



March 1, 2010 – Grand Rapids, MI

Low-Fat Diet

As I told you Saturday, I'm going to begin this month talking about three diets for each of the three genetic patterns. First up is a low-fat diet; it's not a no-fat diet, because we all need some fat. The second type of diet is high protein, and the third is balanced fat and protein.

Typical Americans get about 40% of their calories from fat, and you can look around you and see where that's gotten us—we're the fattest we've ever been. But there are a variety of approaches to lowering the fat in our diet:

- Dean Ornish has an extremely low-fat diet program that I'm not certain I could follow—around 10% of calories from fat. But he's also proven that the dietary changes, combined with some exercise and stress management, can change gene expression. Remember in the last three Saturday Messages, I said that we don't know what might turn genes on and off. Dean's shown you can do it by following his program.
- The Pritikin is another low-fat program—also around 10% of calories from fat. You can find more info about it online.
- You could also count fat grams and make them add up to 20% of your caloric goal. That would be 33 grams of fat for 1,500 calories, and 40 grams of fat if you eat 1,800 calories per day. This might work well for someone who doesn't want to follow a specific eating plan.
- And there's the DASH Diet developed by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services; DASH stands for Dietary Approach to Stop Hypertension.

This month, I'm following the DASH Diet because that's the type of diet my body needs according to my genetic test results. I've written about the DASH before because it's also a way to lower blood pressure, and I'd like mine to be lower. The focus is on more vegetables, more fruits, whole grains, lean protein, and less saturated fat, but more mono- and polyunsaturated fats such as olive oil and nuts. The goal is about 27% of the calories from fat. I can handle that.

If you want to try a lower fat diet because of your genes or because your blood pressure is high, I've put a copy of the **DASH Diet** in the **Research Update** section of drchet.com. It was paid for by our tax dollars—let's put that money to good use, get leaner, lower our blood pressure, and save some healthcare dollars to boot.

What are you prepared to do today?

Dr. Chet

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