

hg **Super Sleuth**



MYTH BLASTING!

Our favorite experts are back to shed some light on common misconceptions in the food and diet world...



SEPARATING NUTRITION FACTS FROM FICTION



ARE ALL CALORIES CREATED EQUAL?

The answer to this one is a resounding no! Although the calorie counts may look similar, each food has its own unique nutrient makeup, which the body processes differently. Bonnie Taub-Dix gives this example: “100 calories of almonds includes fiber, protein, and so on... very different than 100 calories of jelly beans.” Robert J. Davis elaborates, **“100 calories of veggies are more filling than 100 calories of candy, so the veggies make you less hungry and less likely to overeat later.”** Plus, foods high in added sugars can cause spikes and drops in your blood sugar, leaving you feeling hungry. Your best bet is to get the majority of your calories from nutrient-dense choices like fruits, vegetables, and lean protein.

IS THE KETO DIET SAFE AND RECOMMENDED FOR WEIGHT LOSS?

The ketogenic way of eating—high fat, low carb—is super popular, but most of the experts aren’t fans of this diet. The main reason: It isn’t nutritionally balanced. As Lisa R. Young puts it, **“It’s too low in carbs and eliminates most of the healthy carbs—fruits, starchy veggies, and whole grains.”** Additionally, it’s restrictive by nature and can be hard to sustain. It may result in weight loss initially, Davis says, but it isn’t recommended long term.

DOES THE CHOLESTEROL CONTENT OF FOOD AFFECT MY BODY’S CHOLESTEROL LEVELS?

While some people are sensitive to dietary cholesterol, our cholesterol levels are actually more impacted by the amount of trans and saturated fat we consume! Heather K. Jones says saturated fat in particular can increase your LDL (aka bad) cholesterol, putting you at risk for heart disease. Taub-Dix also points out that if you have high cholesterol, **it’s important to focus on foods you should add to your diet, such as those high in soluble fiber like oats, beans, nuts, and avocados.**





ARE COCONUT SUGAR, RAW SUGAR, AND AGAVE BETTER FOR WEIGHT MANAGEMENT THAN REGULAR SUGAR?

Young sums it up simply: Sugar is sugar. Taub-Dix calls sugar “the master of disguise” and points out that the caloric values for all these are similar to table sugar. Jones acknowledges that they do have different impacts on your blood sugar, as some of these enter your bloodstream more slowly. **However, when it comes to weight management and general health, all the experts suggest limiting your overall intake of added sugar**—in all forms—versus just making the switch to one of these supposedly better-for-you alternatives. The new food labels even identify the added sugars, so flip those packages around for the 411!

Being aware and making good choices, based on sound science, can take the worry out of food and beverage decisions.

— DAVID GROTTO

IS THERE SUCH A THING AS NEGATIVE-CALORIE FOODS?

The concept of negative-calorie foods is that it takes more calories to digest them than they actually contain, meaning you’d be reducing your calorie intake rather than adding to it. We were crossing our fingers this one would be true, but the experts all agreed that (sadly) negative-calorie foods don’t exist. Taub-Dix explains that foods given this fictitious title—typically fruits and veggies—are really just “negligible-calorie foods,” meaning they add very few calories to our diet. Still, according to Davis, **low-calorie foods with a high water content (like celery) can help with weight management by making you feel full.** But while they are good choices, don’t start subtracting calories from your daily tally every time you eat them.



MEET THE PANEL



ROBERT J. DAVIS, PHD
Robert (aka the Healthy Skeptic) is an author and the president of Everwell. His work has appeared on CNN, PBS, WebMD, and in the *Wall Street Journal*. His latest book, *Fitter Faster*, focuses on getting fit in just minutes a day.



DAVID GROTTO, MS, RDN, LDN, FAND
David is a past spokesperson for the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics and the founder of Nutrition Housecall, a nutrition consulting firm. Presently, he is the senior wellbeing manager for the Kellogg Company and author of two fantastic books: *The Best Things You Can Eat* and *101 Foods That Could Save Your Life*.



HEATHER K. JONES, RD
A registered dietitian, health journalist, and wellness coach, Heather is the creator of Feel Better Eat Better, an online weight-loss program for women. She’s also the dietitian for Skinnytaste, a popular blog and lifestyle brand.



BONNIE TAUB-DIX, MA, RDN, CDN
Bonnie is a renowned nutrition consultant, spokesperson, columnist, and blogger. Her book *Read It Before You Eat It: Taking You from Label to Table* breaks down common food label terminology to help consumers make better choices. She’s a motivational speaker and a health and wellness blogger for US News & World Report.



LISA R. YOUNG, PHD, RDN
Lisa is an author, speaker, and internationally recognized nutritionist who’s been featured in the *New York Times*, the *Wall Street Journal*, and more. She appeared in the award-winning documentary *Super Size Me*. Her latest book, *Finally Full, Finally Slim*, focuses on losing weight through portion control and mindful eating.