

# On The Seventh Day Of Christmas, ACSH Gave To Me... Seven Useless Diets



By Ruth Kava — December 19, 2016



Six Days Left! [1]

Some folks seem to spend lots of time thinking up more and more bizarre weight loss diets. And most work — initially. But as soon as you move back towards eating your normal diet (soon, we hope!), the weight piles back on. So in the long-ish run, these diets are basically useless! Here they are, in no particular order.

1. **The Blood Type Diet.** Supposedly, you should eat the same type of foods that people ate when your particular blood type evolved. For example, people with type O blood should avoid grains and head towards more protein and fats — this blood type appeared before humans invested in agriculture, so they couldn't have consumed much grain-derived foods. But there's really no scientific support for this diet. Will it help you lose weight? Maybe, depending on the food selections and portion sizes you elect. Will it last? Unlikely.
2. **Baby Food Diet.** Well, if chewing and flavor are things you can do without, this might just be the diet for you. It's designed to be used after weight loss to help keep the weight off, and relies on replacing one or two meals a day with baby food. Could it work? Maybe — if you can stomach anywhere from 12 to 16 little jars of pureed stuff per day.
3. **Gluten-free Diet.** Yes, there are people who really have to have a gluten-free diet — those with celiac disease or a gluten sensitivity. But for the rest of us, this is really not an effective way to lose weight. Even though there are many more gluten-free products on the market today, they may have more calories than the ones they're meant to replace. So no, not likely to help with weight loss.
4. **Cotton Ball Diet.** Yes, it's hard to believe, but some folks advocate that hopeful weight-losers consume cotton balls dipped in juices to fill their stomachs so they don't have room for food.

Do we really have to point out that this could result in intestinal blockages and serious health problems? And would you be able to ever stop eating cotton balls to keep any lost weight from returning. What a mess!

5. The Beverly Hills Diet. This is an oldie. First promulgated in 1981, it says the hopeful loser must eat certain fruits in a particular order for the first 10 days, and then you can add a little butter, bread and corn. Not until day 19 are any complete protein foods like meat or fish allowed. You sure will lose weight quickly on this one — but not from loss of fat. All that fruit will likely provoke diarrhea and substantial water and salt loss. Not a healthful way to proceed.
6. The Cabbage Soup Diet. Another relic of the 1980s. All the dieter is allowed to eat for seven days is, you guessed it, cabbage soup. This is basically a vegetable soup (yes, with lots of cabbage), and it will indeed provoke weight loss (mostly water) and increased flatulence. It's unlikely to be palatable for even seven days!
7. The Tapeworm Diet. Yes, there really are people (not in the U.S., at least legally) who will sell you cysts of beef tapeworms to consume. When these guys 'hatch' and hook into the intestines they 'share' everything you eat — so you lose weight. This is a really old trick-- dating from over a hundred years ago when these cysts were sold as 'magic weight loss pills.' Do we really need to say that the voluntary consumption of a parasite is not a good idea? First, the worms grow and can cause intestinal blockages (see cotton ball diet above), and when they produce larvae, these can burrow through the intestinal wall and embed in muscle, causing pain. Avoid this one.

So while some of these diets may result in a transient weight loss without doing permanent damage to one's health, that's not true of all. Just because one seems to be a logical approach, don't think it is either useful or safe. This holiday season, stick with the 'moderation in everything' approach, and remember, there's always that New Year's Resolution time on the horizon!



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