

# *An Easy Guide to Keto Essentials*

The keto diet has been taking off in popularity for many good reasons. The low-carb, high-fat foods comprising it have been shown by studies to be healthy and beneficial. All sorts of people with health conditions may benefit from this diet, as well as the person who just wants to feel a little better overall.

How can one do this without sacrificing the simple pleasures of enjoying good, tasty food? After all, when people go on a diet, the general supposition is that they will never enjoy anything, at least for some time. And this can be very hard to hear.

That is simply not true, at least for keto. Here are the staples of a tasty, nutritional, and easy keto way of living.

## **Cheese**

Yummy, delicious cheese heads off the list of essentials to have in a well-rounded keto plan. From the basic blocks at the store to small-crafted batches, feel free to eat cheese. Other various health benefits from eating cheese include increased heart health, lowered heart attack risk, increased muscle mass and more.

Cheese is easy to use in all sorts of recipes. What about a quick snack out of the refrigerator? Used as a garnish on vegetables? How about a cheese, lean meat, and nut snack mix? Homemade white sauces, salad dressing options, and more await the interested consumer. There are so many possibilities!

## **Cruciferous Vegetables**

Broccoli, cauliflower, and other cruciferous vegetables are all cleared for the keto follower. The added dose of sulforaphane (a toxin-cleansing compound) is the major reason these vegetables are in a class of their own. They may improve mental clarity and decrease cancer risk.

They are also wonderfully filling; a benefit for the hungry keto follower! Combine cauliflower with cheese, or try a white sauce over cabbage. How about broiled Brussel sprouts in olive oil? And there's always the classic of substituting cauliflower for potatoes.

## **Eggs**

Eggs have less than one gram of carbohydrates and are incredibly versatile. Packed full of nutrients and antioxidants, eggs are very nutritious. They are quick to make, can be used in a wide variety of ways, and have almost no restrictions on how much can be eaten to fill a

hungry stomach. They also trigger a set of hormones that decreases feelings of hunger and keeps blood sugar levels stable for hours. Get rid of those feelings of hunger and a sour mood!

For best results, try to find farm-fresh or organic eggs to reap the maximum benefits. And always make sure to eat the yolks as that's where the major benefits for the keto follower are. No need to simply eat the whites any more! Those rich, golden yolks are full of benefits, according to various studies.

## **Seafood**

Depending on location, quality seafood can be harder to find than some of the other staples on this guide. The benefits are well worth the little extra effort. With high levels of fat, nutrients, minerals and vitamins, seafood is a generally healthy choice and a mainstay of keto. Feel free to indulge a little or keep it as simple as a good can of tuna. The options are almost endless!

Considering the variety of seafood, there's really no limit to what can be made of it, so long as the carbohydrate content is monitored. Stewing, frying and baking are all wonderful possibilities, depending on the ingredients and fish used. However, do keep a careful eye when dealing with shellfish; the carbs in those mollusks are sneaky! And unfortunately, traditional breading is usually not an option. How about trying out a nut-based topping or pan frying in butter?

## **Low-carb Vegetables**

Vegetables are not a universal favorite. Despite all the encouragement, hype, benefits, and so on, it is hard to love (or even like!) vegetables. When high-carb vegetables are taken away as well, it can make it even harder.

There is light at the end of the tunnel! Don't worry too much about the benefits--they are well-known. Focus on recipes that taste good and adjust them to taste. Experiment with various combinations and new dressings from the other staples in this guide. Don't be afraid to try something new, and don't be afraid of simply getting rid of the truly awful vegetables. Life's too short to be (too) miserable over food!

## **Olives and Olive Oil**

Olive oil and olives are well-known as healthy choices. Just how healthy they are is impressive, even for the savvy consumer. They may decrease the risk of heart disease, have been shown to be high in antioxidants, and contain no carbohydrates whatsoever. What better bottle of oil or quick snack can be in the kitchen for the keto follower?

Use olive oil include in simple pan fried recipes, as a base for dressing vegetables, and as a salad dressing ingredient. Just remember that olive oil does not do well at high temperatures and adjust the heat source and/or recipe instructions accordingly. And for those who like straight olives, eat away! Bonus points if they are stuffed with nuts--another great staple!

## **Milk and Cream**

Milk, cream and butter are all good for general eating and good for the keto way as well. Though the high fat content has been thought to create a higher risk of heart disease, studies have been found to be at best, dubious. Eating these foods may even reduce the chance of heart disease.

The other nutrients and minerals found in high fat dairy are essential components of a healthy keto diet. Besides, depending on personal preferences, they are very, very tasty!

Cooking and meal planning can be very interesting and innovative with high fat dairy products. In combination with vegetables, butter can make a boring medley or mix take on a fresh taste and feel. A cream-based sauce over clams can bring unexpected flavors to the forefront of your meal. How about butter melted over broccoli or drizzled over cauliflower? And the list goes on.

## **Coffee and Tea**

With the caveat that these stay unsweetened, there is no need to stop drinking a morning cup of joe or that steaming hot mug of tea. (As if that was an option for some people!) Apart from the caffeine need and general wake up call that they provide for many people, coffee and tea can improve general mood and alertness. They may also bring the risk of diabetes down.

As milk and cream are already on the list of staples, there is no reason to cut out their addition if so desired. However, be mindful of the sugar and other chemical additives found in popular creamers. It's easy to slip up, particularly on favorite foods outside the diet! Try heavy whipping cream or a new brand of coffee creamer as a substitute.

## **Nuts and Seeds**

Nuts and seeds have been beloved by people from the beginning of time. Simple and easy to carry and eat, they contain all the nutrients to start a new plant. They have been shown to be high in healthy fats, great sources of fiber, and are available in a great variety of tasty options. Why not harness those nutrients to grow, fill and sustain a person?

As with seafood, carbs may take a little more watching here. As always, a simple watching mindset will go a long way to keeping to the keto diet. And, by the way, dark chocolate is also keto-approved! How about some dark chocolate-coated cashews or almonds for a quick pick-me-up or treat?

## **In Conclusion**

These are only some of the many and varied staples of a basic keto food list--the must haves. Remember: it's not about subtracting or eliminating bad foods; it's about a new, healthier way of life. And after the basics are in place, the horizons beckon with so many other ideas and ways!

There are many, many more resources and options, including other information on the keto diet in general, recipe collections and ratings, innovative food substitutions and more. How about online communities, such as Facebook groups or forums where others are taking the same journey? Use the basics as a springboard to a new place. They are just waiting for you to take the first step on the keto journey.

References:

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