

A central collage of fitness-related items. A clear plastic water bottle with a blue cap is the central focus. To its left is a whole red apple and a slice of orange. To its right is a slice of yellow lemon. In the background, a silver dumbbell and a white measuring tape are visible against a blue sky with white clouds.

PRO'S AND CON'S TO THE
4 TOP
DIETS

CHRIS AND ERIC MARTINEZ

Dear Fitness Enthusiast,
What's the latest diet you tried?
Was it successful?
Did you enjoy it?

In today's society there are tons of diets that claim to do X, Y, and Z...or better yet they even claim to get you from point A to point Z and by pass all the other letters of the alphabet.

This past decade, we have tried all of these top diets, some we succeeded with and some we have failed. That's why we created this "Pro's and Con's to the 4 Top Diets" guide for you. Because we were in your shoes, feeling frustrated, lost, and nowhere or no one to turn to for help.

We ended up reading text books, books by expert researchers, hired high level coaches, got certificates in training and nutrition, did our own self education and experimentation, have worked with over 1,000 clients, the list goes on. But this all benefits you because no more mistakes or feeling frustrated and lost. This guide is here to help you and we are paying it forward.

The take home for this entire guide is to "Experiment," "Experiment," and "Experiment" some more to see what kind of nutrition program suits your preferences, lifestyle, schedule, and goals so that you increase adherence and consistency which in turn will lead to more results.

Without further ado, we give you "Pro's and Con's to the 4 Top Diets."

Sincerely,
ERIC AND CHRIS



1. PALEO DIETS

PRO'S:

- Teaches good nutrition basics of adding more high-quality and lean protein sources, whole and minimally refined foods, and healthy-essential fats which can promote better overall health¹

- Paleo typically advocates a higher protein/lower carb approach with emphasis on more fruits/veggies and this could lead to lower blood pressure, total cholesterol, improved glucose control, and lipid profiles in metabolic syndrome subjects²

CONS:

- Paleo encourages avoiding milk. Which is a very big deal since milk is very nutritious to incorporate in one's diet for many reasons. A great review by Dr. Fenton explains why milk isn't the bad guy and shouldn't be avoided unless your lactose intolerant or have a dairy sensitivity³

- Paleo encourages avoiding grains. In a 2016 systematic review and meta-analysis out of the American Journal of Clinical Nutrition showed that the weight of the evidence is in favor for having a diet that contains grains for better overall health⁴

OUR RECOMMENDATIONS:

Weigh out the pros and cons, possibly give Paleo a try and if it suits your lifestyle and schedule, you enjoy it, and adherence and consistency is high... then role with it. If not make some changes or experiment with another diet.



1 Masharani et al. 2015
2 Boers et al. 2014; Frassetto 2009
3 Fenton. 2011
4 Chen et al. 2016



2. LOW CARBOHYDRATE DIETS

PRO'S:

- Promotes rapid weight loss from less water and stored glycogen (stored carbs in liver and muscle) from carbohydrates and thus this could lead to more motivation and adherence within the diet and lead to more results⁵
- Jabekk and colleagues found that resistance training in combination with a keto diet may reduce body fat without significantly changing lean body mass, while resistance training on a regular diet may increase lean body mass in without significantly affecting fat mass⁶

CONS:

- Research has shown that it's the higher protein content rather than the lower carbohydrate content that imparts the advantage for weight loss and weight maintenance in low carbohydrate diets⁷
- In a 2016 study out of the Journal of Sports Science and Medicine compared a low carb vs normal macronutrient diet. Results showed subjects both lost weight, gained strength, and muscle mass on both a normal diet and a low carb diet⁸

OUR RECOMMENDATIONS:

If going low carbs is sustainable and realistic for someone's lifestyle, they have no preference for carbs, and don't compete in any high volume or high intensity style training... then it may be worth a go. Just keep in mind there's no real magic behind low carb diets and in fact it doesn't matter too much when protein and total calories are matched with other diets.



5 Whitney E. Understanding Nutrition. 2013
6 Jabekk et al. NutrMetab. 2010
7 Hall et al 2014; Ferraro 1991; Segal-Isaacson 2004; Soenen 2012
8 Meirelles et al. JSSM. 2016

3. INTERMITTENT FASTING (IF)

PRO'S:

- IF advocates a lower meal frequency so you don't have to worry about eating every 3-5 hours, this is good for people that have very hectic schedules and travel for their jobs
- IF represents a valid but not superior option to continuous calorie restriction for weight loss

CONS:

- Intermittent fasting (in the broadest sense) works, but whether it's more effective than continuous calorie reductions must be determined on an individual level. It may not be the best route to go for maximum muscle growth purposes since anabolism (muscle growth state) isn't being induced frequently enough over a 24 hour period
- In the largest systematic review published to date, Seimon and colleagues compared the effects of intermittent calorierestriction to continuous calorie restriction on bodyweight, body composition and other clinical parameters. Their review included 40 studies. They found that the two diet types resulted in equivalent outcomes in terms of bodyweight reduction and body composition change. No difference at improving glucose control, insulin sensitivity, thyroid, cortisol, etc

OUR RECOMMENDATIONS:

This really depends on the context of an individual's goals, schedule, lifestyle, and personal preferences as far as meal frequency. We'd recommend if you're looking to lose weight, retain muscle mass and you have a very busy schedule...then maybe try IF. On the contrary, if you're looking to gain muscle mass and your schedule isn't too hectic then IF wouldn't be a superior option.

5 Whitney E. Understanding Nutrition. 2013
6 Jabekk et al. NutrMetab. 2010
7 Hall et al 2014; Ferraro 1991; Segal-Isaacson 2004; Soenen 2012
8 Meirelles et al. JSSM. 2016



4. CALORIE COUNTING (I.E. MACROCOUNTING/FLEXIBLE NUTRITION)

PRO'S:

- The research is very clear on calorie counting, and it demonstrates that calorie counting is beneficial. In a 2005 study out of the New England Journal of Medicine showed people who frequently recorded their food intake¹³ lost over twice as much weight as people who infrequently recorded their food intake. In a 1993 study out of the Behavior Therapy Journal showed that self-monitoring of food intake was positively associated with weight loss success, and not monitoring at all was negatively associated with weight change¹⁴
- Flexible Dieting practices, especially in the early stages of a diet, can simply lead to better adherence and make a whole darn process more enjoyable¹⁵

CONS:

- People can get themselves into trouble with visual estimation of caloric intake. After tracking and weighing foods, people have the tendency to slack off. Visual estimation of caloric intake are widely inaccurate, and examples of this phenomenon abound in the scientific literature¹⁶
- Not everyone is motivated, claims they don't have time, wants to count their calories, or needs to count their calories, so it's pointless since adherence, motivation, and consistency will be low.

OUR RECOMMENDATIONS:

Again this depends on context as far as personal preference, lifestyle, schedule, and goals. If you're looking to have more variety in your nutrition while including whole and minimally refined foods along with the foods you enjoy then you may want to try flexible nutrition. The main caveat is the misconceptions people have of being too flexible within flexible nutrition and that can hinder results.

13 Wadden. 2005
14 Baker. 1993
15 Westenhoefer 1999; Smith 1999; Stewart 2002
16 Benton 2015; Wansink 2006



We hope you've enjoyed this "PRO'S AND CON'S TO THE 4 TOP DIETS" guide. As you know, choosing the right nutrition program to change your physique is only one part of the equation when it comes to fitness and health. Now go out there and take action!

-Eric and Chris

