Keto vs Plant-Based: Which Actually Burns Fat Without Destroying Your Arteries? Transcript

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Keto vs. Plants: Setting Up the Debate

If you spent even 10 minutes on social media this week, you've seen the war. It's unavoidable. In one corner, ribeye steak and captions like Keto melts fat.

Plants? They're trying to kill you. The other corner? Green smoothies screaming. Plant-based heals everything. And keto? It'll clog your arteries before you hit 40. Here's the problem for the average person who's just trying lose 10 pounds and not end up with a heart attack.

Both sides have receipts, both sides, they have before and after photos, Both Sides, They have proof. So today, we're actually going to stop the shouting match.

We're stopping the internet bullying and we are doing this round by round, mano a mano. But before we do quick check in, I need you to drop this in the comments right now.

Are you team keto or team plants? And what's your number one goal? Is it losing weight, losing A1C or losing cholesterol? I'm Dr. Columbus Batiste, an interventional cardiologist and lifestyle advocate.

This is a deep dive. But quick note, this is education only. I'm a believer in shared decision making. We work for you, you don't work us. Talk with your clinician.

Round 1: Early Weight Loss and Water Weight

And one rule before we get going, we're comparing the best versions of each approach. No vegan Oreos, no gas station keto. Here's how we are going to keep this honest.

Who drops it faster? Scale two, second one, body composition. Fat versus muscle, who loses the right stuff? The third one? Cardio metabolic labs, triglycerides, glucose, A1C, LDL, and ideally, April B.

That's the fight. Let's ring the bell. You ready? Round one is our speed round. So your friend goes keto, in week one they look like they deflated. Doc, they lost eight pounds in seven days.

So is that real fat loss or smoke and mirrors? Well, here's the honest answer. Keto usually wins the very first month on total weight loss. Now, during that first months, ketogenic diets often produce greater total loss, around 2.9 to 4.8 kilograms.

Then you compare that to plant-based diets, it's there oftentimes around two to two and a half kilograms, so if you're judging purely by what moves the scale faster, keto tends to take round one.

But this is the part social media and influencers skip. The composition of that weight-loss is not the same. Now in a direct inpatient comparison controlled at Libidim trial, people on the keto, they did lose more total weight over two weeks.

But most of that keto loss was from fat-free mass, which means lean tissue and water shifts. While the plant-based approach, it produced significant fat mass reduction.

All right, pop quiz, drop your guess in the comments. When someone loses eight pounds in week one on keto?

Round 2: Body Composition and Fat Loss Quality

How much of do you think is actually from water? So here's the science behind the water loss in ketogenic diet. It all revolves and starts and stops with something called glycogen.

Glycogne is stored carbohydrates in the muscle and liver. In glyogene, it holds water like a sponge. So much so that for every gram of glygogen, you actually hold roughly 3-4 grams of water.

When your carbohydrate intake drops, your glyogen drops. The water subsequently flushes out your system. That's why keto looks like chico early. Plus, the ketones can actually suppress your appetite.

And that means that people will naturally eat less. So yes, round one does go to keto for early scale change. I need you to remember the asterisk. Fast weight loss isn't always fast fat loss.

Round two, it's all about the body composition. because I don't want you lighter and weaker. I want fat loss while protecting the muscle. So who wins?

Fat loss is quality, right? So they lock people inside of a controlled setting. Food was measured, no cheating, and they compared low fat plant-based versus a low carb ketogenic diet.

And here's what happened. What they found is that plant based, because of the fiber and the volume, people naturally ate hundreds fewer calories per day.

And despite the higher insulin levels, they lost significant body fat. Meanwhile, the keto did drop weight, but a meaningful portion, it actually came from fat-free mass.

That matters because muscle is your metabolic currency. Remember that. Muscle is you currency, muscle will support your glucose disposal, your strength, you function, and your longevity.

Round 3: Cholesterol, A1C, and Heart Health

You need it. So round two, It actually goes to plants for fat loss quality and lean mass preservation. Round three. It's my round, the cardiologist's round.

Because listen, weight is one thing, but your arteries and your labs, they actually tell the real story. First, credit where credit's due. Keto can oftentimes improve your triglycerides and blood sugar quickly, especially transitioning from the standard American diet.

Less carbohydrate or garbage intake, right? Smaller glucose spikes. Your A1C can improve. But here's the trade. Most people don't track closely at all.

You're LDL and you're April B. So I need you to listen closely. If your glucose looks amazing but your April B is rising, you're not safe. You're just high risk with good sugar.

Now, April being in plain English, well, your LDL cholesterol is like weighing the total passengers on the highway. That's one thing. But your Apple B, it's like counting the number of cars.

that's what's more important because April b reflects the numbers of atherogenic particles. The particles that can enter the artery wall and drive plaque through inflammation.

And for many people, that standard keto diet, especially heavy in saturated fat, it actually can drive your LDL and April B up. Now why, you may be asking.

It's a good question. Saturated fat can actually reduce your LDO receptor activity in the liver, which means fewer particles get cleared from circulation.

So blood sugar can look perfect while your arteries are quietly loading the plaque in a pipeline. Alright, quick check

in. When's the last time you had your cholesterol checked?

When was the first time your April B tested? Type yes or no in the comments and when you have it done. Now plant-based, especially whole food plant based, is consistently strong for LDL reduction.

Why? Well because soluble fiber binds to bowel acids. your body has to pull LDL out of circulation to make more bowel. That is physiology, not height.

And one of the most lab-optimized versions has a name, the portfolio diet, a plant-based pattern designed specifically to lower LDl. In known controlled trials, LDR reductions can land around 30%. It's kind of a statin-like magnitude for many people.

And here's the cardiologist mindset.

Round 4: Sustainability and Real-World Adherence

I need you to say this with me. HDL is not the trophy. Lowering Able B and LDL, improving triglycerides, Improving your A1C, lowering your blood pressure, that's risk reduction stack.

That's a loss you want. So in the labs, especially plaque driving markers, round three, it goes to the plants. All right, round four is all about sustainability because real life, it's the final exam.

We're talking about stress, the airport test, a holiday dinner test. The birthday test the road trip test which approach can you actually stay with? So we know keto is restricted by design and for many people adherence drops hard over time.

And plant-based isn't effortless. Trust me, I know many of people who struggle with the cheese. It's that struggle's real. No, but it's more flexible across cuisines and settings.

That's why it is the diet, the core component of the Blue Zones around the world. So round four goes to plants for real-world stickiness. Now let's tally it.

Round one, speed, it went to keto. They win. round two, body composition, plants. Round three, labs and artery health, plants. Round four, sustainability, plans.

So the winner for long-term health body composition, artery protection, real-world stickiness is a whole food plant-based diet. And here's a clean takeaway.

If your only goal is watching the scale drop fast in that very first month, Keto often delivers. It does, but there are other options. Now, if your goal is more holistic, lose fat, protect your muscle, improve artery markers, stay consistent long enough to change your life, the evidence keeps pointing to a whole fiber-rich plant foods.

What's your biggest obstacle right now keeping you from the science, from evidence? Is it cravings? is it time? It is social events? Now if this helped you, I need you to share it with that friend who puts butter in their coffee still after listening to this.

If you want to go fast, go along. If you want to go far, go together. Let's go Far Together, building healthier hearts and stronger communities. I need you to like it, share it and send it.

Save a life. See you next time.