

Celebs v. Science: Kardashians Test For Arsenic In Their System



By Ana-Marija Dolaskie — March 16, 2018



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Usually, when I am fresh out of story ideas, I simply turn on the TV to an episode of *Keeping Up With The Kardashians* (KUWTK).

OK, that's not entirely true, but it does so happen that I got my latest topic from one of their recent episodes. Or at least, recent to me.

Seven minutes in, I was hooked. Sisters Kourtney and Kim Kardashian were discussing ways they stay healthy. Kim's motto — which happens to be much like the council's — is, "everything in moderation." Kourtney's secret to a healthy lifestyle is being gluten-free. Not because she has celiac disease, but because she is trying to live a 'clean' lifestyle. So much so, that Kim points out, she's even gone to the extreme of making her own almond milk.

The sister's discussion escalates to the point that they both would like to find out which one of them is healthier than the other: the one who eats everything in moderation (Kim), or the one who skips the gluten and makes homemade non-milk. (Kourtney). Specifically, Kim's concern is that sister Kourtney is ingesting 'too much arsenic' by being an extremely gluten-free human. So, to do this, they chose a sweat test, a urine sample, and blood work.

Arsenic in rice — and in the body

First, a note on arsenic.

Gluten-free products often contain rice flour as a substitute for wheat. Arsenic is a natural compound, found in rice. In fact, arsenic is found naturally all over the world, especially in groundwater, as well as in dairy products, grains, meat, and fish. It is nearly impossible to avoid —

and that's OK — since levels of arsenic in food are so minuscule, they do not pose any harm to human health. What's more, arsenic doesn't hang out in your system too long. It's excreted in the urine within minutes of being ingested.

But a simple search on the internet will show [alarming stories](#) [1] on gluten-free diets and rice — the irony shouldn't be lost on you — those who avoid gluten to supposedly stay healthy are also being warned of too much arsenic in their healthy, gluten-free diet. It never ends.

Sweat and urine tests

Sweat tests are commonly used when testing for cystic fibrosis, but a urine test perhaps more accurately detects arsenic or other chemicals in the body. The full results of the tests weren't revealed in the episode, though it was announced that neither sister had any traces of arsenic in their systems. We suspect that if any traces of arsenic were found, they were found in the urine test.

The sisters happily concluded that they're both healthy, no matter their diet decisions. Perhaps more importantly that Kourtney's gluten-free diet isn't poisoning her with obscene levels of arsenic, and that Kim's 'everything in moderation' diet is far from dangerous for her health.

We've covered the topic of dieting and 'eating clean' many times. (See [here](#) [2], and [here](#) [3]) If you're not going to click on those links, let me summarize it for you: every road to a healthy lifestyle leads to balanced meals and exercise. You can kick-start your weight loss with the latest diet fads, or avoid this and that, but at the end of the day — eating healthy and exercising regularly will seal the deal, in the long run.

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Links

[1] <https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2017/02/170213131150.htm>

[2] <https://www.acsh.org/news/2018/02/14/eating-slowly-stay-slim-and-other-food-habits-weight-management-12572>

[3] <https://www.acsh.org/news/2018/01/23/ketogenic-diet-digesting-facts-12459>