

Fruits, Vegetables....What About Low Carb?

Did you know that:

- 64% of Americans are overweight or obese.
- Less than 20% of Americans eat 5 a day or more.
- At any given time, 44% of women and 29% of men are dieting.
- One in five American adults have tried the low-carb diet in the last year.

What do we know about low carb diets?

- Low-carbohydrate diets—to the extent that they restrict fruit and vegetable intake—are unhealthy and inhibit intake of important nutrients, fiber and phytochemicals (which are known to have health-promoting and disease-preventing properties).
- Low carb diets restrict or eliminate foods such as fruits and vegetables, and many then encourage the use of supplements. Research indicates that getting nutrients from whole foods provide for a greater health benefit than they would individually as a supplement.
- There is solid scientific evidence in support of the relationship between fruit and vegetable intake and health.
- At present, there is no published scientific evidence that low-carbohydrate diets are more effective in producing long-term weight loss than adopting healthy eating habits and regular physical activity.
- In general, all fruits and vegetables have a low glycemic load (GL), meaning they do not contain much carbohydrate and therefore are unlikely to adversely impact blood sugar management.
- Major concerns about low-carbohydrate diets include: the high protein intake puts more stress on the kidneys—what are the long-term effects?; and, what are the effects of prolonged decreased vitamin, mineral, fiber and phytochemical intake on overall health?

What is recommended?

Eating low-fat meals that include 5 to 9 servings of colorful fruits and vegetables every day is a cornerstone of a healthy life plan; physical activity is another cornerstone. A combination of physical activity and proper food intake can help with attaining and maintaining a healthy weight.