

72-hour fruit diet: Myths vs. Facts

OSF HealthCare Newsroom

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A TikTok video has gone viral claiming only eating fruits for 72 hours can provide miraculous benefits. The video from the “HealthyToMe” account, which has over 8 million views, shows an AI-generated “doctor” who makes numerous claims regarding this diet. It also includes a widely-used AI-generated voice to read the text on the screen.

Ashley Simper, manager of Dietetic Services with OSF HealthCare, breaks down the claims and what is myth vs. fact.

Claim #1: After 12 hours, you will experience improved digestion. Your body will start to digest and absorb the nutrients present in the fruits. The dietary fibers will reduce bloating, relieve your swollen belly, and alleviate stomachaches.

“Fiber is important to help keep our digestive system moving. But if you have a sudden increase in fiber in your diet, as you would if you ate all fruits for three days straight, it can have the opposite effect. The claims to reduce bloating can be quite the opposite. It can actually promote bloating, abdominal cramping and pain,” Simper says. “What we would recommend is a slow increase in fiber as well as making sure you’re having adequate fluids (eight 8-ounce glasses of water daily), we don’t want to do something like that overnight.”

Claim #2: After 24 hours, you will start burning bad fats. Your body will enter a state of nutritional ketosis, meaning it will begin using stored fats as a source of energy.

“The claim that it’s going to burn bad fats through ketosis, which is pulling your fat from your stored energy, is completely false. You have to have the absence of carbohydrates in the diet to induce ketosis. Fruit is a carbohydrate-containing food. You’re not going to be inducing ketosis with an all-fruit diet in three days,” Simper says.

Simper adds that she does not recommend ketogenic diets for weight loss.

“It is not sustainable, and it can lead to nutrient deficiencies. The best way to burn body fat is to reduce calories and increase physical activity,” Simper says. “If you lose weight within three days on an all-fruit diet, it’s likely going to be water weight. You can sometimes lose lean mass at the same time, we don’t want to lose that muscle mass.”

Claim #3: After 48 hours, you will experience reduced illness. Your immune system will be stimulated by the vitamins, minerals and antioxidants present in the fruits.

“Nutrients in fruit, like antioxidants and fiber can help boost your immunity and reduce illness, this certainly will not happen overnight,” Simper says. “What’s important for your overall health is to eat a variety of foods, consistently for days or even months, to see those benefits.”

Claim #4: After 72 hours, your organs will undergo detoxification. Your body will have benefited from a digestive break and detoxification. You will have more energy, clearer skin and an anti-aging effect.

“Detoxification of our organs happens naturally in the body. We have built-in mechanisms that help rid our body of waste. Fruit is high in water, so it can help you stay hydrated and flush some of the waste of the body out through the kidneys, but this is not some kind of miracle detox that happens when you eat fruit for three days,” Simper says.

Simper adds her dietetic practice does not promote anything that claims to detoxify our bodies.

“Especially things like over-the-counter supplements, those can be very dangerous,” Simper adds.

While this diet could improve your energy temporarily, it’s still a low-calorie diet, which Simper says can make you feel more sluggish.

The video goes on to claim the best fruits to include in this “fasting period” are antioxidant rich berries, apples, oranges and grapefruits, kiwis and pomegranates.

Simper calls this 72-hour fruit diet an “overly restricted fad diet.”

“This has some very far-reaching and false claims. Although it’s not going to be dangerous to someone to eat only fruits for 72 hours, if you’re considered a somewhat healthy individual. What’s important is adding a variety of foods in your diet, reducing your calories, and pairing it with physical activity to see those long-term solutions for your health.”

If you have any questions about your diet, you can speak with an OSF HealthCare dietitian. Find providers and locations here: <https://healthlibrary.osfhealthcare.org/Search/85,P01156>