foods, however these things have nothing to do with your blood type. I can assure you there are lactose intolerant people of all blood types, as well as people with peanut allergies, diabetes, and all forms of gastrointestinal diseases with all different blood types.

There has also been recent findings that people can spontaneously change blood types over their lifetime. Numerous reports are now showing that people can lose blood type antigens from their blood cells over time. In other words, if you are an AB right now, you could potentially be a B later in life.

Also patients who have had a bone marrow transfusion also can have a complete change in blood type.

Finally there has even been documentation of an organ transplant patient experiencing a spontaneous blood type change.

All of this means that blood type cannot possibly have anything to do with your diet or food selection, otherwise each group of people described above would automatically need to change their diet as soon as their blood type changed. This however is not the case. And therefore the fact that blood types can change also proves that blood types diets cannot be true.

Blood type diets are nothing more than a clever marketing spin, and I'll give the author credit for thinking of something as creative as this. It however has no scientific foundation as blood type has nothing to do with food allergies, or the way your body absorbs food.

# Conclusion

Any diet 'style' can work if it creates a caloric deficit.

The easier the diet is to follow the better your chances are for long term weight loss success.

There are no such thing as 'good' foods and 'bad' foods. There is just food and how much of it you choose to eat.

Finding a diet style that helps you eat less total food without going insane is the key to lasting weight loss.

Be cautious of diets that make one food out to be a bad guy and anoint other foods as the savior. There is no such thing as 'good' and 'bad' food...there is just food and how much of it you choose to eat.

Some foods satisfy hunger better than others, and in most cases whole foods that are minimally processed will provide maximum satisfaction per calorie. In other words, the more whole foods you eat the better chance you have at losing weight and enjoying the food along the way.

Setting a goal and having a plan to reach that goal is the first and most important step to losing weight.