

KETO DIET FOR THE OVER 40 MALE



For men over 40 who are ready to make a lifestyle change but aren't sure where to start, switching to a low-carb plan like the keto diet might be the answer they've been searching for. The keto diet forces the body into ketosis. This means it uses dietary fats instead of carbohydrates for energy. When following this type of plan, you consume 75% fat, 20% protein and only 5% carbs (of total calories). By doing this you change how your body burns energy which has an impact on the waistline.

Ketosis causes rapid weight loss which is great for a busy man looking to lose weight. Men tend to have bigger appetites than women (1). Men often favour the keto diet because there's no need to count calories or stick to smaller portions. As it is high in fat and protein it can satisfy the appetite of the hungriest man.

Many men take pride in their muscular appearance. Unfortunately, going on calorie restricting diets can cause the breakdown of muscle mass, (2) which can then increase the risk of falls, especially in older men (3). The keto diet is high in protein which helps to preserve those muscles in middle aged men. However, it is also necessary to do body weight exercises. This improves muscle strength and increases calorie burn to enhance weight loss.

As men age, the chances of dying from heart disease, cancer and other conditions increases (4).

It is therefore important when they are over 40, that any diet they follow is not harmful to their health. Due to the large amount of fat in the keto diet men over 40 need to make sure that they don't eat too many saturated fats.

This is because saturated fat can increase cholesterol and cause heart disease. This does not mean men over 40 cannot do keto, but they may need to amend it slightly. Firstly, it is a good idea to lower carbohydrate intake gradually.

Secondly, older men need 30g fibre each day (5). As the keto diet is low in fibre it is not recommended long term. A way to overcome this is to try what is called carb cycling. For example, one day a week try to eat a good selection of vegetables with your meals. This is because vegetables contain plenty of fibre along with a lot of nutrients that are also great for overall health and immunity. Cutting out vegetables means a lot of these vital nutrients are missing.

Eating vegetables will also help stop constipation, prevent bowel cancer and also keep the gut healthy. As we age, it is important to understand that overall health is important. So extreme diets are not advisable for more than a week or two.

The keto diet can have both good and bad effects on the health of the 40-something man. The keto diet has been found to lower triglycerides and stabilize blood sugar levels, which is important for men over 40 who have higher risk of heart disease (6).

It has also been found to increase the good cholesterol and reduce the bad. And it can even improve the symptoms of diabetes (7).

Unfortunately, the diet can cause something called non-alcoholic fatty liver disease. This can double a mature man's risk of dying and is caused by eating too much saturated fat like that found in red meat (8). Now, I know you men love a big juicy steak but it would be better to eat more fish which contains healthier fats called omega 3 fat. Mono-saturated fats are also preferable to those in red meat too. Mono-saturated fats are found in nuts, seeds, avocados, olives and oils made from these foods (9). Eggs also contain much healthier fats than those in red meat.

It has long been believed that as men reach middle age their metabolism naturally slows down (10). This causes weight gain, which is a typical problem in men over 40. And it gets worse the older they get. This makes it harder to lose that stubborn belly fat. However, recent research now suggests that this weight gain is more to do with lifestyle than metabolism (11). The keto diet doesn't increase the metabolism but it takes more energy to breakdown fat and protein than carbohydrates. This helps the weight loss process (12).

Pasta, bread, alcohol and soda drinks could slow down your metabolism (13). As these are not eaten on a keto diet, this is another benefit for the older gent.

There is a concern with the keto diet that men over 40 should be aware of. That is that it can increase the risk of having kidney stones. This is caused by the high amount of protein which can cause high levels of uric acid. This uric acid ends up in the urine, which passes through the kidneys. If there is too much it can lead to the risk of developing kidney stones. They are not life threatening but can be painful (14)..

So, it is best for men over 40 with a family history of kidney stones to speak with their doctor before starting the keto diet.

As men age they are more likely to suffer from erectile dysfunction. This is only made worse if they are overweight (15). Luckily the keto diet is reported to boost the male hormone testosterone. This helps increase sexual desire and also helps with performance. In addition, as the man starts to lose weight he will feel good about his body. This will make him feel more confident in the bedroom.

However, the keto diet can cause temporary problems in the bedroom. This is due to the initial effects of the diet called keto flu. This can cause flu-like symptoms and tiredness; neither of which are conducive to an active sex life. There is one huge benefit of the keto diet for men over 40. That is that it is reported to increase testosterone (16). This is good news as this important hormone does decline with age (17). Low levels of testosterone are linked to increased risk of Alzheimer's (18) and heart failure (19). Therefore, eating a ketogenic diet can go some way to preventing dementia and heart issues.

Despite wanting to be slim, it is important that men consider health first and foremost. Have some flexibility to enable working the keto diet into a long-term health plan. Whatever age and whether male or female, consider your specific needs, listen to your body and pick up on what feels best, then stick with that.

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