

Calorie Control

COMMENTARY

Fall 2004
Vol. 26

Number of Dieters on the Rise and Carb Craze Continues, But Practical Weight Loss Approaches Still Prevail

Health professionals, government agencies, regulators and many others are saying the same thing — Americans weigh too much. And, statistics published in the June 2004 issue of the *Journal of the American Medical Association* confirm that adults and children continue to weigh in on the heavy side, with 66 percent of adults overweight and 31 percent obese. Thirty-two percent of children between the ages of six and 19 were found to be overweight and 17 percent obese. The study found that there has essentially been no change in the number of overweight and obese children over the past two years. Although this may seem like bleak news, a new survey indicates there may be some light at the end of the tunnel.

It appears that overweight Americans are listening and acting, in response to warnings about the health effects of obesity. The



number of people on a diet has increased dramatically in the last few years. A new national survey, commissioned by the Calorie Control Council (a non-profit association that has tracked weight and dieting levels for the past 20 years) indicates that one-third of adult Americans, or 71 million, are currently on a diet — an increase of 35 percent since 2000, and the highest level of dieting in 15 years.

Many dieters are making sensible changes when it comes to weight loss. The majority of dieters agree that controlling calories, cutting back on foods high in sugar and fat, eating smaller portions, etc., are the best ways to lose weight.

(continued on page 8)

One-third of adult Americans, or 71 million, are currently on a diet — an increase of 35 percent since 2000, and the highest level of dieting in 15 years

—Calorie Control Council Survey, 2004

2

Low-Carbs, Net Carbs, Who's Counting Carbs Anyway and What Role do Polyols Play?



3

Low Calorie/ Low-Fat Bulletin

4

Low-Calorie Sweeteners: Helpful in Weight Control

6

Olestra "Pops" in Microwave Popcorn



7

Q&A on Childhood Obesity with William Dietz, M.D., Ph.D

Low-Carbs, Net Carbs, Who's Counting Carbs Anyway and What Role do Polyols Play?

Polyols provide fewer calories per gram than sugar, and do not cause sudden increases in blood glucose levels.

Because these sweeteners have lower caloric values than sugars, they can be useful for people with diabetes and those trying to control their calories.

For those consumers who are “carb conscious” there’s no shortage of low-carb products — from ice cream to pasta and even bread, where have all the carbohydrates gone? According to *Prepared Foods*, there were 661 low-carbohydrate products introduced in the U.S. just through May 2004, far exceeding the 289 products introduced in 2003. The U.S. now has a total of 827 low-carbohydrate products on the market, compared to a total of 83 low-carbohydrate products in Canada and 14 products in the U.K.

With an increased focus on reducing carbohydrates, manufacturers are searching for the best ways to meet consumer demand.

In January, more than 450 representatives from various companies gathered for the first “Low-Carb Summit,” which occurred in Denver, Colorado. The focus of the summit was to discuss opportunities in the low carb market. Restaurants are also trying to accommodate patrons watching their carbs. According to

Restaurant Business, nineteen percent of those classified as “frequent restaurant patrons” (those who dine out 2-3 times per month) in casual dining establishments are using Atkins. Restaurants have responded with “Atkins friendly” wraps, bunless burgers and more.

Polyols Make it Possible

But how are manufacturers meeting consumer demand and reducing the carbohydrates in their products? Many manufacturers are turning to the use of polyols. Polyols are sugar-free sweeteners that are used cup-for-cup in the same amount as sugar. Many health professionals refer to polyols as “sugar replacers” since this is a more consumer friendly term. Polyols provide fewer calories per gram than sugar, and do not cause sudden increases in blood glucose levels. This is because they are more slowly and incompletely absorbed from the small intestine into the blood. Some of the portion that is not absorbed into the blood is broken down into smaller segments in the large intestine. Because these sweeteners have lower caloric values than

sugars, they can be useful for people with diabetes and those trying to control their calories.

Carb Counting Claims — What Makes Up Low-Carbohydrate Products?

Consumers and health professionals have seen the terms “impact” or “net carbs” on the label of “carb conscious” products — but what exactly do these mean? For the most part, to make a product reduced in carbohydrates, many food

manufacturers are subtracting the total grams of polyols and fiber from the total grams of carbohydrates. The remaining carbohydrates after subtracting the polyols and fiber from the total carbohydrates are often referred to as the “net” or “impact” carbohydrates. Although this may be acceptable for those following a lower carbohydrate diet such as the

Atkins Diet or the South Beach Diet, for those with diabetes (who must carefully control their carbohydrate intake), depending on the “net” or “impact” carbs labeling may not be the best guidance. Most diabetes educators advise their patients to do the following when determining carbohydrate content from foods with polyols:

1. If all the carbohydrate comes from polyols and there are less than 10 grams of total carbohydrate it can be considered a “free food.” Health professionals recommend three servings or less per day.
2. If the grams of polyols are greater than 10, subtract half of the grams of polyols from the total carbohydrate grams and count the remaining carbohydrate grams accordingly into the meal plan.



(continued on page 7)

Low-Calorie/Low-Fat Bulletin

MORE OPTIONS NOW AVAILABLE AT CHAIN RESTAURANTS

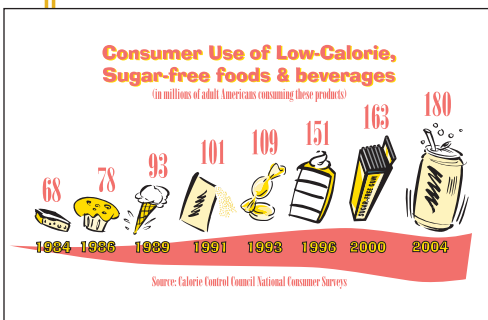
Many restaurant chains are introducing food items and new menus that are lower in calories and fat to meet consumer demand. For example, Subway will offer a meal for kids that will substitute a fruit roll-up for a cookie in addition to other substitutions. Taco Bell now offers “Fresco Style” items that have a salsa-based sauce instead of a cheese and sour cream-based sauce. This simple sauce substitution will reduce up to 40 percent of the calories and 70 percent of the fat in the meal. In addition to a new line of Premium salads, McDonald’s will soon offer new chicken McNuggets, which will have 50 fewer calories and less fat than the original. Among others, Burger King and Wendy’s have already unveiled reduced-calorie and reduced-fat menu items including salads, salad dressings, meats, and ice cream products. And for those who get their nutrition from a “cup of joe,” Caribou Coffee and Starbucks have introduced a line of reduced-calorie and carbohydrate lattes.



Seventy three percent use these products “to stay in overall better health” followed by “to eat or drink healthier foods and beverages” (68%) and “to reduce calories” (62%).

FDA ISSUES “CALORIES COUNT” REPORT TO HELP TACKLE OBESITY

The “calories count” message will be a key strategy in the Food & Drug Administration’s (FDA) plan to help reduce overweight and obesity. In March, the FDA released a report by the FDA’s Obesity Working Group. The report contains a variety of recommendations, which the FDA will focus on in the coming months and years. The variety of recommendations fall under the theme of “calories count.” Health & Human Services Secretary Tommy Thompson, added, “Counting calories is critical for people trying to achieve and maintain a healthy weight. This new report highlights FDA’s overall strategy for getting consumers accurate, helpful information that allows them to make wise food choices at home, at supermarkets and in restaurants. Taking small steps to eat a more balanced diet and to stay physically active can go a long way to reversing the epidemic of obesity that harms far too many Americans.”



“LIGHT” PRODUCTS CONSUMED BY 9 OUT OF 10 PEOPLE

While it may seem the low-carb craze has taken over, “light” products continue to be extremely popular. In fact, 92 percent of adults now consume

either low-fat/reduced-fat/fat-free or low-calorie/reduced-sugar/sugar-free products on a regular basis (at least once every two weeks), according to a 2004 Calorie Control Council Survey.

Use of low-calorie, reduced-sugar, sugar-free foods and beverages is reported by 84 percent of those surveyed. Among dieters that use is even higher (95%). The most popular reduced-calorie, sugar-free products among users include carbonated diet soft drinks (58%), sugar-free/light non-carbonated soft drinks (53%) and sugar substitutes (46%). And over eight out of ten users (85%) are interested in being offered additional low-calorie products. Although some may think the majority of adults use low-calorie and reduced-sugar foods and beverages simply to control their weight, the recent survey indicates otherwise.

FDA ALLOWS OBESITY-RELATED CLAIM FOR LOW- AND REDUCED-CALORIE FOODS AND BEVERAGES

In response to a Calorie Control Council request, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has stated that an obesity-related claim may appear on low-calorie and reduced-calorie foods and beverages. Regulations allow certain foods and beverages to be labeled as “low calorie” and “reduced calorie” and, according to FDA, the usefulness of such foods in reducing or maintaining weight may also be indicated on the products. Therefore, foods and beverages that meet the requirements for low-calorie or reduced-calorie may be labeled, for example, “Low calorie [name of food] may be useful in weight control. Obesity increases the risk of developing diabetes, heart disease, and certain cancers.”

WHOSE FAULT IS IT ANYWAY?

Most people do not blame the food and beverage industry for their weight woes — although several lawsuits may have people believing otherwise. A national survey by Context Marketing published in the April issue of *Prepared Foods* found that 90 percent believe the obesity problem is not the responsibility of the food and beverage industry and 77 percent do not feel food and beverage companies should be held accountable.

“Low-calorie sweeteners and the products that contain them are useful tools for those trying to control or lose weight. Weight control is mainly a matter of caloric balance.”

—Dr. John Foreyt,
Baylor College of
Medicine

Low-Calorie Sweeteners: Helpful in Weight Control

Many people use low-calorie sweeteners and the products that contain them to help control calories and manage their weight. However, a recent “short communication” from Purdue University, which received widespread media attention, may have unnecessarily alarmed consumers regarding the use of low-calorie sweeteners. Based on a study of approximately 10 rats per group, the researchers concluded that low-calorie sweeteners may “fool the tongue” and may not be useful in weight control. However, leading obesity researcher Dr. John Foreyt, director of the Nutrition Research Clinic and professor, Department of Medicine at Baylor College of Medicine in Houston, noted that other studies have found that these products can be useful. “Low-calorie sweeteners and the products that contain them are useful tools for those trying to control or lose weight. Weight control is mainly a matter of caloric balance, which this study does not evaluate,” said Dr. Foreyt.

Research conducted by other leading scientists confirm Dr. Foreyt’s comments. For example, a study published in the *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition* found that using low-calorie sugar-free foods and beverages aided in the prevention of weight gain. Another study conducted by Dr. George Blackburn of Harvard Medical School and also published in the *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition* investigated whether the addition of aspartame to a multidisciplinary weight control program would improve weight loss and long-term control of body weight in obese women. The researchers found that participation in this multidisciplinary weight control program including the use of aspartame-sweetened foods and beverages not only facilitated weight loss, but also long-term maintenance of a reduced body weight.

ADA Confirms Usefulness and Benefits of Low-Calorie Sweeteners

In February 2004, the American Dietetic Association (ADA) published an extensive updated review paper confirming that “nonnutritive” or low-calorie sweeteners and the products that contain them are not only safe, but can also be beneficial in weight control. The following are excerpts from the ADA’s updated position paper on sweeteners:

- “Nonnutritive sweeteners added to the diet have been shown to promote modest loss of weight and, within a multidisciplinary weight-control program, may facilitate long-term maintenance of reduction in body weight.”
- “Additionally, most of the research associating sweet and ingestive behaviors has involved nutritive sweeteners; according to a



previous review, nonnutritive sweeteners do not have a paradoxical effect to increase appetite and food intake. Thus, the rise in prevalence [of obesity] clearly relates to all factors that cause an energy imbalance. Individuals who wish to lose weight may choose to use nonnutritive sweeteners but should do so within the context of a sensible weight management program including a balanced diet and exercise.”

Low-calorie sweeteners not only provide consumers with many safe products that are beneficial in weight control, but low-calorie sweeteners and the products that contain them are becoming more popular as indicated by recent surveys (see page 3). And consumers want more of these products, not only to aid them in controlling weight, but also to help them obtain better health. ■■■

References:

Blackburn, G. L., et. al. *The Effect of Aspartame as Part of a Multidisciplinary Weight-Control Program on Short- and Long-term Control of Body Weight.* *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition.* 1997. Vol. 65. 409-418.

Davidson, TL and Switber, SE. *A Pavlovian Approach to the Problem of Obesity.* *International Journal of Obesity. Short Communication.* April, 2004, Vol. 28. 933-935.

Position of the American Dietetic Association: Use of Nutritive and Nonnutritive Sweeteners; Journal of the American Dietetic Association. February, 2004. Vol. 104. 255-275.

Raben, A., et. al. *Sucrose Compared with Artificial Sweeteners: Different Effects on Ad Libitum Food Intake and Body Weight After 10 Weeks of Supplementation in Overweight Subjects.* *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition.* October 2002. Vol. 76. No. 4. 721-729.

Low-Calorie Sweetener Update

Below is a recent update on the various low-calorie sweeteners. The past year has been “sweet” for these products.

Acesulfame Potassium: Acesulfame Potassium has received a general use approval (meaning it can now be used as a general-purpose sweetener and flavor enhancer in food, not including meat and poultry) according to the Food and Drug Administration (FDA). Acesulfame K has been used for many years in thousands of foods and beverages in approximately 90 countries. For more information visit www.sunett.com.

Aspartame: Although many people may have heard the Internet and email rumors that aspartame causes everything from lupus to multiple sclerosis, there is no validity to this information. An extensive review by the American Dietetic Association (ADA) and published as part of their position statement on nutritive and non-nutritive sweeteners is the most recent re-confirmation of aspartame’s safety. The paper notes that available evidence suggests that consumption of aspartame by normal humans is safe and is not associated with serious adverse health effects. Additionally the paper adds, “A comprehensive review of the safety of aspartame has recently been published. The review covers previous publications as well as new information that support the safety of aspartame as a food additive...” For more information visit www.aspartame.org.



Neotame: Neotame is a relative newcomer on the low-calorie sweetener scene. The FDA approved the use of neotame as a general-purpose sweetener in July 2002. Neotame is 7,000-13,000 times sweeter than sugar and has a clean, sweet taste like sucrose and unique flavor enhancement properties. Neotame is being used in hundreds of products globally and is generally used in combination with other low-calorie sweeteners. For more information visit www.neotame.com.

Saccharin: Effective June 16, 2004, the Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau has removed the requirement for bottlers of wine, distilled spirits, and malt beverages to display a warning on products containing saccharin. This reflects the National Toxicology Program’s revised findings about saccharin and the removal of the statutory requirement for any warning. Another sweet mile marker for saccharin — the trademark for Sweet’N Low’s (the brand name tabletop sweetener for saccharin) treble clef and staff

logo was the one-millionth trademark issued in the United States. For more information visit www.saccharin.org.

Sucralose: Tate & Lyle became the sole manufacturer of sucralose in an agreement with McNeil Nutritionals, completed April 2004. Tate & Lyle is now responsible for the ingredient sales of sucralose to food and beverage manufacturers while McNeil Nutritionals continues to be responsible for the Splenda® Brand tabletop sweetener in retail and foodservice. Tate & Lyle also announced a \$30 million expansion of its sucralose plant in McIntosh, Alabama. The expansion is expected to be complete by 2006.

For more information visit www.sucralose.com.

Stevia: The Joint FAO/WHO Expert Committee on Food Additives (JECFA) met in Geneva, Switzerland from June 8-17, 2004, to evaluate various food additives. At the meeting, JECFA approved a temporary 2 mg/kg of body weight Acceptable Daily Intake (ADI) for steviol glycosides. However, JECFA has asked that additional

information regarding the pharmacological effects in humans be provided by 2007. In order for the temporary designation to be removed, further analytical data on steviol glycosides is also required. Stevia is not currently approved as a low-calorie sweetener in the U.S., and may only be sold as a dietary supplement. For more information visit www.caloriecontrol.org/stevioside.html. ■■■

References:

Joint FAO/WHO Expert Committee on Food Additives, Sixty-third meeting, Geneva, 8-17 June 2004, Summary and Conclusions, [ftp://ftp.fao.org/esn/jecfa/jecfa63_summary.pdf](http://ftp.fao.org/esn/jecfa/jecfa63_summary.pdf)

“Nonnutritive sweeteners added to the diet have been shown to promote modest loss of weight and, within a multi-disciplinary weight-control program, may facilitate long-term maintenance of reduction in body weight.”

—American Dietetic Association Position Paper on Nutritive and Nonnutritive Sweeteners

Olestra "Pops" in Microwave Popcorn

Consumers may find a new ingredient has "popped" into their light microwave popcorn. The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) recently announced the approval of olestra (brand name Olean®) in prepackaged ready-to-heat popcorn.

Olestra is a calorie-free cooking oil that comes from soybeans and is fat-free. Use of olestra in various products not only reduces the fat but also reduces calories by as much as 50 percent.

In related news, Frito-Lay has announced a name change of its WOW! Chips (which contain olestra). The new chips, which include Lay's and Ruffles potato chips as well as Doritos and Tostitos, will be called "Light." Frito-Lay began shipments of these new products in mid-September. Chips containing olestra are significantly reduced in fat and calories compared to the regular versions.

Additionally, snacks containing olestra no longer need to carry a label concerning possible digestive problems. The FDA reviewed new

scientific data, which led to the ruling. The clinical studies involved many people eating olestra-containing products under "real-life" conditions.

Light microwave popcorn made with olestra offers yet another great-tasting choice for health conscious consumers. Use of low and reduced-fat products continues to remain high. Regular usage (at least once every two weeks) of low-fat, reduced-fat, fat-free products is found among a vast majority (88%) of American adults, according to a 2004 survey conducted for the Calorie Control Council. An overwhelming majority of dieters (94%) report use of these products and almost nine out of ten consumers (87%) are interested in being offered additional reduced-fat products. ■■■■

Additional Studies Support "Online Dieting" for Weight Maintenance "CaloriesCount.com Dieter" and Researcher Appear on the *Today Show*

A recent study published in *Obesity Research* and led by Jean Harvey-Berino of Vermont University found that an Internet program was as effective as in-person counseling in promoting long-term weight maintenance. After losing weight through a six-month program, participants were assigned to one of three groups, either frequent in-person support (F-IPS), minimal in-person support (M-IPS) or Internet support (IS). The researchers found that those in the Internet support group were able to sustain a weight loss that was comparable to those who

received in-person support. Previous studies have shown that "online dieting" can be effective for weight loss as well.

Dr. Harvey-Berino discussed her recent research with Katie Couric of NBC's *Today Show*. Joan Rainwater, a member of CaloriesCount.com who lost 32 pounds and has kept it off for almost a year, added to the discussion by talking about her own experience with online dieting. The following is an excerpt from the show:

Katie Couric: "What did Cyber Dieting do for you that traditional forms couldn't?"

Joan Rainwater: "First of all, it's convenient. I didn't have to go anywhere. I didn't have to sit through a meeting. I didn't have to get on a scale in front of other people. I could, you know, weigh myself on my own bathroom scale and log on, and it was easy. I just did

CaloriesCount.com. I entered my food in a food diary every single day. I could tell calorie content at the end of the day. I printed out grocery lists, I printed out weekly menus. So it was so convenient and easy... Their [CaloriesCount.com's] whole premise is **healthy eating and exercise for life**. So I knew it was going to be a lifestyle change."

However, Joan isn't the only one logging on and finding success. In April, CaloriesCount.com worked with one of its corporate wellness partners to launch an online weight loss challenge. Over 1,600 employees participated in this pilot program.

The average weight loss of all employees who successfully completed the Challenge was 10 pounds. Fifty-one percent of those who successfully completed the Challenge were able to drop five percent of their initial body weight, on average, in eight weeks.

A post-Challenge survey indicated that the majority of employees were happy with the online weight loss challenge, with 93 percent saying they felt CaloriesCount.com was a helpful resource and were satisfied with the program. Additionally, 89 percent of respondents felt that taking part in the Challenge positively impacted their work ability, and 99 percent would like to participate in more Challenges with CaloriesCount.com. ■■■■



Joan speaks with *Today Show* host Katie Couric and University of Vermont researcher, Jean Harvey-Berino, about how she lost 32 pounds with the help of CaloriesCount.com.

Q&A on Childhood Obesity with William Dietz, M.D., Ph.D

William Dietz, Director of the Center for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) Division of Nutrition and Physical Activity recently spoke with *Commentary* about childhood obesity, how to prevent children from becoming overweight and what parents can do to help their children. Read on for Dr. Dietz's comments.

Commentary: What advice do you have for parents of overweight and/or obese children?

Dr. Dietz: First, parents should consult their child's medical provider to determine if their child is overweight and to ensure that the parent's concerns are valid. If a child does need to lose weight, parents can help their children make dietary modifications to reduce calories. Parents should look for ways to provide greater volume from foods while reducing calories. For example, food volume can be increased by encouraging children to eat fruits, vegetables, soups or a salad to begin a meal. These foods tend to be lower in calorie and higher in volume, which helps them to feel more full. Parents can also help their children choose water or a diet beverage in place of a full-calorie beverage.

It's also important for children to be physically active and this includes more enjoyable playtime. Parents should also decrease the amount of TV their children watch. Children are prone to eat while watching TV and parents should discourage this.

Commentary: Are low-carbohydrate diets appropriate for children?

Dr. Dietz: No. Low-carbohydrate and other crash diets are not appropriate for children.

Commentary: What steps can parents take in preventing their children from becoming overweight?

Dr. Dietz: The same steps that parents use to help a child reduce his or her weight can also be applied to prevention. Parents can help their children choose foods that are lower in calories but still provide volume. Again, choosing fruits and vegetables is important. Another example includes choosing a lower-calorie yogurt over the full-calorie yogurt. The child still receives the same amount of nutrients but with fewer calories. Parents should be in charge of what their children are eating and make healthy options available.

Commentary: Which factors contribute to childhood obesity?

Dr. Dietz: There are numerous factors but too much TV watching and a decrease in physical activity can play a role. There is also some evidence pointing to a decrease in the consumption of fruits and vegetables by children as well as an increase in portion sizes.

Commentary: Do you think the trend of increasing numbers of overweight/obese children will continue?

Dr. Dietz: The visibility of childhood obesity has definitely increased and that's the first step to change. We are just now starting to respond to the problem and our response is in the initial phase. However, people must recognize that there is a problem before change occurs. The public is now more aware of obesity, but it is not yet clear that increased awareness has led to increased concern or action.



“The visibility of childhood obesity has definitely increased and that's the first step to change. We are just now starting to respond to the problem and our response is in the initial phase. However, people must recognize that there is a problem before change occurs. The public is now more aware of obesity, but it is not yet clear that increased awareness has led to increased concern or action.”

— Dr. William Dietz,
Director of the CDC's
Division of Nutrition
and Physical Activity

Low Carbs, Net Carbs *(continued from page 2)*

FDA has yet to define any terms regarding the amount of carbohydrates in foods and beverages. However, the agency has received petitions asking FDA to define certain terms such as “low carbohydrate,” “reduced carbohydrate” and “carbohydrate free.” The FDA has said that it plans to initiate rulemaking proceedings regarding the nutrient content claims for carbohydrate. The agency has also stated it plans to provide guidance to food manufacturers on the use of the term “net” and similar terms in relation to the food's carbohydrate content.

For more information on polyols, including downloadable brochures and a PowerPoint presentation (designed specifically for health professionals) visit www.caloriecontrol.org/redcal.html and www.caloriecontrol.org/polyolpres.html. ■■■

References:

Warsbau, Hope. *FAQs About Polyols*. *Today's Dietitian*. April 2004. Vol. 6. No. 4.

Number of Dieters on the Rise *(continued from page 1)*

According to the survey, dieters listed the following as the top ways to lose weight:

- Cutting down on foods high in sugar or fat (96%)
- Exercising (84%)
- Using low-calorie and reduced-fat foods and beverages (81%)
- Eating smaller portions of favorite foods (80%)
- Cutting down on foods high in carbohydrates (73%)
- Combining calorie reduction with exercise (72%)

Does Cutting Carbohydrates Equal Success?

Almost 20 percent of dieters (or 14 million) are using weight loss diets such as Atkins, The Zone, South Beach and Sugar Busters, as opposed to just 11 percent in 2000. However, the survey found that cutting carbs may not be the best way to lose weight. Those dieters who are controlling carbohydrate content are much more likely to have made more than five dieting attempts over the *past year*, according to the survey. And when it comes to weight maintenance over the long-term (greater than six months), carbs do not seem to be the magic bullet. In fact, there was little difference between people who were cutting carbs and those who were not in terms of the length of time they were able to maintain their weight loss.

Recent studies confirm the findings of the survey. When compared with low-fat diets, low-carbohydrate diets may produce greater amounts of weight loss over the short-term (six months). Researchers also see decreases in cholesterol and triglycerides. Another advantage of lower-carbohydrate diets is that people tend to be encouraged by their quick success and continue with the diets over the next several weeks and months. However, researchers have found that the amount of weight loss was similar between those on a low-carbohydrate diet and those on a low-fat diet after a year. Such findings may suggest that those on the low-carbohydrate diet regained some of the weight they had lost initially.

Whether people are using low-carbohydrate diets or low-fat diets, many adults are still considering carbohydrate content as a factor when making purchases. Sixty-four percent of dieters consider carbohydrate content when making food and beverage purchases, as opposed to just 38 percent of the total population. Specifically, carbohydrate content is mentioned as a factor in the purchase of bread (76%), cakes/pies/baked goods (59%), pasta (57%), cereal (53%) and ice cream/frozen yogurt (54%).

Although the latest low-carb diets may influence what adults are eating, the vast majority of dieters who are cutting back on car-

bohydrates agree or strongly agree that it is also important to reduce calories. And almost as many are combining calorie reduction with exercise as a means of weight control.

Weight Loss Hurdles

While dieters seem to be aware of the factors that contribute to weight loss, they are also aware of the factors that inhibit their weight loss. The following were listed as the top reasons for being unsuccessful at losing weight:

- Metabolism slowing down (63%)
- Not exercising enough (59%)
- Not having enough self-discipline (50%)
- Splurging on favorite foods (49%)
- Snacking too much (42%)

"Weighing In" On Dieting

Although this survey indicates that some people may be getting the message when it comes to losing weight and dieting, weight loss is only half the battle. The war is really only won if the weight loss can be maintained over the long term. Although most dieters report being successful at weight loss, with 71 percent having lost 10 pounds or more, the real test is whether or not they can keep the weight off. And no matter what method these dieters use, cutting calories, reducing carbohydrate, increasing protein, etc., most health professionals agree that the changes they make to lose the weight should be lifestyle changes. If the changes leading to weight loss are only temporary, previous "bad habits" are bound to creep back, often resulting in weight regain. ■■■■

References:

Bravata, et. al. *Efficacy and Safety of Low-Carbohydrate Diets. Journal of the American Medical Association. April 9, 2003. Vol. 289. No. 14. 1837-1850.*

Collins, Karen. *Defining the Success of Low-Carb Diets. www.msnbc.com. August 20, 2004.*

Foster, et. al. *A Randomized Trial of a Low-Carbohydrate Diet for Obesity. New England Journal of Medicine. May 22, 2003. Vol. 348. No. 21. 2082-2090.*

Light Products Usage and Weight Control Habits Survey. Conducted by Booth Research Services, Inc. for the Calorie Control Council, May 2004.

Trends in Intake of Energy and Macronutrients—United States, 1971-2000. Journal of the American Medical Association. March 10, 2004. Vol. 291. No. 10. 1193.

Samaha, et. al. *A Low-Carbohydrate as Compared with a Low-Fat Diet in Severe Obesity. New England Journal of Medicine. May 22, 2003. Vol. 348. No. 21. 2074-2081.*



Calorie Control COMMENTARY

Providing timely information on low-calorie and reduced-fat foods and beverages, weight management, physical activity and healthy eating.

Calorie Control Commentary (ISSN 1049-1791) is published by the Calorie Control Council, an international non-profit association of manufacturers of low-calorie and reduced-fat foods and beverages. Commentary is written by Council staff, which includes specialists in nutrition, food science and food safety.

© 2004 by the Calorie Control Council

5775 Peachtree-Dunwoody Road
Building G, Suite 500
Atlanta, Georgia 30342
Phone: (404) 252-3663.
E-mail: ccc@kellencompany.com.
Internet: www.caloriecontrol.org.

Permission to reprint from Calorie Control Commentary in whole or in part is granted provided customary credit is given.