



The Ketogenic Diet

Dr. Charles Shaffer

Occasionally, I will run across a letter or article I would like to share with Dr. Georgia Ede, a psychiatrist who wrote a letter in a therapist magazine. She has valid points regarding ketogenic diets and our low-carb diet, other points I may not entirely agree with.

Dr. Ede states a “ketogenic diets cause a profound shift in brain and body chemistry rather quickly” and that these changes are “always positive”. Healthy individuals can see impacts in their medication dosages and side effects. This is monitored closely during the first few month, such as your metabolism adjusting to a way of eating. Medications are continued until you’ve been in ketosis for six weeks which is the minimum amount of time it takes the body to start turning ketones into fat, the efficiency for fuel. Once the six-week period is met, clinicians can discuss their patients actions and medications.

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She continues “I’m sorry to be the bearer of evil tidings, but your move makes it worse before it gets better. Irritability, low energy, mood swings, sleep changes, and cravings for sweets and starches are among possible withdraws. This advocate support helps you get through the rough spots during the first and second week”.

Before taking medications such as Depakote, Topamax, and Zonegran, it’s encouraged to speak with your doctor or provider first for alternative ways to reduce risks for developing kidney stones. These patients should eat a low salt diet. Therefore, embarking on a ketogenic diet while taking these medications can be tricky and should be managed by your physicians.

Some people develop constipation due to psychiatric medications, other medicines, dietary tips, etc. This can also be true for first starting a ketogenic diet. This is only temporary, and our booklet discusses this and treatment options.

Dr. Ede is convinced of the benefits of the ketogenic diet and eats it herself. She also states less medication you’re taking before you start is always better. If changes are recommended, you should consult your doctor.

Dr. Ede writes “if you’re tearing off medication, keep in mind that it takes six weeks for the brain to reverse the effects of psychiatric medications completely”. If you’re taking more than one psychiatric medication, it may be best to wait at least six weeks between each medication. If you taper a second medication during the six week window and your depression symptoms begin to return, we will know whether it’s because the benefits are wearing out or you started tapering the medication you’ve been given.

Many patients stop their psychiatric drugs after they’ve reached maintenance. At this stage, we can also help you adjust with what medicines you can gradually start decreasing. You may also need to talk with your primary care physician as medications will probably be lowered.

I hope you enjoyed reading Dr. Ede’s input on the ketogenic diet. Remember, we are here to assist you in reaching your weight loss goal. There is a lot of information given to you if you allow yourself to really follow the plan.

Blessings,
Chuck Shaffer MD

The Recipe of the Month

Pesto

Ingredients - Yields 6 servings

- *3 Cups lightly packed spinach leaves*
- *1/3 Cup walnuts*
- *1/3 Cup Parmesan cheese*
- *3 Tablespoons apple cider vinegar with mother*
- *1/2 Clove garlic, minced*
- *1/3 Cup olive oil*
- *1/4 Teaspoon kosher salt*
- *1/8 Teaspoon black pepper*



Directions

In the base of a food processor, combine spinach, walnuts, vinegar and minced garlic. Pulse ingredients until spinach is chopped and ingredients are combined.

With the machine running, add olive oil and mix until pesto is creamy. Add salt and pepper to taste.

