

Dissecting Diets

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As a Nutritional Counsellor I am trained to dissect diets of all shapes and sizes.

I find I can't whole-heartedly approve of any of them.

I usually end up saying I like this bit, but I don't like that!

No two People are the Same

Just as we are all different in the way we look etc., the way our bodies digest food is just as different. There is no 'diet' (method of eating) that suits everyone... just doesn't happen.

This is why I stress to you about learning to listen to what your body is trying to tell you.

It will become obvious to you as you learn to tune in. A little pain here. A bit of a headache there. Feeling really sleepy. No 'up and go' or so much energy you don't want to stop!

Tune in. Listen. Test. Keep a food diary if necessary.



Let's Examine Three Diets

We will look at just three different diet styles:

1. **Mediterranean Diet**
2. **Ketogenic Diet**
3. **Paleo Diet**

What I recommend is a mixture of these three. I find they all have their good points.

I find the:

1. Mediterranean Diet to be a too heavy on grain consumption
2. Ketogenic Diet too high in animal products and lacks sufficient vegetables and fibre generally.
3. Paleo to be too high in animal products and lacking some of the best dairy such as yoghurt.

This is according to my research and a little experience with each of them.

Anyway, I have developed my own eating plan from taking a bit of this and a bit of that and I find it works well for me.



Mediterranean

Mediterranean Style of Eating



I do believe the Mediterranean Diet is certainly on the right track but feel there is enough evidence to suggest that too much grain consumption comes with risks.

Wheat has been so destroyed by them making the gluten content very high. I believe it's behind an awful lot of problems people are facing.

Personally, I side-step wheat wherever I can, eating only a little true sour-dough bread on occasion.

According to the Naturopathic Nutrition outlook, I do believe in eating whole foods. This means, I believe you are better off eating whole grains, which include the outer bran and the germ – the core that provides the seed with nutrients when it sprouts and grows.

I believe from all my learning and research, that sprouting grains and seeds removes many of the problems associated with them and vastly improves their nutrition.

Mediterranean Diet

This has been reported repeatedly as being one of the healthiest diets to go on to improve your health and to address many conditions.

It's pretty good as it fits in nicely with my 'whole food' concept but could be a little heavy on starchy foods that easily convert to sugar within the body.

But you could do a lot worse than follow a program such as this.

Basics:

- Vegetables
- Fruits
- Nuts
- Seeds
- Legumes
- Potatoes
- Whole grains
- Breads
- Herbs
- Spices
- Fish
- Seafood
- Extra-virgin Olive Oil

Moderately:

- Poultry
- Eggs
- Cheese
- Yoghurt

Rarely:

- Red meat

Do not eat:

- Sugar-sweetened beverages
- Added sugars
- Processed meat
- Refined grains
- Refined oils
- Or any other highly processed foods



There is some controversy over the exact diet because of the variety of different countries that use it.

But what is agreed upon:

- It's high in plant foods
- Relatively low in animal foods
- Fish and seafood at least twice a week

Their main beverages are:

- Water
- 1 glass of red wine per day, if desired.
 - Wine should be totally avoided by anyone who has problems controlling their consumption.
 - There are other ways of obtaining resveratrol – the main health ingredient in wine.
- Organic Coffee and tea are fine.
- Reduce or avoid all sugar-sweetened beverages and fruit juices.



In case you are wondering what a 'serve' is... here are a few examples:

Vegetables

- About 75g
- ½ cup cooked green or orange
- ½ cup cooked beans, peas, lentils
- 1 cup green leafy or raw salad
- ½ cup sweet corn
- ½ medium potato or starchy veg
- 1 medium tomato

Fruit

- About 150g
- 1 medium apple, banana, orange, pear
- 2 small apricots, kiwi, plums
- 1 cup berries





Paleo Style of Eating



Paleo Diet

Before I move on, please understand that the word 'diet' used here is not related to weight loss as such. The word 'diet' is used to describe the kind of eating pattern you feel is a fit for you. If it fits, you will follow it for the rest of your life.

I use Paleo as my 'go to' for recipes for grain-free cooking. As previously mentioned, I like to side-step wheat wherever I can except for a little sour-dough bread on occasions. But I do like bread!

This means that I like to make alternative breads occasionally and I've learned a lot from reading up on Paleo recipes.

I don't go along with all the flours they recommend as many of them are highly refined. I now mainly stick to almond meal, coconut flour and sometimes use some sprouted grains that I've milled.

Paleo tends to have high meat consumption. I cannot handle lots of meat. I prefer to eat vegetarian some days and smaller amounts of meat on other days. I guess you could call it Flexitarian!



Ketogenic



Keto Style of Eating

I trialed the Ketogenic Diet for a couple of months as there is so much interest in it around the world. It was so I could learn.

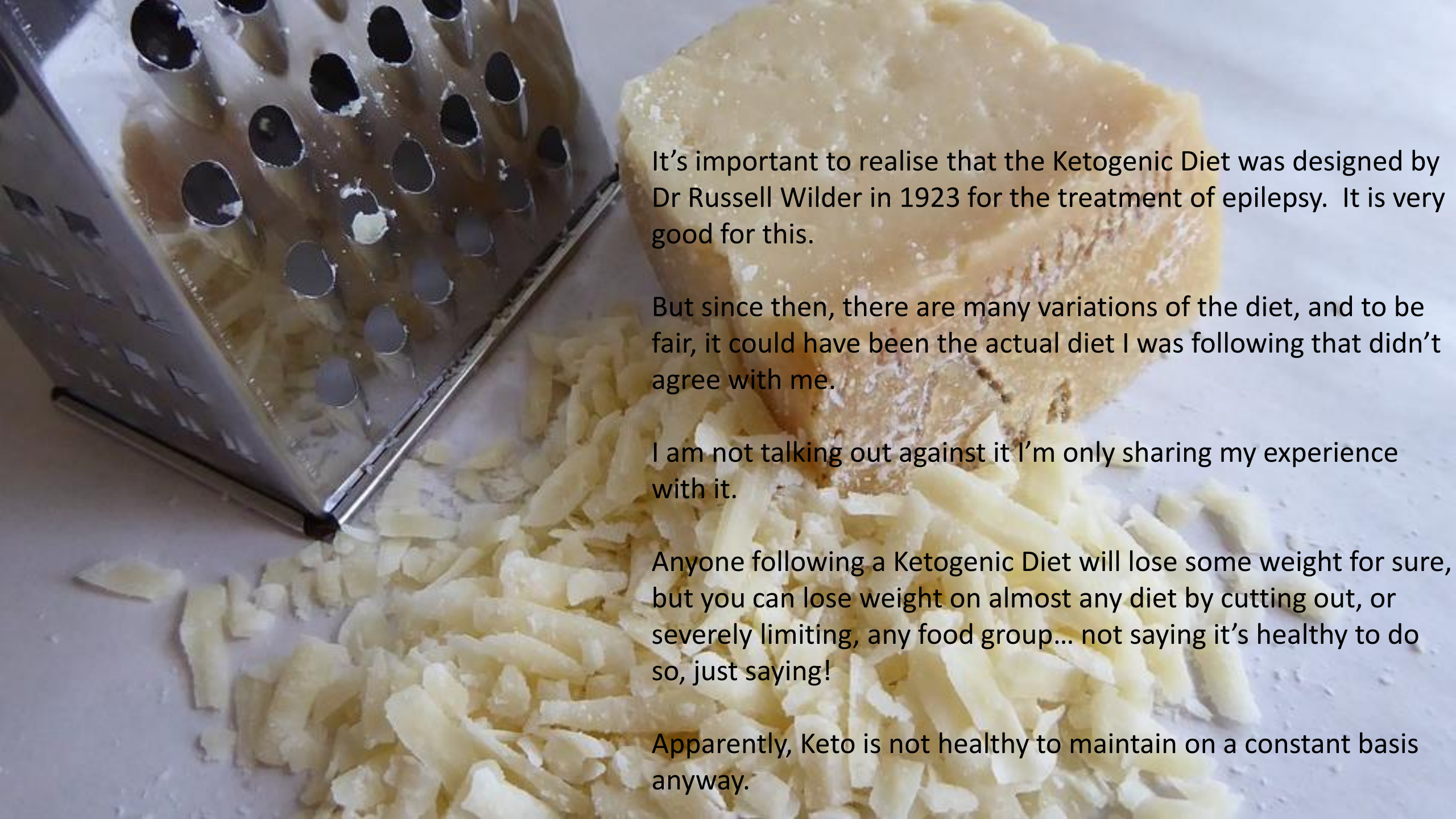
My findings were that constipation became my constant 'friend' - which I didn't welcome! I was following a specific Keto menu, doing exactly what they said.

I found the amounts of meat to be way above than I would usually eat, although they said it was only medium meat.

The quantity of cheese we ended up eating within a couple of days or so was equal to what we would eat over a two-week plus period normally.

I finally called a halt to it as there were not nearly enough vegetables consumed and it certainly called for a high meat/cheese shopping bill.

But I learned from it and there were a few recipes I really liked and still use on occasion.



It's important to realise that the Ketogenic Diet was designed by Dr Russell Wilder in 1923 for the treatment of epilepsy. It is very good for this.

But since then, there are many variations of the diet, and to be fair, it could have been the actual diet I was following that didn't agree with me.

I am not talking out against it I'm only sharing my experience with it.

Anyone following a Ketogenic Diet will lose some weight for sure, but you can lose weight on almost any diet by cutting out, or severely limiting, any food group... not saying it's healthy to do so, just saying!

Apparently, Keto is not healthy to maintain on a constant basis anyway.

But the reality is, my eating style is close to **Mediterranean** for all those lovely fruits and vegetables.

Ketogenic teaches you not to be afraid of the true healthy fats... and

Paleo is good for breads and baking.



But as you know, I don't believe in the word 'diet' at all! We are not going on a diet, we are **exchanging bad lifestyle habits for good lifestyle habits**. This will last you a lifetime!



Many doctors, dieticians, nutritionists etc. all proclaim that they only go on 'evidence- based' scientific papers. That really sounds good to me, but I have learned that not all evidence based papers are what they seem to be!

It depends on who is running the trial and who is funding the project. If the evidence is from a third-party who has no interest in the outcome, that's a different story.

Do you know that government dietary fat recommendations were untested in any trial prior to being introduced into the 'low-fat' revolution? What has been the outcome? Fatter people... everywhere! More heart problems and diabetes, cancer and such than has ever been before! It's time to realise that something is very, very wrong.

This is why, in certain areas, I suggest you 'err on the side of caution' and don't make any one food a large part of your diet, apart from vegetables and maybe fruit.

CAUTION



Eat lots of variation, in particular leafy green vegetables and some of every other type.

Not all at once mind, LOL... but try to buy different varieties each week. A little bit of this and a little bit of that!

In eating a large variety of vegetables and fruits, nuts and seeds lies the key to health.

Even something 'good for you' can be too much if you consume it in large quantities...

Let me tell you a little story
about my uncle...



He arrived at our
home one
Christmas Day
carrying a very
large bunch of
bananas over his
shoulder.

“What’s with all the bananas, uncle?”

“Oh, bananas are good for you... you need to eat a lot of bananas!” he replied.



He lay the bunch down on the lawn and proceeded to peel one banana after another... and this was before our Christmas dinner! I can't remember how many he ate but I do remember my eyes fairly popped!



Maybe a week later he came to our home again.

“Where are all the bananas, uncle?”

“Bananas! Ugh, I never want to see another banana for as long as I live! Terrible! Terrible!”

Obviously, too much of anything is simply too much and his body let him know... eventually!!

There are many pendulum swings from low-fat to high-fat, from low-carb to high carb etc. etc.

Let's see if we can find the middle ground to eat healthily and well, lose weight, if necessary but improving our health as we go. Imagine each year feeling better than the year before! Way to go!

