

Today's diet fads

Are Atkins low-carb diets really healthy or is CR the way to go?

By **BRIANNA GUYER**
Staff Reporter
BGG5003@PSU.EDU

The Atkins Diet, The South Beach Diet, Weight Watchers, Jenny Craig, L.A. Weight Loss... We've all heard of these diets and dieting programs. Diets are everywhere these days! Whether a person is dieting to maintain a slim figure, for health reasons, or to impress a certain someone, tens of thousands of Americans begin to diet each year. For many, the results are very rewarding, but for others dieting can cause severe problems that can change their lives forever.

Diets like the Atkins Diet and The South Beach Diet all center around the idea of having a low carbohydrate intake and they seem to think that weight gain is caused by carbohydrates.

Human Biology by Sylvia S. Mader states, "Weight gain is caused by consuming too many calories, whether they are from carbohydrate, protein, or fat." Mader also noted that weight gain caused by carbohydrates cannot be proven scientifically.

But if weight gain caused by carbohydrates cannot be proven scientifically then it is hard to see why many diets surround themselves with a low-carbohydrate, high-protein diet.

After a while, scientists and the general public began to catch onto this theory and research was performed regarding these ideas. At first, many researchers were pleased with the results patients often had while on low-carb diets, losing an average of thirteen pounds, but were shocked when they looked into the difficulties and problems that these

diets could produce later on.

Some of these problems included long-term bone health, difficulties for people who have an underlying problem with their kidneys or liver, and problems with heart disease.

Dropout rates for low-carbohydrate diets tend to be very high. Considering the average individual is not ready to cut out nearly all sweets, alcohol, pasta, bread, vegetables, and fruits of all kind, it is no wonder these diets will not last long.

Just the concept of not eating a wide variety of fruits and vegetables screams that it will be a problem. There is large nutritional content in both fruits and vegetables and taking them out of a daily diet can leave an individual more susceptible to things such as catching an illness.

The thirteen pounds mentioned earlier, which individuals tend to lose while on low-carbohydrate diets, typically do not stay off for a long period of time, prompting many others to quit their diet.

Mader of *Human Biology* said that within twelve months most individuals tend to gain at least half of their total weight loss back.

While dieting often seems impossible, if one researches a diet properly and does not fall into the typical "fad dieting," then weight loss and good health can often be achieved and maintained.

As mentioned earlier by Mader, "Weight gain is caused by consuming too many calories..." In order to achieve weight loss in this way, a diet that involves calorie restriction, or CR, is key.

According to the website Answers.com, CR is "the practice of limiting dietary energy intake to

improve health and retard aging. In human subjects, CR has been shown to lower cholesterol and blood pressure...Energy intake must be minimized, but sufficient quantities of vitamins, minerals and other important nutrients must still be ingested."

There are many diets that try to model this style of dieting such as programs like Jenny Craig, L.A. Weight Loss, and Weight Watchers. These diets try to incorporate a healthy, balanced diet, with a routine of daily activity.

Some diets, such as the Jenny Craig diet, incorporate pre-packaged food items into the dieters' meals. Diets such as these are typically easy for people to maintain because once you are in the habit of checking the labels and getting into the routine of exercising the diet can be maintained. Also, since the weight is coming off in a healthy, natural way, there are fewer problems associated with CR diets.

A very important thing to note when discussing dieting is what can happen when one becomes so involved with dieting that it becomes an obsession. Bulimia nervosa and anorexia nervosa are both eating disorders that typically result from this obsession. Both of these eating disorders are very serious and have consequences, which could be lifelong if not recognized and treated early on.

The effects of dieting can be wide and varied depending on how one uses them and can have different outcomes, both negative and positive. Health risks are associated with all diets and should be thoroughly checked into before any individual begins a diet.

Immigration debate heating up

Pres. Bush and Congress ponder how to handle the growing influx of illegal immigrants in the United States

By **NEDRA PICKLER**
Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON - Founded by immigrants and praised as a haven for the oppressed, the United States now is struggling to decide the fate of as many as 12 million people living in the country illegally.

The Senate takes up the emotional debate on the heels of weekend rallies that drew hundreds of thousands of people protesting attempts to toughen laws against immigrants. Among the ideas that President Bush and members of Congress are considering:

-- Erecting a fence on the Mexico border to deter illegal immigration.

-- Treating people who sneak across the border as felons to be deported.

-- Allowing foreigners to stay in the country legally as custodians, dish washers, construction workers and other low-paid employees.

-- Allowing those working in the U.S. a path to citizenship.

-- Requiring them to get in line behind everyone else back in their home countries who want to become Americans.

On Monday, the Senate Judiciary Committee takes up the issue and Bush headlines a naturalization ceremony for 30 new citizens at Constitution Hall. Demonstrations are planned near the Capitol, including a prayer service with immigration advocates and clergy who plan to wear handcuffs to demonstrate the criminalization of immigration violations.

Bush is going to Mexico this week for a meeting with the leaders of Mexico and Canada. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice said Sunday it's important that Mexico "recognize

the importance of defense of the borders and of American laws."

Protests raged across the country over the weekend, led by more than 500,000 people who marched through downtown Los Angeles on Saturday in one of the largest demonstrations for any cause in recent U.S. history. Marchers also took to the streets in Phoenix, Milwaukee, Dallas and Columbus, Ohio.

The president, working hand-in-hand with the business community that relies on cheap labor, is pressuring Congress to allow immigrants to stay in the country legally if they take a job that Americans are unwilling to do.

Judiciary Chairman Arlen Specter, R-Pa., also supports the idea and has vowed that his committee will advance a bill to the full Senate on Monday, even if they have to work "very, very late into the night."

"If they're prepared to work to become American citizens in the long line traditionally of immigrants who have helped make this country, we can have both a nation of laws and a welcoming nation of workers who do some very, very important jobs for our economy," Specter said Sunday on ABC's "This Week."

Senate Majority Leader Bill Frist, R-Tenn., has said that whether or not a bill gets out of the Judiciary Committee, he is opening two weeks of debate on the issue Tuesday. He has offered a plan that would tighten borders, add Border Patrol agents and punish employers who hire illegal immigrants because he says the most important concern is improving national security in an age of terrorism. His bill sidesteps the question of temporary work permits, but he has said he's open to the idea.

Democrats have said they will do everything they can to block Frist's bill. Sen. Edward Kennedy, D-Mass., said Sunday that legislation creating

tougher enforcement does not do enough.

"We have spent \$20 billion on chains and fences and border guards and dogs in the southern border over the last 10 years," Kennedy said on "Face the Nation" on CBS. "And it doesn't work. What we need is a comprehensive approach. I think President Bush understands it."

Where Kennedy and Bush differ is on the question of what to do with foreigners who are already living and working in the United States. Kennedy and Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz., have a bill that would allow those immigrants to apply for citizenship once they pay taxes and a fine and learn English.

Critics like Rep. Tom Tancredo, R-Colo., say that would give amnesty to people who have broken the law by entering the country without permission.

"It's a slap in the face to every single person who has done it the right way, and to everybody who's waiting out there to do it the right way," Tancredo said. "It's bad policy. And it's also, I think, for the Republican Party especially, bad policy."

Bush wants to give foreign workers a guest permit to stay for a specific amount of time to do a job, without a path to citizenship. Sens. John Cornyn, R-Texas, and Jon Kyl, R-Ariz., propose to let employed illegal immigrants stay for five years but then leave, pay fines and apply to re-enter the country.

If the Senate can agree on the bill, the work won't be over to get legislation to Bush's desk to become a law. The House passed a bill last year that increases penalties for illegal immigration activities, requires employers to verify the legal status of their employees and provides \$2.2 billion for a seven-mile wall across the border. But it did not address the guest worker issue.

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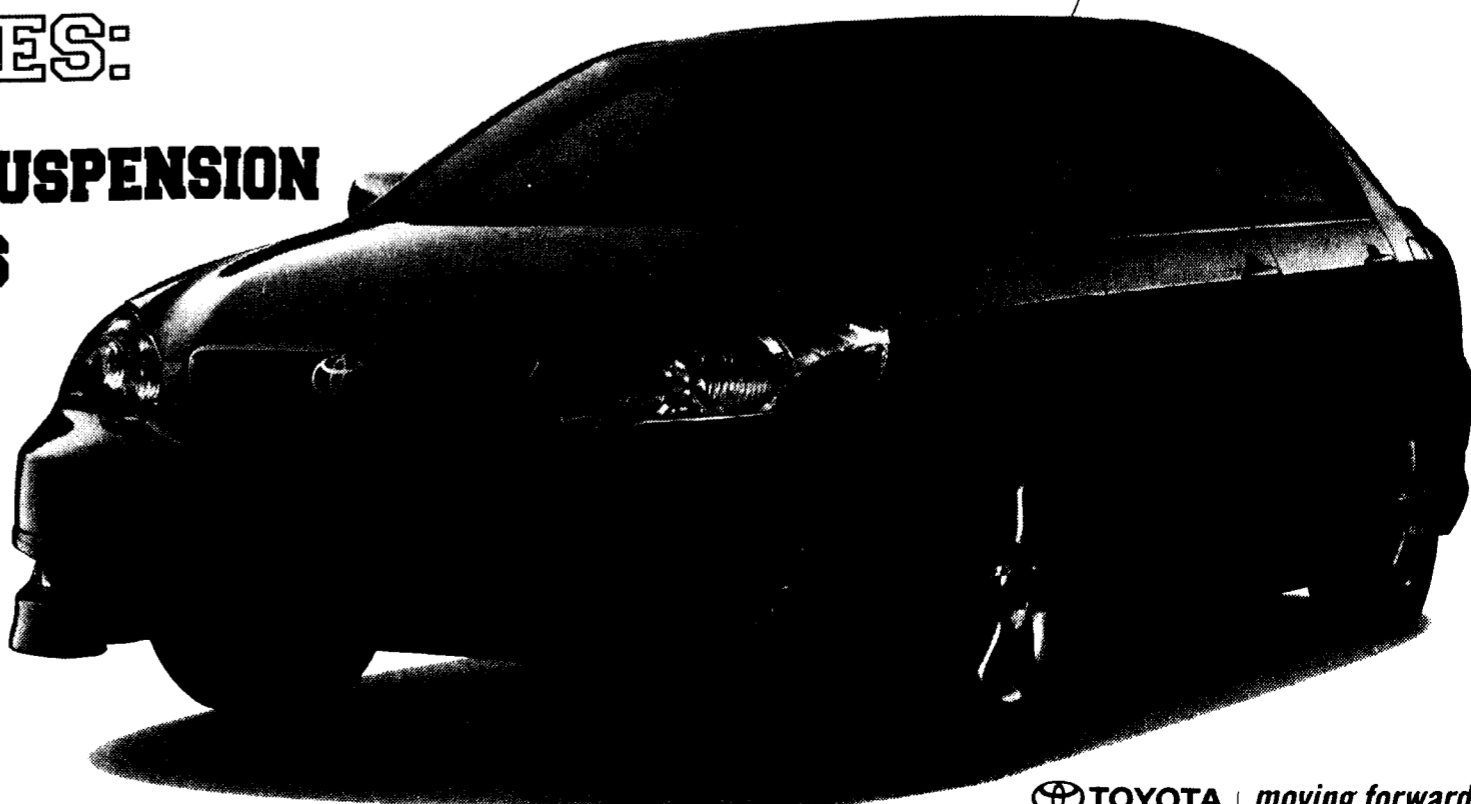
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