

Ditch the One-Size-Fits-All Diet Approach

Every year a new fad diet seems to emerge. First carbs are the enemy. Then it's fat we should avoid. Atkin's, Ketogenic, South Beach, lemon detox, the list goes on. But now, new research is supporting the claim that there is no one-size-fits-all plan because we all process food in different ways.

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Kaela Ketchum, OSF HealthCare Registered Dietitian

"Everybody's body is different. It's amazing. You could go ask one person with diabetes what potatoes do to them and it spikes their blood sugars really high. You can ask the person next to them who maybe has diabetes also and they say potatoes do nothing for me. Everybody's body is different, health conditions, genetics, so much plays a role in how our diet affects us." (:22)

The [study](#) tracked the glucose levels of 1,100 participants. Study participants ate matching meals of muffins and sandwiches throughout the day, and even though 60% of the study group were identical twins, no two people had the same reaction to the same regimen. Ketchum says the results underscore the fact that there is no such thing as a perfect diet for the masses.

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"In my opinion there is no perfect diet. But what we do need to make sure we are doing is getting a good balance of nutrients, and so really looking at those five food groups and figuring out the dairy, grains, protein or meats, fruits and vegetables. Are you getting a variety of those each day, because that is really what's going to fuel our body for what we need." (:23)

According to U.S. Weight Loss & Diet Control Market, weight loss is a [\\$72 billion dollar industry](#), and one of the most advertised.

Much of this advertising is behind fad diets. These (often extreme) diets are popular, usually promise quick weight loss, and generally don't have much credible research to back them up.

It is [estimated](#) that 45 million American who go on a diet annually, and 50% of them use fad diets. Ketchum says buying into these fad diets can be discouraging to people when the long term results aren't what they expected.

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"It can often be damaging because they think, 'I have a friend who is doing this and they've lost a lot of weight so I'm going to try it,' and for a variety of reasons that diet doesn't work for that person and then they're discouraged and they think they can't lose weight." (:14)

Ketchum says that individuals trying to lose weight might be best served by a nutritionist who is able to assist them with a personally tailored plan, and the first step is for a patient to speak with his or her primary care doctor.

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"The first thing would be to make sure you're staying in contact with your primary doctor if you're wanting to lose weight, because they are going to be the ones keeping up with your medical conditions and any

conditions you may have that a diet is really needed to watch for. And then also seeking a dietitian to see with those medical conditions now, and with my lifestyle, what are some things we can do to help you promote that healthy weight loss that's going to be sustainable and healthy for your various conditions.” (:28)

If you don't have a primary care doctor, go to [osfhealthcare.org](https://www.osfhealthcare.org) and click [Find a Doctor](#).