

Dr. Colbert: How You Can Bust the Weight Loss Halt

Like steps, it is natural for weight loss to hit plateaus, and then after a minor adjustment, weight loss continues. If your weight loss has stalled or plateaued for three to four weeks, then go through this checklist and adjust as needed.

Plateaus are normal when losing weight, but there are a limited number of reasons that might happen. Carefully and honestly evaluate yourself as you consider the following.

- Am I eating too many carbs? Even healthy carbs count. At the macro level, 5 percent of your daily intake coming from healthy carbs should be enough to burn fat for most anyone. That's 20 grams of healthy net carbs per day. Odds are your carb intake has crept up and is greater than 5 percent (20 grams).
- Am I consuming too much protein? If you eat an excessive amount of protein, the body will convert the excess protein to carbs, and that can throw you out of ketosis. Usually 3–4 ounces of protein per meal for women and 3–6 ounces of protein per meal for men is adequate. Some people need less.
- Am I drinking enough water? Not drinking enough water can slow weight loss down. Increase your water intake to at least six to eight glasses per day.
- Am I eating too many nuts? Eating too many nuts, which may have excessive net carbs, can knock you out of ketosis. Or maybe the excessive proteins from too many nuts are converting to sugar, which definitely would stop ketosis and weight loss.
- Do I need to start exercising? Consider adding brisk walking to your routine. Start with ten to twenty minutes of walking three times each week. You'll want to

eventually increase it to thirty minutes or more five days a week, but for now this is a good start. But just walk; don't run. Also, if you are able, find a walking partner for accountability.

- Am I eating too much dairy? Dairy is often the culprit for slowing down and even stalling weight loss. Look at what you've been eating. Adjust if necessary.
- Am I eating enough fat? Double-check your 75 percent fats intake. Are you still on target? Adding more olive oil or avocado oil to meals is often the answer. For women, 75 percent of 1,600 total calories as fat is 10 tablespoons per day (tablespoons per meal). For men, 75 percent of 2,400 total calories as fat is 15 tablespoons per day (5 tablespoons per meal).
- Am I eating too much food (calories)? Maybe you are simply eating too much food. Look at your daily intake. Are you on target (1,600 calories per day for women and 2,000–2,400 calories per day for men)? Count your calories for a few days to check yourself.
- Am I consuming artificial sweeteners? Fake sugars are notorious for knocking you out of ketosis. Examine your food and drinks closely.
- Am I eating hidden sugars? Examine your food and drinks. Nut butters, for example, which are great for fat and protein intake, often have sugar added and may even have excessive carbs.
- Do I need to increase my exercise? If you want to increase your exercise (beyond the assumed twenty-minute walks at least three times a week), increase your walks to thirty minutes four or five times a week. Do more aerobic exercise, ride a bike, swim, and so on.
- Do I need to begin intermittent fasting? On a keto diet, you will feel full longer and can usually skip meals, especially breakfasts. This increases your fat burning. Maintain your macros as you go. Many of my female patients are able to break through their weight loss plateaus by eating their last meals between 5:00 and

6:00 p.m.

- Am I under too much stress? Stress releases cortisol, which can cause weight gain. Stress may be unavoidable, so learn to practice techniques that calm you. Meditation, praise music, prayer, laughter, sleep, reading books, watching funny movies or TV shows, drinking tea, turning off technology, using essential oils, playing with your grandkids, or journaling are all good ways to decrease stress. If you are able to fix the situation and remove the stressor, that is always the best option. (My book *Stress Less* is a good resource if you need to break free from stress in your life.)
- Am I experiencing hormone fluctuations? Women have hormone fluctuations during their menstrual cycles, especially during their menstrual periods, and this can slow down weight loss (typically for a week). If this happens, be aware, but press on.
- Am I getting enough sleep? Getting a good night's sleep, seven to eight hours, is vital. Some people need less sleep, but odds are you need to regularly get at least seven to eight hours of sleep each night.
- Do I have a sluggish thyroid? Consult your doctor for this or read my book *Dr. Colbert's Hormone Health Zone*, but a sluggish thyroid is common (especially in women) as we age. Symptoms often include cold hands and feet, losing the outer eyebrows, a lower body temperature, constant fatigue, weight gain, and dry skin. A natural thyroid supplement is usually the answer here.
- Am I consuming too much sodium? Too much salt can slow down your weight loss. I've seen it happen. Look closely at your food intake, and you may need to cut back on the salt and salty seasonings you might be using.
- Am I exercising too much? If you do high-intensity exercise, your body has to burn glucose for energy (protein and fat burn too slowly), so you will need to increase your carbs before a workout. (Or take MCT oil powder or Instant Ketones before a workout.) Otherwise,

your body will crash, you may need to sleep, and you may feel sick. All you need to do is increase your carbs before or on those high-intensity-workout days. Eventually you will find the balance. It's best to avoid high-intensity workouts until you achieve your weight loss goals, or you will probably have to increase your carbs before your workouts. {eoa}

The preceding is an excerpt from Appendix B of Dr. Don. Colbert's book Beyond Keto (Charisma House 2021). For more information and to order the book, please visit .

Don Colbert, MD, has been a board-certified family practice doctor for over twenty-five years in Orlando, Florida, and most recently in Dallas, Texas. He is also board certified in antiaging medicine through the American Academy of Anti-Aging Medicine and has received extensive training in nutritional and preventive medicine. He is the author of three New York Times best-selling books: Dr. Colbert's Keto Zone Diet, The Seven Pillars of Health and Dr. Colbert's "I Can Do This" Diet, along with best sellers Toxic Relief, the Bible Cure series, Living in Divine Health, and Stress Less. He has sold more than 10 million books and treated over fifty thousand patients in his years of practicing medicine.

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