

## THE PITFALLS OF HIGH PROTEIN, LOW CARBOHYDRATE DIETS

Many of the Fad Diets on the market today are high in protein and low in carbohydrates. Advocates of these diets claim the carbohydrates will make us fat. The truth be told is that this is very misleading. Eating carbohydrate rich foods such as fruits, vegetables, whole grain breads & cereals & beans will not make us fat unless you eat massive amounts. Excessive consumption of less nutritionally sound refined carbohydrates such as candy, chocolate, biscuits and cakes may lead to weight problems as most are also very high in fat & calories.

High Protein, low carbohydrate diets are of great concern to Registered Dietitians for the following reasons.

1. Potential for Kidney problems- In the absence of adequate carbohydrates in the diet, the body will burn fatty acids as a source of energy. This process causes the kidneys to work overtime potentially causing irreversible kidney damage.
2. Production of Ketones- When Fatty Acids are burned as a source of energy, ketones are released into the bloodstream. Release of ketones can cause nausea, dehydration, dizziness, constipation, headaches and bad breath.
3. Increased Risk for Heart Disease- Consuming a diet high in protein often results in a diet which is also high in saturated fat and cholesterol which can drastically increase the risk factors for Heart Disease and some Cancers.
4. Temporary vs. Permanent Weight Loss- High protein, low carbohydrate diets may promote rapid weight loss however, the pounds that are lost are mostly water weight. Weight gain can occur as quickly as weight loss once carbohydrates are reintroduced
5. Increased risk of Osteoporosis- High protein, low carbohydrate diets causes changes in the urine chemistry causing higher levels of calcium to be leaked from the bones.
6. Increased risk for Kidney Stones- High protein, low carbohydrate diets cause increased levels of uric acid which greatly increases the chances of developing Kidney Stones.