

Ketogenic Diet Therapy 101: Info for Caregivers

i **Ketogenic Diet Therapies** - used for almost 100 years for people that have seizures that do not respond to medicines.

Ketogenic diet plans

1 **VERY HIGH IN FAT** → brain → fuel

Ketogenic diet plans are very high in fat to give the BRAIN a different fuel called ketones.

2 **PROTEIN** → muscles → working optimally

You eat enough protein to keep your MUSCLES working at their best.

3 **CARBS** → veggies & fruits → fiber & vitamins

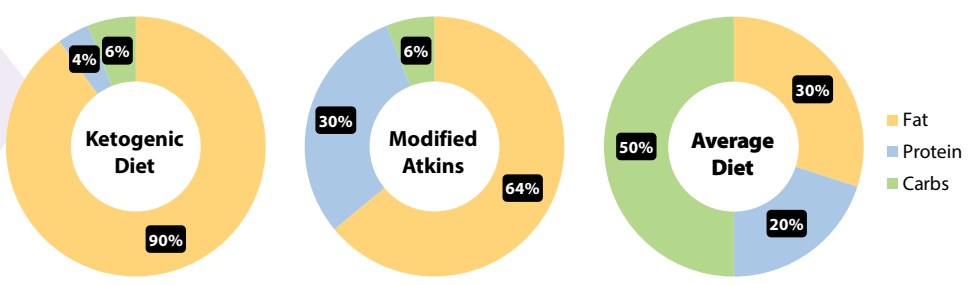
Servings are small due to natural sugars in fruits and vegetables.

4 **NO SUGARS** → avoid sweets, breads & grains

Sugars, also known as carbohydrates, are severely LIMITED.

Compare

Strictest Ketogenic Diet or Modified Atkins vs. Average Diet



FAQs (Frequently Asked Questions)

Is this diet “healthy”?

This is not like following a diet to lose weight. It is mathematically calculated for each person’s needs. People on this diet must take vitamin and mineral supplements to make sure they receive everything they need every day. These supplements are as important as their seizure medicines. The person following a ketogenic diet must see the doctor and dietitian regularly to make sure their weight and growth are normal and have blood tests done to check that they are safe.

Will this diet make them have a heart attack with all of that fat?

In the beginning, fat levels in the blood may increase but since the body is using them for fuel they come down over time.

Why would anyone want to eat like that?

It’s not how people like to eat but anything that will stop seizures is a good thing. We want to save brain cells for more important things like reading, writing, or arithmetic!

So how does this diet work?

Despite almost 100 years of research we still do not know. The key is having fats with every meal or snack and limiting carbohydrates.

What does a meal look like?

Most meals are made up of 4 foods: heavy whipping cream, protein about the size of a golf ball, a small serving of vegetables (about 5 green beans) or part of a piece of fruit (1/2 a strawberry), and a large serving of fat, like 4-5 pats of butter.

Those portions are really small, won’t they be hungry all day?

High fat foods have a lot of calories in a very small serving. They keep you feeling full for a long time and leave the stomach very slowly. Ketones, the new fuel, also makes you feel less hungry. Some even have a hard time finishing these small meals!



So, if they “cheat” on this diet, what will happen?

Having an extra bite of egg or one more green bean might mean having an extra seizure that day. Having a single bite of a cookie or one piece of candy could cause seizures so bad they wind up in the hospital. There are special “keto-friendly” desserts or sweets this person can have without having to cheat.

Is there anything else that needs to be different?

Yes – there are two more areas where sugars (carbs) can hide: medicines and body care products.

- 1 Medicines:** Liquid and chewable medicines are usually a “no-no” with keto therapy. Tablets, capsules, and suppositories have the lowest amounts of hidden sugars.
- 2 Body Care Products:** Sugars can also be absorbed through the skin so it is best to use low carb lotions, sun screens, toothpaste, and insect repellents. Lists of “keto safe” products are available on the Charlie Foundation website: charliefoundation.org/resources-tools/resources-2/low-carb.

What can I do to help make the diet a success?

Food is such an important part of how we comfort and celebrate. Offering non-food rewards is a healthier option for everyone. Instead of giving a piece of candy for a job well done, how about a hug, a sticker, small toy, or going to the park to play.

How will we celebrate birthdays or holidays?

Keto meals can be designed around any celebration meal. KetoVie even has foods that can be used to make stuffing for Thanksgiving or a birthday cake. Go to our website, KetoVie.com, to learn more about ketogenic diets and keto-friendly foods.

Where can I go to learn more about this diet therapy for seizures?

The Epilepsy Foundation, epilepsyfoundation.org, is always a good place to start. Other organizations are devoted strictly to ketogenic therapies like The Charlie Foundation, charliefoundation.org, and Matthew’s Friends, matthewsfriends.org.