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Four nutrition myths we all need to stop believing

Still following those fad diets in 2022? asks experts to explain common misconceptions about food

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If you've ever found yourself Googling phrases like 'foods to make me lose weight' or 'how to lose weight fast', you may have stumbled across some questionable tips out there.



When it comes to food and nutrition – especially in the context of weight loss – there are lots of weird diets that promise specific 'results'. However, these dramatic dietary claims can have a seriously negative impact on both your mental and physical wellbeing and rob you of crucial nutrition.

We asked a few experts to talk us through four of the most common diet claims...

1. No carbs after 6pm

According to Lola Biggs, registered dietician at Together Health (togetherhealth.co.uk), "it's more about what you are eating, and how much of it, rather than when you are eating it. There's nothing wrong with eating healthy carbs after 6pm, if you choose foods such as nuts, seeds, legumes, vegetables, fruits, and whole grains". That said, some experts do think eating within a timeframe or window can be beneficial, and eating too close to bedtime might not be the best idea.

Pauline Cox, functional nutritionist at Wiley's Finest (wileysfinest.co.uk), explains that "eating within an eight-hour window gives your body the chance to lower blood glucose levels outside of that eight-hour window, lowering insulin and increasing glucagon levels, triggering fat-burning".

2. Gluten-free food aids weight loss

You may have noticed the rise in gluten-free options and people opting for a no-gluten diet. This is great news for anybody with coeliac disease or gluten sensitivity, who need to steer clear of gluten for health reasons. Where it can get muddled, though, is when people imply gluten-free options are just 'better' than their gluten-packed counterparts and that gluten-free diets aid weight loss.

"Getting enough heart-healthy wholegrains in your diet is important, as they can lower cholesterol levels and are good sources of key vitamins and minerals such as iron, magnesium, and B vitamins," says Lola.

3. Full-fat is bad for you

Have you been attracted to 'fat-free' labels on cheese or yoghurts at the supermarket? Well, consuming fat does not necessarily make you fat. And fat-free does not necessarily mean something is healthier. "Too much fat in your diet – the saturated fats kind – can be bad for you, but there are some full-fat foods that can be good for you," says Lola. "Low-fat versions can often be stuffed with artificial sweeteners, flavouring and sugars to improve the taste."

4. Certain foods can help you burn fat

Maybe you've been chugging apple cider vinegar, eating grapefruit early in the morning, or cooking everything in cayenne pepper because you've heard these things will make you burn fat. Again, it's not that black and white. Certain foods or ingredients will not automatically make you thinner, and you may find yourself eating some strange things if you think this is the answer. According to Melissa Snover, registered nutritionist and founder of Nourished (get-nourished.com), it is more important to focus on feeling full and satisfied, and getting a good range of vitamins. "Nutritious foods high in protein and good fats are beneficial for offsetting hunger over long periods, which is an important tool for weight loss, as it lowers your overall food intake," she says.