

## Reading Passage (263 words): Benefits of the Atkins Diet

The Atkins diet is a popular diet that calls for the consumption of eating mostly protein and refraining from carbohydrates such as pasta or bread. WebMD explains the diet: "Our bodies burn both fat and carbohydrates for energy, but carbs are used first. By drastically reducing carbs and eating more protein and fat, our bodies naturally lose weight". The diet has been proven to work because many people on this diet have benefited in three ways.

Firstly, the main benefit of Atkins is the loss of pounds or weight in a short period of time. People can eat decent portions of steak, chicken, cheese, eggs, and bacon. Many people will get on the Atkins diet for weeks and see a noticeable change in their appearance. By ridding themselves of pastas and breads, people do not have to exercise as much and that is an important step for short-term needs.

Secondly, people using the Atkins Diet have the chance to prevent diseases such as diabetes. Carbohydrates break down into sugar and have much higher calorie content. The body naturally creates insulin to compensate for sugar that enters the bloodstream. If there is too much sugar in the bloodstream, the insulin converts into fat, and the metabolic disorder diabetes can be the result over time.

Finally, the appetite is reduced which is the whole purpose of losing weight. Eaters get to consume rich foods like steak and cheese. This allows the person to eat the very foods that many diets restrict. Over time, the person does not have a large appetite and can enjoy participating in the diet.

Writing Prompt: How does the information in the lecture call into question the information in the reading passage?

## Lecture (396 words): Disadvantages of the Atkins Diet

What does it mean to be healthy? Is being skinny or weighing less mean we are healthy? Well, many people believe that if they are over-weight, they can go on a diet, lose excess weight, and finally be healthy.

A popular and controversial diet that people try to be healthy is called the Atkins diet which comes from the book Dr. Atkins New Diet Revolution and New Atkins for a New You. Basically, this diet calls for less carbohydrate intake that reduces the amount of sugar stored. The body no longer works to rid itself of the carbohydrates. Instead, the body focuses on stored fat. The fat becomes the energy source that the body uses; therefore, the used energy translates into weight loss. Although the diet has been proven to work, it is viewed as a controversial diet.

One common reason that the diet is controversial is because of the short term benefits versus the long term benefits. Many people quickly lose weight while they are doing the Atkins diet, but after the weight loss, they quickly gain the weight back as soon as they veer from the restrictions of the diet. So, the long term goals of the diet are always in question.

The theory of the Atkins diet states that it can prevent the chance of diseases like diabetes because the body is not making excess amounts of sugar. According to Robert H. Eckel, MD, at the University of Colorado Health Sciences Center in Denver, he worries that the Atkins diet may not be good for preventing heart disease, stroke, and cancer. In theory, the diet may prevent one disease only to potentially cause another.

Finally, there may be a loss of appetite, but that does not necessarily mean that you are more healthy. The body needs carbohydrates, grains, and fruits for healthy metabolic activity and glucose that helps brain functions. Moreover, the Atkins diet calls for restrictions on foods that we eat today, and man's early diet did not call for such large amounts of protein.

In conclusion, the Atkins diet is a good diet for short-term benefits, but more studies are needed to clarify if there are long-term health problems as a result of the diet. In the end, if a person eats less food, he or she will lose weight, but that does not necessarily mean they are healthy.