



Health

Group calls low-carb diet unhealthy

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Pork rinds, beef jerky and hot dogs sound more like the diet of a junk-food junkie than that of someone determined to lose weight.

But this latest fad diet promises you can shed the pounds fast while eating all the meat, cheese, eggs and fat you want. The trick is to lay off the carbohydrates and sugars.

Ron Glasgow, a 39-year-old computer support technician from Cumming, said he went from 425 to 330 pounds in 11 months, while continuing his lifestyle as a "big-eater." A typical breakfast for him while on the diet consists of a three-egg omelet and a 12-ounce package of bacon or a half-pound of ham.

Many dietitians and health experts - 10,000 of whom will be in Atlanta this week for the American Dietetic Association's annual meeting - insist the diet is unhealthy and the weight loss is temporary.

The high-protein, no-carb plan is "a nightmare of a diet," said Kathleen Zelman, a registered dietitian and ADA spokesperson. "At first, it sounds so alluring. You get the green light to eat these foods."

But she said the monotony soon gets old. Sure, you get the hamburger, but

no bun or fries. You can eat a big steak, but forget the baked potato and tossed salad.

Plus, it's just unhealthy, nutritionists say. Along with the risk of increasing cholesterol levels, the diet could cause kidney problems or possibly a loss of calcium in the bones, Ms. Zelman said. Limiting the intake of carbohydrates to such a dramatically low level starves the body of needed nutrients and causes an artificial metabolic state.

"Think of it on a global perspective - the world at large survives on grains," Ms. Zelman said. "If we didn't have carbohydrates, we would not be able to survive. Bread is the staff of life." But Glasgow said the diet allows him to lose weight and continue to be a "big eater."

"I'm aware of some of the opponents, but for me right now, it seems to be working," he said.

Glasgow said he lost 100 pounds once before on a low-fat, high exercise diet, but he couldn't stay on it. While on that diet, he said he took a two-month leave of absence from his job and exercised between 6 and 8 hours a day. When he returned to a more reasonable exercise schedule, the weight stopped coming off and he

went back to his old ways.

With studies showing that more than half of all adults are overweight and that exercise is at an all-time low, Americans are constantly searching for a way to slim down without drastically changing their lifestyles. The increasing number of unhealthy and overweight adults and children is one issue of particular concern for the ADA at its four-day meeting that starts today. Like other health organizations, the ADA maintains the only way to lose weight is through a healthy, well-balanced diet and exercise.

In addition to weight loss, the ADA will hold discussions this week on issues such as food safety, children's health and reducing the risks of heart disease and colon cancer through diet.

The low-carb diet was first touted by Dr. Robert Atkins more than 20 years ago. Its popularity in the '90s has been attributed to his latest book "Dr. Atkins' New Diet Revolution," currently the best-selling mass market paperback in the country.

"Part of the reason for the resurgence is that Americans are getting fatter and there's a greater desperation than there's ever been," Ms. Zelman said.

Colin Powell to speak at inaugural event

CONTRIBUTED STORY

FOR THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

October 13, 1999 - Portland State University recently announced that General Colin Powell will deliver the keynote address at the University's first-ever Simon Benson Awards Dinner.

The Simon Benson Award was established to recognize individuals who have helped shape the spirit of the region, contributed to the cultural and vitality of the region and who exemplify the spirit of philanthropy. This year's recipients of the Awards are Paul Bragdon, for his leadership roles at Reed College and the Oregon Graduate Institute of Technology, and Jean Vollum, for her many years of philanthropy benefiting the area's universities. Powell, who served as

Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of staff for the United States, is the chairman of America's Promise - The Alliance for Youth, the national campaign on behalf of the nation's young people. Wells Fargo is presenting Powell's keynote address.

The event will be held Tuesday, November 16 at the Portland Marriott. Ticket prices for the reception and dinner start at \$150. Individuals and organizations interested in attending should contact Dana Sedlak at 503-725-4478. The Award was named for Simon Benson to exemplify his commitment to philanthropic activity in the Portland area. Benson contributed the land and money to build Benson High School, the land for Benson State Park, Multnomah Falls, the Columbia Gorge Highway

and Portland's unique "Benson Bubbles." Portland State University, a national acclaimed leader in community-based learning, is located along the tree-lined South Park blocks of downtown Portland. The University's position in the heart of Oregon's economic and cultural center enables PSU students and faculty to apply scholarly theory to the real-world problems of business and community organizations. Portland State offers over 100 undergraduates, master's, and doctoral degrees, as well as graduate certificates and continuing programs. PSU serves more students and confers more masters' degrees annually than any other Oregon university.

Research Challenges Cerebral Palsy Causes

BY MARIE MCINERNEY

Australian and New Zealand researchers on Friday challenged traditional views that cerebral palsy occurred mainly due to oxygen deprivation during labor or birth, saying most cases developed during pregnancy.

A task force set up to study cerebral palsy research said it hoped its consensus statement, published in the British Medical Journal, would stop moves to "witch-hunt" doctors and nurses who were often held culpable for the condition.

The group, led by Australian obstetrician Alastair MacLennan, said traditional lay and medical assumptions held that cerebral palsy was mostly caused by a lack of oxygen in labor and thus a result of "birth trauma" or "birth asphyxia".

However MacLennan told Reuters the group believed about 80 percent of cases occurred during pregnancy, with only two percent during labor and delivery, and the remainder neo-natal.

"Indeed, the origins of the brain damage are much more often during pregnancy and occur silently due to several causes, for example umbilical cord compression, sub-clinical intrauterine infection and congenital clotting disorders in the foetus," the group said in a statement released in Adelaide.

MacLennan said the multidisciplinary task force had been set up by the Perinatal Society of Australia and New Zealand. Its findings followed a two-year study of available research and were endorsed by obstetric and paediatric colleges in more than a dozen nations including Britain and the United States.

Cerebral palsy was a non-progressive disorder of posture and movement, caused by brain damage before, at or

after birth, and affected one in 400 babies born worldwide, he said. The rate of the disorder had not dropped significantly in the last 40 years, despite advances in medical and midwifery care, MacLennan said, calling for a greater focus for research into causes during pregnancy and in babies born prematurely.

In its statement, the task force referred to recent epidemiological evidence from the U.S and Australia that more than 90 percent of cases of cerebral palsy had no putative signs of asphyxia or complications during labour.

"Although some cases of cerebral palsy can also follow brain damage as a child, for example after meningitis or near-drowning, very few actually originate during labour or birth," it said.

The group said when both infection and clotting disorders were present before birth, a type of "foetal stroke" may develop and its effects not recognised until labour or after birth.

"Previously these signs of fetal distress in labour were assumed to have begun then, and attempts to deliver the baby in time or in good condition were unsuccessful, sometimes leading to inappropriate recrimination and expensive civil litigation."

The task force said cerebral palsy lawsuits citing medical negligence during labour or birth in Australia had led to the closure of maternity hospitals and loss of experienced staff. "This new understanding of the origins of cerebral palsy may help reverse those trends, leave more public resources for the care of children with cerebral palsy, focus research on the earlier prevention of cerebral palsy and stop the impulse to witch-hunt and shoot the messenger," it said.

Breast cancer: A daughter's perspective



Jennifer Hays, Ph.D.
 Baylor College of Medicine
 Houston, Texas

WOMEN'S HEALTH FOCUS

happens to our health. And keep in mind that only 10 percent of women with breast cancer have a family history of the disease, so the rest of you should not be lulled into a false sense of security.

Our behaviors right now can and do affect our current and future health status. While there are no clear-cut strategies to prevent breast cancer, it appears that smoking, alcohol and obesity increase the risk for the disease. It also appears that a diet low in fat and high in fruits and vegetables might have a protective effect.

Even without conclusive evidence, at the very least you can enjoy the many other health benefits of eating five or more daily servings of fruits and vegetables, losing weight, avoiding cigarette smoke, and drinking moderately or not at all.

I encourage every woman I know to be vigilant for signs of breast cancer, because early detection saves lives. We should all do a monthly breast self-exam and make sure we see

our physician for an annual breast exam. At age 35, get a baseline mammogram, and starting at age 40, have one yearly. Mammograms can detect tumors long before you or your physician can.

Some women avoid mammograms because they are worried about discomfort, but my guess is that we really avoid them because we don't like to think we could get breast cancer.

If an exam or mammogram does indicate a problem, remember that breast cancer is no longer one of the leading causes of death for older women. Thanks to early detection and new medications, more than two million women in the U.S. are living proof that you can survive breast cancer.

You can't control everything, but you do have control over whether you regularly practice prevention and early detection. Follow a healthy lifestyle and have routine exams for breast cancer. That's what I do so I can celebrate my daughter's 42nd birthday with her.

Oregon Food Bank in need of assistance

Associated Press

Despite record employment and a strong economy, the Oregon Food Bank is reporting a 14 percent jump in the number of people receiving emergency food in the past year, up to 460,000 boxes distributed statewide. The increase from July 1998 to July 1999 is due mainly to families moving off welfare into low-paying jobs, population growth and rising housing and child-care costs, according to social workers and welfare experts. Now 41 percent of those getting help are children, and most of the rest are single mothers, said Liesl Wendt, spokeswoman for the food bank. "They are people who are working or looking for work," Wendt said. "Some have work but now make too much to qualify for the (welfare benefits) they still need."

The food bank gets its food from charity drives, businesses and restaurants and individual donations.

At one bank in southeast Portland, mothers pushed shopping carts past shelves of baby food, canned soup and coolers filled with lettuce and tomatoes.

"We get to this point at the end of every month," said Angela Bacon. Her 3-year-old son, John, slid along behind her, one hand clamped on the back of her shirt. Her husband works full time as a janitor, and she stays home because they can't afford care for their two kids, one of whom has respiratory problems and needs special attention.

In a crowded waiting room, families mingled and waited for their name to be called. Sarah Taylor was there to pick up a box of food for her and her 6-year-old son, Tanner. She just lost a job, is looking for work and is not on welfare. The number of boxes parceled out in Coos and Curry counties ballooned more than 42 percent from the prior year. Other steady increases were reported elsewhere in Multnomah County and in Salem. Families who have moved from welfare to work are relying on food donations because their wages can't cover the decrease in food stamp and cash assistance, food bank officials said.

Many find they are making too much to get food stamps and too little to buy the basic food they need.

But the jump at the food bank is not explained by the number of Oregon families receiving food stamps or cash aid, said Jim Neely, deputy administrator with the state Adult and Family Services.

The number of families on food stamps has stayed consistent during the past year, moving from 105,240 families receiving a total \$15,360,744 in September 1998 to 105,989 families receiving \$15,560,345 in August, Neely said. And although the number of families on cash assistance has dropped 16 percent during the past two years there was only a 2 percent decrease in the last year, according to Neely.

The rising cost of housing is also a factor.

"As housing costs rise, which they've been doing for a long time, it leaves less and less for the other important things a family needs," said Peter Grundfossen of the Association of Oregon Housing Authority in Portland. He said more than 107,000 low-income families in Oregon spend more than 50 percent of their income on housing. Average rental prices in the Portland area increased from \$563 a month in 1994 to \$635 a month in 1997. Sarah Taylor, one of the mothers at the food bank Tuesday, said she is grateful for the help. "I don't know what we would do without it; we have nothing by the end of the month."



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