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**Title:** *The Carbohydrate Addict's Diet*

Authors: Dr. Rachael F. Heller and Dr. Richard F. Heller. Doesn't list direct credentials although says both are "doctors" and professors at University's.

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**Rationale/Claim:**

According to the authors there are two reasons why most diets fail. Due to the fact that most diets are too demanding, the dieter struggles to follow the guidelines given for them to abide by. Also most diets come to an end because the dieters get bored with the food that they are allowed to eat and lose motivation to continue. This diet allows them to eat the foods that they enjoy while focusing on the amount of which they are eating.

According to the book there are three different levels at which a person can be addicted to carbohydrates. To determine which level the dieter is at they must first take a survey based on their eating habits. Points are given for each time the dieter agrees with the question. At the end the points are totaled and the level of carbohydrate addiction is then determined based on the point value. The level one person tends to eat foods that have carbohydrates from a healthy source. However they do not necessarily focus on the amount that they are eating. They rationalize their eating patterns by saying that the foods they are eating are healthy and too much of a good thing is not bad. People at level two chose to eat more starchy foods than those at level 1 because of the "initial sense of physical satisfaction, a sense of relaxation". At this level the dieter begins to rationalize even more and begins to lose control. The level 3 carbohydrate addiction is similar to that of a level two with the addition that the carbohydrate addict is also tempted by more by sweets. They have the mindset that dessert is just as important as the main course. They are often unaware of their eating habits making it easy for them to feel no remorse.

The authors claim that this diet will work better for the average carbohydrate addict than other diets because you are not removing what you really want to eat completely from your diet. With other diets there is too much restriction for the dieter and the diet becomes uncomfortable.

The basis of this diet is to follow 5 simple guidelines. First it is important for the dieter to eat at least two complementary meals throughout the day that are high in fiber and low in fat and carbohydrates. Second the dieter will get to have a “reward meal” every day. This meal is to allow the dieter to indulge their cravings. They do not need to restrict their portion sizes or what they eat, but should realize that having the meal be nourishing and well balanced is an important factor. The third guideline is that you must complete your reward meal within 75-90 minutes. This is due to the fact that if you are still eating after this time period, your body will release more insulin than what is needed and will leave you feeling unsatisfied. The fourth guideline states that you are allowed to consume alcohol but only during your reward meal. However if you decide to drink alcohol during your reward meal, the amount of time in which you have to complete your meal is reduced to 60 minutes. The fifth and final guideline is that there should be absolutely no snacking between meals. According to the authors the fifth guideline is an important factor because it is a lot more difficult for a carbohydrate addict to hit the breaks once having even a small bite of carbohydrates.

The reasoning behind why this diet works is due to the fact that there are fewer meals. The more carbohydrates that a person eats, the more insulin is released into the blood stream. The authors claim is that with an excess of insulin in the blood, the dieter will not reach a sense of satiety. By limiting the amount of meals, the dieter is reducing the amount of insulin responses and therefore more easily achieving fullness.

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### **Overview of diet:**

Sample menu:

Breakfast: western omelet, bacon, coffee

Lunch: spinach salad, steamed green beans, sirloin steak, tea

Reward Dinner: Mexican soup, onion bread, chicken breast, garlic and green beans, salad, apple cream pie, beverage of choice

After putting this into dietary analysis it came to around 1700 calories, significantly less than what we thought. The main thing that we didn't like about this diet is the amount of red meat. Since the majority of the food has to be carbohydrate free it leads to high protein intake and most of Americans already have excess protein in their diets. In dietary analysis it said that protein intake was over 140%. This is only a sample menu of one day but fruit intake might also be of concern if not incorporated into the reward meal. Other than that the diet seems to be well-balanced.

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### **Is it well-rounded and sustainable?**

We feel that this diet has parts that are positive and other parts that are negative. By encouraging a dieter to have one free meal a day, it is setting them up to binge. If someone is restricting carbohydrates for 2 out of their 3 meals than when they are able to eat carbohydrates they will be driven to eat larger amounts since they aren't going to be able to have them again for awhile. Snacking is also prohibited which may cause someone to become uncomfortably hungry and lead to overeating at their next meal.

The diet is basically a modified Atkins diet however it is not as restricting. You are allowed to have carbohydrates once a day which will help prevent cravings. We do not believe that this diet can be maintained for life however and it doesn't address long term life changes that have to be made in order to stay at your goal weight. It is highly likely that once people return to their normal diets that they will regain the weight since exercise and behavior modification wasn't incorporated into the diet. The author's claim that after following this diet your body will no longer crave carbohydrates like before you began the diet.

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### **Critical Comments:** (Use bullet format please)

- No specific calorie amount

- Since carbohydrates are allowed in one meal a day it should minimize feelings of deprivation and hunger, however no snacks may lead to overeating at meals
  - There is no restriction on protein and because you are allowed to have one free meal carbohydrate needs will most likely be met
  - This diet can be nutritionally adequate depending on how the dieter used it. It really varies on what type of protein they choose and if during their free meal if they chose to eat fruit and healthy carbohydrates. We think that this diet like many other are as healthy as the dieter makes it
  - This diet does not have any extra costs associated with it
  - This diet does not incorporate the ideas of intuitive eating. It focuses on restriction which leads to reward (ie: reward dinner) and doesn't incorporate hunger/fullness cues at all
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### **Overall Conclusion:**

We feel that this diet can easily be compared to that of a child with a generous yet overbearing mother; the child being the carbohydrate addict and the mother being the dietary guidelines. Imagine that the mother were to give her son a bicycle for his birthday and said he could ride it whenever he wanted. Ordinarily the child would be ecstatic. However if the mother were include stipulations such as he must wear a helmet, knee and elbow pads, and only ride it in the front yard, there would obviously be a letdown for the child. To me this diet is very similar. At first this book gives the dieter a sense of freedom that they will be able to fulfill a decent portion of their cravings. Then the dieter comes to find that they will only be able to indulge once a day for a certain amount of time, for the rest of the day the need to follow a strict diet plan. The authors claim that this diet is revolutionary, in our opinion because of the allowing for the dieter to indulge and satisfy some of those cravings. However we believe that abiding by the guidelines of this diet, the dieter will need just as much will power to succeed as they would with any other diet. As with any other diet, the amount of will power that the dieter has will also obviously determine if the diet is realistically capable of being a long-term plan. As far as if there are any concerns for a person being on this diet, we would

have to say “no”. The diet is not restricting the person from consuming calories. It emphasizes having carbohydrates and protein in the diet and therefore it is up to the dieter to get an adequate amount of calories.