



High-Carbohydrate Diets in America

- 1939 **Rice Diet, Duke University, MDs**
A study by Duke University reveals that the Rice Diet prevents and treats hypertension, diabetes, obesity, and more. It's very simple – eat rice, don't eat salt, eat whole foods.
- 1970s **Macrobiotics in America**
Michio and Aveline Kushi bring awareness of macrobiotics to America. Their lifestyle diet is based on the five element theory and emphasizes whole grains, seasonal eating, and specific cooking preparations.
- 1971 **Introduction of Complementary Proteins**
Frances Moore Lappé writes *Diet for a Small Planet*, based on the vegetarian movement of the 1960s. She incorporates vegetarian principles with a focus on whole grains and sustainable living.
- 1975 **Pritikin Diet**
Nathan Pritikin and his son, Robert Pritikin, write many books based on his extremely high-carb, low-fat diet: 80% complex carbohydrates, 5-10% fats, and 10-15% protein. Pritikin was a medical researcher who created his diet and lifestyle program based on the native diets of Mexico, New Guinea, and South Africa.
- 1977 **Dietary Goals for the American People**
The Senate Select Committee on Nutrition and Human Needs, led by Senator George McGovern, creates "Dietary Goals for the American People," recommending 55-60% of calories from carbohydrates.
- 1980s **High-Carbs to Lower Risk of Health Problems and Increase Weight Loss**
Dr. John McDougall writes *The McDougall Plan*, which he claims will reverse health problems and promote weight loss. He recommends a low-fat, low-protein approach with 75-85% of calories from carbohydrates.
- 1990s **Eat More, Weigh Less**
Dr. Dean Ornish, author of *Eat More, Weigh Less*, advocates a diet of 70% complex carbohydrates, 10% fat, and 20% protein. Macrobiotic principles are reflected in his recommendations. The Journal of American Medical Association (JAMA) finds that the average Ornish patient, while eating more food, loses 24 pounds in the first year, and keeps most of it off for five years or more. Insurance companies began paying client costs for this program.
- 1995 **High-Carb, Low-Fat Diet for Women**
Suzanne Powter releases her bestselling book, *Stop the Insanity*, which is the first popular diet to specifically recommend that women consume a high-carb, low-fat diet for weight loss.
- 1998 **Gluten-Free Awareness**
Ann Louise Gittleman, PhD, author of *Your Body Knows Best*, former head nutritionist of the Pritikin Center, exposes the detrimental effects of an extremely high-carbohydrate diet by pointing out that excess gluten may cause allergies, celiac, candida, and mineral deficiencies.
- 2004 **High-Carb vs. Low-Carb Diets**
A study by the National Weight Control Registry of people who lost more than 30 pounds and kept it off for a year reports that less than one percent of the successful dieters were on a low-carb diet. They recommend a low-fat, high-carbohydrate diet to keep weight off.
- 2007 **Rising Awareness of the Benefits of Whole Grains**
Whole grain awareness grows as many doctors, authors and nutritionists claim that unprocessed grains are essential to a healthy diet. Companies like General Mills begin changing their ingredients and advertising whole grains.
- 2010 **Quality of Whole Grains**
Studies continue to show a connection between whole grains and improved health, addressing the importance of the *quality* of carbohydrate you eat. Major companies, like Kelloggs and Post, shift advertising efforts to whole grains. Health advocates show concern that labeling is misleading, and what may have started as a whole grain has been processed and combined with a slew of sugars and additives, leaving little nutritional content.