

The South Beach Diet is not low-carb. Nor is it low-fat. Instead, it teaches you to rely on the right carbs and the right fats--the good ones--so you lose weight, lower your cholesterol, reduce your risk of heart disease and diabetes, and get rid of cravings without feeling hungry.

In one 12-week study of 40 overweight people, those who followed the South Beach Diet lost an average of 13.6 lb, almost double the 7.5 lb lost by those on the strict "Step II" American Heart Association (AHA) diet. And the South Beach group showed greater decreases in waist-to-hip ratio (belly fat) and triglycerides, and their good to bad cholesterol ratio improved more. Plus, only one person dropped out compared with five in the AHA group.

By choosing the right carbs and the right fats, you simply won't be hungry all the time, and portion sizes will take care of themselves.

**Caution:** If you have kidney problems, talk to your doctor before starting this diet. If you have diabetes, get tested to make sure that your kidneys are not impaired before starting this diet.

### **Good Carbs versus Bad Carbs**

Much of our excess weight comes from the carbohydrates we eat, especially the highly processed ones found in baked goods, breads, snacks, soft drinks, and other convenient favorites. Modern industrial processing removes the fiber from these foods, and once that's gone, their very nature--and how we metabolize them--changes significantly, and for the worse.

One side effect of excess weight, we now know, is an impairment of insulin's ability to do its job of processing fuel (fats and sugars) properly. This condition is called insulin resistance. As a result, the body stores more fat than it should, especially in the midsection.

Decrease consumption of those bad carbs, studies showed, and the insulin resistance starts clearing up. Weight decreases, and you begin metabolizing carbs properly. Even the craving for carbs disappears once you cut down on them. Finally, cutting out processed carbs lowers triglycerides and cholesterol.

### **The Right Fat**

To make up for the overall cut in carbs, my diet permits ample fats and animal proteins. The low-fat regimen's severe restrictions on meat were unnecessary. The latest studies had shown that lean meat did not have a harmful effect on blood chemistry. Even egg yolks are good for you, which is contrary to what we once believed. Chicken, turkey, and fish are recommended, along with nuts and low-fat cheeses and yogurt.

As a rule, low-fat prepared foods can be a bad idea; the fats are replaced with carbs, which are also fattening. But dairy products such as cheese, milk, and yogurt that are low-fat are exceptions to this rule; they are nutritious and not fattening.

I also allowed plenty of healthy monounsaturated fats such as olive and canola oils. These are the good fats. In addition to actually reducing the risk of heart attack and stroke, they taste good and make food palatable. They're filling too.

### **Phase 1: Two Weeks of Restraint**

This is the strictest part of the diet and is meant to last for 2 weeks only. But you could lose up to 13 lb depending on your starting weight. It allows ample portions of protein, good fats, and the lowest-glycemic index carbs needed for satisfaction and blood sugar control. By the time this phase ends, your cravings for sweets, baked goods, and starches will also have vanished.

Each day includes six different occasions to eat, so you should never feel hungry. If you do, maybe you're being too stingy with your portions. Meals should be of normal size, enough to satisfy you, but no more than that. No need to measure most things.

#### **Phase 1 Sample Meal Plan**

##### **Breakfast**

Tomato juice, 6 oz  
Scrambled eggs with fresh herbs and mushrooms  
Canadian bacon, 2 slices  
Decaf coffee or decaf tea with fat-free milk and sugar substitute

##### **Midmorning Snack**

Part-skim mozzarella cheese stick

##### **Lunch**

Chicken Caesar salad (no croutons)  
Prepared Caesar dressing, 2 Tbsp

##### **Midafternoon Snack**

Low-fat cottage cheese (½ cup) with ½ cup chopped tomatoes and cucumbers

### **Dinner**

Mahi mahi

Oven-Roasted Vegetables

Arugula salad

Low-sugar prepared dressing

### **Dessert**

Lemon Peel Ricotta Crème

### **Foods to Enjoy**

**Beef:** Lean cuts such as sirloin (including ground), tenderloin.

**Poultry (skinless):** Cornish hen, turkey bacon, turkey breast, chicken breast.

**Seafood:** All types of fish and shellfish.

**Pork:** Boiled ham, Canadian bacon, tenderloin.

**Veal:** Chop, cutlet, top round.

**Lunchmeat:** Fat-free or low-fat.

#### **Cheese (fat-free or low-fat):**

American, Cheddar, cottage cheese, cream cheese substitute (dairy-free), feta.

**Nuts:** Peanut butter, peanuts, pecans, pistachios, walnuts, cashews.

**Eggs:** Whole eggs are not limited unless otherwise directed by your doctor. Use egg whites and egg substitute as desired.

### **Foods to Avoid**

**Beef:** Brisket, liver, rib steaks, other fatty cuts.

**Poultry:** Chicken wings, thighs, and legs, turkey wings, duck, goose, poultry products (processed).

**Pork:** Honey-baked ham.

**Veal:** Breast.

**Cheese:** Brie, Edam, all full-fat.

**Vegetables and legumes:** Barley, beets, black-eyed peas, carrots, corn, pinto beans, sweet potatoes, white potatoes, yams.

**Fruit:** Avoid all fruits and fruit juices during Phase 1.

**Starches:** Avoid all starchy food during Phase 1, including all types of bread, cereal, matzo, oatmeal, rice, pasta, pastry, potatoes, and baked goods.

**Dairy:** Avoid all dairy foods during Phase 1, including ice cream, milk, soy milk, yogurt.

**Tofu:** Use soft, low-fat, or light varieties.

**Miscellaneous:** Alcohol of any kind

**Vegetables and legumes:**

Artichokes, asparagus, beans and legumes, broccoli, cabbage, cauliflower, celery, cucumbers, eggplant, lettuce, mushrooms, red peppers, spinach, tomatoes, zucchini.

**Fats:** Canola and olive oils.

**Spices and seasonings:** All seasonings that contain no added sugar, broth, butter sprays, pepper.

**Sweets (limit to 75 calories per day):** Chocolate powder (no added sugar), cocoa powder (baking type), hard candy, sugar substitute (all sugar-free unless otherwise specified).

**Phase 2: More Liberal Meal Plans**

Here's where you gradually reintroduce certain healthy carbs into your diet: fruit, sweet potatoes, whole grain bread, whole grain rice, whole wheat pasta. Start with one piece of fruit a day for lunch or dinner, and continue with some cereal or a piece of bread. Weight loss will slow a little. (A healthy average rate of weight loss is 1 to 2 lb a week over time.) Stay on this phase until you hit your target weight. If you regain some weight, switch back to Phase 1 until you lose it.

A key to success is the glycemic index (GI) that ranks carbohydrate foods by their effect on your blood sugar levels. Focus on adding low-GI foods (apples, berries, grapefruit, high-fiber cereal, whole grain breads) to your diet instead of those with a high GI (cakes, cookies, crackers, pasta, white bread).

The goal is to eat more carbs again while continuing to lose weight. If you add an apple and a slice of bread a day, and you're still dropping pounds, that's great. If you try an apple, two slices of bread, and a banana daily and notice that your weight loss has stalled, you've gone too far. Cut back, or try some different carbs.

You'll go on that cautious way as long as you're in Phase 2, eating the most beneficial carbs and paying attention to how they affect you. You should also be aware of foods that increase cravings. No two people will experience this phase the same way. Some dieters can have pasta once a week with no detrimental effects. Others have to avoid pasta but can eat sweet potatoes. You'll have to figure this dynamic out for yourself.

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## Phase 2 Sample Meal Plan

### Breakfast

Berry smoothie (8 oz Dannon Light 'n Fit fruit-flavored yogurt, ½ cup berries, ½ cup crushed ice, blended)  
Decaf coffee or decaf tea with fat-free milk and sugar substitute

### **Midmorning Snack**

1 hard-boiled egg

### **Lunch**

Lemon Couscous Chicken

Tomato and cucumber slices

### **Midafternoon Snack**

Dannon Light 'n Fit yogurt, 4 oz

### **Dinner**

Meat Loaf

Steamed asparagus

Mushrooms sautéed in olive oil

Sliced Bermuda onion and tomato with drizzled olive oil

### **Dessert**

Sliced cantaloupe with 2 Tbsp ricotta cheese

### **Foods You Can Eat Again**

**Fruit:** Apples, blueberries, cantaloupe, grapefruit, grapes, mangoes, oranges, peaches.

**Dairy:** Milk (light soy, fat-free, or 1%), yogurt.

**Starches (use sparingly):** Bagels (small whole grain), bran muffins, bread (multigrain, bran, whole wheat), cereal (high-fiber, oatmeal

### **Foods to Avoid or Eat Rarely**

**Starches:** Bagels (refined wheat), bread (refined wheat, white), cookies, cornflakes, dinner rolls, matzo, pasta (white), potatoes (white baked, instant), rice cakes, rice (white).

**Vegetables:** Beets, carrots, corn, white potatoes.

**Fruit:** Bananas, canned fruit, fruit

[not instant]), pasta (whole wheat), juice, pineapple, raisins, watermelon, pita, rice (brown, wild).

**Miscellaneous:** Honey, ice cream,

**Vegetables and legumes:** Barley, jam.  
black-eyed peas, pinto beans, sweet potatoes, yams.

**Miscellaneous:** Chocolate  
(bittersweet or semisweet, sparingly), pudding (fat-free).

### Phase 3: The Rest of Your Life

This is the maintenance phase: how you'll eat for the rest of your life. It's the most liberal stage. You can continue to eat snacks if you need them, but most people find that they are satisfied without them.

There will always be times when you overindulge a little even after years on the diet. Those are the times when you'll switch back to Phase 1 for a week or two. You'll get back to where you were, and then you'll return to Phase 3.

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Phase 3 Sample Meal Plan

**Breakfast**

½ grapefruit

Tex-Mex eggs (2 eggs scrambled with shredded Monterey Jack cheese and salsa)

Whole grain toast, 1 slice

Decaf coffee or decaf tea with fat-free milk and sugar substitute

**Lunch**

Roast Beef Wrap

Nectarine

**Dinner**

Grilled salmon with tomato salsa

Tossed salad (mixed greens, cucumbers, green bell peppers, cherry tomatoes)

Olive oil and vinegar to taste or 2 Tbsp low-sugar prepared dressing

**Dessert**

Chocolate-Dipped Apricots

**Don't Forget (All Phases)**

1. Drink at least eight glasses of water or decaf beverages (club soda, unsweetened flavored seltzers, decaf tea or coffee [no sugar], decaf sugar-free sodas) per day.
2. Limit caffeine-containing beverages to 1 cup per day.
3. Take a daily multivitamin and mineral supplement.
4. Take a daily calcium supplement (500 mg for men of all ages and women under 50, 1,000 mg for women over 50).

South Beach Diet by Dr A Agatston

Its not low carb and its not low fat!

Teaches you to rely on the right carbs and the right fats – and enables you to live quite happily without the bad ones. You should lose somewhere between 8-13 pounds in the first two weeks alone.

- You'll eat normal size helpings of meat, chicken, turkey, fish and shellfish
- You'll have plenty of vegetables, eggs, cheese and nuts
- You'll have salads with real olive oil in the dressing.
- You'll have 3 balanced meals a day and it will be your job to eat so your hunger is satisfied
- You'll have dessert after dinner
- You'll drink water, plus tea & coffee if you wish

➤ Phase 1

- For the next 14 days you won't have any bread, rice, potatoes, pasta or baked goods. No fruit, no sweets, cakes biscuits, ice cream, beer or alcohol.
- During the first week the craving for the above will disappear
- You will lose between 8-13 pounds

➤ Phase 2

- Weight loss should be appx 2 lbs a week
- You can start introducing more food back to your diet
- Fruit can be added back to the diet, and pasta etc in reduced quantities
- Phase 2 should last till you hit your target weight

Phase 3 is the rest of your life – when you're into the habits of good healthy eating and back to normal foods - as long as you stick to a few basic rules!

Good carbs/ Bad carbs

Phase 1 begins to reverse the body's inability to process sugars and starches properly. To do this we need to cut out all carbs but the healthiest ones ie those high in fibre and nutrients (and lowest in sugar and starch) – vegetables and salads only in other words!!

Typical brekkie – two egg omelette with two slices lean bacon cooked in a spray of olive oil

This combines protein (eggs & bacon) and good fats (oil and bacon). This will keep your stomach full and occupied with digestion ie no hunger pangs!

An alternative could have been an omelette with vegetables ie mushrooms, peppers, broccoli. Or an omelette with ham or low-fat cheese.

It is essential not to skip breakfast as this allows blood sugar to drop and results in cravings for dodgy carbs!

You can have up to 7 eggs a week.

You should be ready for a mid-morning snack about 10.30am whether or not you feel like you need one. The only low-fat food this diet recommends is low-fat cheese or low-fat yoghurt. (In other low-fat foods, the fat tends to have been replaced with carbohydrates)

Typical lunch could be mixed salad, with grilled chicken or fish, olive oil vinaigrette, grilled prawns, tuna nicoise salad. Eat until you are full.

Aim for good mix of healthy carbohydrates, protein and fats. The aim is to deprive your system of the low-quality sugar and starch that play havoc with your blood chemistry.

Mid-afternoon is another dodgy time as blood sugar levels drop again triggering cravings for chocolate/sweets etc. Nuts are a good thing to eat at this time. Not salted or smoked nuts though. Almonds, or Pistachios. Try and only eat a limited amount ie 15 almonds or 30 pistachios.

Dinner – again we rely on chicken, fish, lean beef and plenty of vegetables and salad to go with them.

Strong recommendation to have dessert after dinner as this is another prime time for blood sugar levels to drop. Two solutions – sugar free jelly (called gelatine in the book but I guess it's the same thing!!) plus ample use of low-fat ricotta cheese.

Main aim is to slow the absorption of the sugars in the carbohydrates into the bloodstream. Fibre is a very good way of slowing this process down. Similar to drinking on an empty stomach – you get drunk faster than if you had food in your stomach to absorb the alcohol.

Fat also slows down the absorption of sugar. As well as acidic foods such as lemon and vinegar, which slow down the speed at which your stomach empties.

Basically anything that helps slow down the absorption of carbohydrate sugars is good!

You can split carb sugars into two groups – slow and fast.

Fast sugar gives us a quick 'hit' but then increases cravings soon after the initial hit. Slow sugar gradually raises our sugar levels but also lowers them slower so the cravings do not reappear so quickly.

Basically when we have low blood sugar, and we raise it quickly then pancreas increases insulin levels in the body, this then reduces the sugar level but often to a level that is too low thus creating more cravings, and so on.

The slower the rate that sugar is released into the body, the slower insulin is released into our bodies to counteract it. Ie no sudden rise/fall in blood sugar = no cravings

Timing your snacks to correspond with the daily lows in blood sugar can also help counteract the craving. There is a lag between your stomach starting to fill and your brain noticing it., so eating i.e. a few nuts before lunch will stop you eating so much

Certain foods cause our sugar levels to rise more quickly – i.e. white bread, white pasta, sugar, beer, rice, certain tropical fruit, anything made with white flour, potatoes and other starchy vegetables,

Phase 1 foods to enjoy :

Beef – Sirloin (including minced), Tenderloin, Top Round, Other lean cuts

Poultry (skinless) – Turkey/chicken breast, Poussin, Turkey Bacon (2 slices per day)  
Seafood – all types of fish and shellfish  
Pork – Boiled Ham, Lean Bacon, tenderloin  
Veal – Leg Cutlet, Top Round, Veal Chop,  
Lunchmeat – Non-fat or lower fat only  
Cheese (fat-free or lower fat) –American, Cheddar, Feta, Mozzarella, Parmesan,  
Ricotta, Provolone, String, Dairy free cream cheese, fat free cottage cheese  
Nuts – 30 pistachios, 20 small peanuts, 15 pecan halves, 1 teaspoon peanut butter  
Eggs – 7 eggs per week  
Tofu – soft, low-fat or lite varieties  
Vegetables – Artichokes, Asparagus, Aubergines, Beans (black, butter. Chickpeas,  
Green, Italian, kidney, lentils, Lima, split peas) Broccoli, Cabbage,  
Cauliflower,  
Celery, Courgettes, Cucumbers, Lettuce, Mushrooms, Spinach, Turnips  
Fats – olive oil  
Spices –all spices that contain no added sugar, extracts (vanilla, almond etc)  
Horseradish sauce, low fat butter substitute) pepper 9black, white, red,  
Cayenne)  
Sweet treats – limit to 75 calories per day – no added sugar chocolate powder, sugar  
free ice-lollies, sugar free gelatine, sugar free hard sweets, sugarless  
chewing gum, sugar substitute.

Foods to avoid :

Fatty cuts of meat, chicken wings/legs, duck, goose, honey bake ham, brie, edam,  
beets, carrots, corn, potatoes, tomato (limit to 1 whole or 10 cherry per meal) sweet  
potatoes, apples, apricots, berries, melon, peaches, pears, all starchy food ie bread,  
cereal, oatmeal, rice, pasta, pastry, frozen yoghurt, ice-cream, milk, soy milk, yoghurt,  
alcohol of any kind.

Dessert ideas

-Basically all involved 110g low fat ricotta cheese mixed with: -  
Sugar substitute, lemon zest, lime zest, vanilla extract, almond extract.  
Mix up and serve chilled

After 2 weeks of phase 1 they recommend you switch to phase 2 – ie gradually  
reintroducing certain healthy carbs ie fruit, granary bread brown rice, wholemeal  
pasta, sweet potatoes

Foods to reintroduce in phase 2:-

Apples, apricots, blueberries, melon, cherries, grapefruit, grapes, kiwi, mango,  
oranges, peaches, pears, plums, strawberries, light fruit flavoured yoghurt, light soya  
milk, plain lowfat or fatfree yoghurt, starches –use sparingly ie all-bran cereal, bran  
flakes, oatmeal, brown rice, wholewheat pasta, multigrain bread, popcorn, small sweet  
potato, wholegrain bagels etc, red wine.

Foods to avoid or eat rarely:-

White rice, baked white potatoes, instant potatoes, dinner rolls, white bread, white  
pasta, pretzels, rice cakes, cornflakes, biscuits, beetroot, carrots, corn, potatoes,  
banana, fruit juice, canned fruit, pineapple, raisins, watermelon, honey, jam, ice-  
cream

## What Is the Glycemic Index?

The Glycemic Index--or GI, for short--is a system that ranks foods by how they affect your levels of blood sugar. Low-GI foods (less than 55) produce a gradual rise in blood sugar that's easy on the body. Foods between 55 and 70 are intermediate-GI foods. Foods with high-GI numbers (more than 70) make blood sugar as well as insulin levels spike fast. We now realize that's a health threat.

Can choosing more low-GI foods make you healthier?

Mounting research suggests keeping blood sugar from spiking pays off in many ways.

Low-GI foods appear to:

stave off heart disease

prevent type 2 diabetes

help you evade serious side effects if you have diabetes

curb your appetite so you lose weight

perhaps even help you feel more energetic

Is it hard to use the GI in real life?

Definitely not. Here are the general guidelines. Include at least one low-GI food at each meal or snack, advises top GI expert Jennie Brand-Miller, PhD, University of Sydney, Australia. No one's suggesting you eliminate all high-GI foods, but you can use this guide to work toward more intermediate- and low-GI choices--with the exceptions noted below. So far, there's no fixed rule as to the number of GI points that you are "allowed" at each meal.

\* Eat sparingly any low- or intermediate-GI foods that are printed in red, such as candy bars. These are high in empty calories. Eat too much, and you'll crowd out essential nutrients and gain weight. \* On the other hand, don't avoid or even limit high-glycemic index foods that are printed in green. These are low-calorie and very nutritious foods, such as watermelon and baked potato.

## Low-Glycemic Index Foods: Less Than 55

\* Eat foods printed in red sparingly; these are high in empty calories.

|             |     |
|-------------|-----|
| Artichoke   | <15 |
| Asparagus   | <15 |
| Broccoli    | <15 |
| Cauliflower | <15 |

|  |     |     |
|--|-----|-----|
| Celery                                 | <15 |     |
| Cucumber                               | <15 |     |
| Eggplant                               | <15 |     |
| Green beans                            | <15 |     |
| Lettuce, all varieties                 | <15 |     |
| Low-fat yogurt, artificially sweetened | <15 | <15 |
| Peanuts                                | <15 |     |
| Peppers, all varieties                 | <15 |     |
| Snow peas                              | <15 |     |
| Spinach                                | <15 |     |
| Young summer squash                    | <15 | <15 |
| Zucchini                               | <15 |     |
| Tomatoes                               | 15  |     |
| Cherries                               | 22  |     |
| Peas, dried                            | 22  |     |
| Plum                                   | 24  |     |
| Grapefruit                             | 25  |     |
| Pearled barley                         | 25  |     |
| Peach                                  | 28  |     |
| Canned peaches, natural juice          | 30  |     |
| Dried apricots                         | 31  |     |
| Soy milk                               | 30  |     |
| Baby lima beans, frozen                | 32  |     |
| Fat-free milk                          | 32  |     |
| Fettuccine                             | 32  |     |
| *M&M's Chocolate Candies, Peanut       | 32  |     |
| Low-fat yogurt, sugar sweetened        | 33  |     |
| Apple                                  | 36  |     |
| Pear                                   | 36  |     |
| Whole wheat spaghetti                  | 37  |     |
| Tomato soup                            | 38  |     |
| Carrots, cooked                        | 39  |     |
| *Mars Snickers Bar                     | 40  |     |
| Apple juice                            | 41  |     |
| Spaghetti                              | 41  |     |
| All-Bran                               | 42  |     |
| Canned chickpeas                       | 42  |     |
| Custard                                | 43  |     |
| Grapes                                 | 43  |     |
| Orange                                 | 43  |     |
| Canned lentil soup                     | 44  |     |
| Canned pinto beans                     | 45  |     |
| Macaroni                               | 45  |     |
| Pineapple juice                        | 46  |     |
| Banana bread                           | 47  |     |
| Long-grain rice                        | 47  |     |
| Parboiled rice                         | 47  |     |
| Bulgur                                 | 48  |     |
| Canned baked beans                     | 48  |     |
| Grapefruit juice                       | 48  |     |
| Green peas                             | 48  |     |

|                                    |    |
|------------------------------------|----|
| Oat bran bread                     | 48 |
| *Chocolate bar, 1.5 oz             | 49 |
| Old-fashioned oatmeal              | 49 |
| Cheese tortellini                  | 50 |
| *Low-fat ice cream                 | 50 |
| Canned kidney beans                | 52 |
| Kiwifruit                          | 52 |
| Orange juice, not from concentrate | 52 |
| Banana                             | 53 |
| *Potato chips                      | 54 |
| *Pound cake                        | 54 |
| Special K                          | 54 |
| Sweet potato                       | 54 |

\* Eat foods printed in red sparingly; these are high in empty calories.