

Low Carbohydrate Diet During Lactation



What is the ketogenic, or low carb diet?



Effective weight loss strategy for many people →

- High in fat, moderate protein, very low carb
- Avoids grains such as pasta, rice, bread, as well as sugar and fruit
- By eating very few carbohydrates, the body is forced to break down fat for energy, causing a rise in blood and urinary ketones.



! What is ketoacidosis?

- If ketone levels get too high Blood becomes too acidic (dangerous)
- Symptoms: nausea, vomiting, abdominal pain, diarrhea



Life-threatening if untreated



Requires hospital treatment: IV fluids, carbohydrates, electrolytes



💧 Why lactating people are at higher risk

- Making milk requires extra energy
- Low carbs → body burns even more fat
- Higher ketone levels 💧

Lactating people are at higher risk for life threatening ketoacidosis as compared to non-lactating people.

When risk is even higher



Illness



Heavy Exercise



Nursing Multiples



Extra milk pumping/donations



Avoid a strict low-carbohydrate diet while lactating. Seek guidance from a dietitian or clinician for a safe nutrition plan.