keto-green™

The Fat-Burning Power of Ketogenic Eating + The Nourishing Strength of Alkaline Foods = Rapid Weight Loss and Hormone Balance

16

Includes more than 50 delicious recipes!

Bestselling author of The Hormone Fix

ANNA CABECA, DO
THE FAT-BURNING POWER OF KETOGENIC EATING + THE
NOURISHING STRENGTH OF ALKALINE FOODS = RAPID
WEIGHT LOSS AND HORMONE BALANCE

DR. ANNA CABECA, DO, OBGYN, FACOG

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No book can replace the diagnostic expertise and medical advice of a trusted physician. Please be certain to consult with your doctor before making any decisions that affect your health, particularly if you suffer from any medical condition or have any symptoms that may require treatment.

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First Edition

Book design by Diane Hobbing
To my loving daughters, Brittany, Amanda, Amira, and Avamarie. You inspire me to live healthier every day and share these lessons with faith and love.
INTRODUCTION

Welcome to Keto-Green 16! The next sixteen days are going to be exciting, encouraging, and uplifting as you begin to drop pounds—perhaps up to a pound a day!—and lose inches around your waist, without cravings or hunger. At the same time, you’ll begin to feel mentally and physically energized like never before. And, I predict, you will feel a dramatic improvement in your digestive health, your sleep, and, even more excitingly, your mood.

All of these things happen when you go Keto-Green—a scientifically validated, breakthrough way of eating that combines a fat-melting ketogenic diet (low in carbs, high in good fats, moderate in protein) with health-boosting alkaline-rich foods. You’ll also incorporate intermittent fasting into your routine, going without food for roughly sixteen hours (mostly overnight). It’s the healthiest way to fast, and its impact on fat-burning and metabolism is remarkable.

I understand that you might be a little skeptical about considering yet another diet. You’ve probably removed unhealthy foods from your diet before. You’ve exercised as much as you can. You’ve yo-yo dieted, sometimes gaining back more than you originally lost. And then there’s the dreaded, hard-to-lose belly fat. Through it all, you’re still unable to shed as many pounds as you want, and you can’t see the results of your efforts and hard work. And if you do see results, they seem to be only temporary.

What’s the problem? What’s going wrong with your body? Why is it so hard to lose weight—especially as you get older and, for many women, enter menopause?
I get it. Do I ever! At age thirty-eight, I weighed more than 240 pounds, with a lot of it abdominal fat. Then I lost one of my children, my toddler, Garrett, and wasn’t in any mental or emotional shape to focus on losing weight. But after taking a healing journey around the world in the wake of that tragedy, I eventually got below 150 pounds, got pregnant again (after being declared infertile), and was able to stay at that healthy weight for ten years.

Then, when I was forty-eight, menopause hit, and I quickly gained twenty pounds, seemingly overnight. It was a time in my life of toxic romantic relationships (like the time I got engaged to the wrong guy), brain fog, near-bankruptcy, and more. The stress, combined with my changing hormones, made it seemingly impossible to get thin and feel well.

The more I talked to my patients and saw how their stories mirrored mine, I realized I wasn’t alone—and neither are you! I was in a metabolic stall and mental fog brought on by hormones. I had to understand what was happening in this peri-menopausal time period to my body and my mind.

I was determined to figure out why it’s so hard to get lasting results and how to conquer this stubborn problem—and do it quickly.

Brain, Body, and Belly

It turns out that the missing link in getting to and staying at a healthy weight is your brain. Your brain has significant power over your hormones, and these affect your weight, your metabolism, and your appetite. If there is a disconnect between your brain and your body, your hormones will not function optimally—a condition I call neuroendocrine vulnerability—and it will be challenging to lose weight and keep it off. But we can get to our happy weight, and we can do it effortlessly. So hang in there with me.

Hormones are chemicals that conduct an intricate symphony of
messing throughout our bodies, regulating everything from sleep to sex, mood to energy, mobility to growth.

Several hormones play a huge role in hunger and its opposite: satiety, the happy feeling of being full and satisfied after a meal. Others help the body burn fat and reduce weight, even belly fat. You may already be familiar with insulin, a hormone that tells your muscle cells to take in glucose (blood sugar) from the bloodstream.

Our reproductive hormones are involved in weight too. As we age, our bodies slowly decrease the production of estrogen, progesterone, DHEA, and testosterone, causing more fat tissue to form around our middle.

Even stress hormones like cortisol get into the act. Because most of us are constantly under stress, cortisol stays spiked in the body. Excess cortisol triggers the release of energy in the form of fat and glucose. Ultimately, the fat is redeposited as pudge around the belly, near the liver, forming an unhealthy type of fat called visceral fat.

Most people haven’t heard of the hormone adiponectin, which controls glucose levels and fat burning.

What all hormones have in common is that they are in contact with the brain. By making us feel more or less hungry, speeding up or slowing down our metabolism, or controlling the burning of fat, these hormones, when in balance, interact with the brain to make tiny course corrections to help keep our weight within a healthy range.

Once you get balanced and your hormones are working in sync with your brain, you’ll resolve neuroendocrine vulnerability. As a result, you’ll more easily burn fat, develop toned muscles, and stay in fat-burning mode even when you’re not moving.

So the key is to train your brain and balance your hormones to work for and with your body, instead of against it—and get sexy and slim in the process.

And with my Keto-Green diet, you can do it in just sixteen days. Isn’t that great news?
What to Expect

On Keto-Green 16, you’ll experience and discover how to:

- **Lose weight rapidly.** This diet promotes ketosis, a process in which your body starts burning stored fat, and does so quickly. It also keeps your blood sugar steady all day so that you avoid hunger and cravings. It’s a great kick-start to move you off a plateau, gain willpower, and get results fast. In two studies I conducted at North Florida Integrative Medicine in Gainesville, Florida, in 2019, with forty-three people, the participants lost anywhere from half a pound to nearly one pound a day—without feeling hungry or fatigued. What’s more, they felt better and had reduced symptom scores overall!

- **Strip off those last five or ten pounds.** Here’s where dieters really struggle—those final stubborn pounds that block you from getting to your happy weight. It’s a common problem you’ve probably encountered in your quest for lower numbers on the scale and a shapelier image in the mirror. But don’t worry. I’ve had many clients who wanted to get rid of those obstinate five or ten pounds, and they did it within sixteen days.

- **Get a tinier waist.** No one likes having a flabby belly, yet tummy fat and muffin tops can often be the hardest places on the body to pry loose the pudge. Belly fat not only is unsightly, but also can be deadly as we get older because it contributes to a higher risk of heart disease, diabetes, and chronic illness, more so than any other fat in your body. Keto-Green 16 helps you lose weight specifically from the abdominal area and keep it off for good, because it targets poorly balanced hormones that pile pounds on your waistline. In my studies, participants lost an average of 2.25 inches around their midsections in only sixteen days. How’s that for waist reduction?
• **Flush out toxins.** Every day we’re exposed to toxins and unnatural substances in our environment—toxins the body likes to store in fat tissue, other tissues, and various organs, affecting their operation. Many of these toxins are hormone-disrupting chemicals that influence how much weight we gain or lose. They have been found to create more and bigger fat cells, or trick the brain into making us eat more.

Fortunately, our bodies are good housekeepers, automatically doing the job of cleaning out or neutralizing toxins through the colon, liver, kidneys, lungs, lymph system, and skin. But the body needs help to do its cleanup job. This plan provides naturally detoxifying foods and alkaline foods, along with intermittent fasting, to rid the body of these unnatural chemicals so we can lose weight for good.

• **Exercise less but get more results.** With my sixteen-minute workout, you’ll learn how to perform high-intensity interval training (HIIT), a type of workout that uses short bursts of strenuous activity to ramp up your heart rate and boost your fitness. Interval training is the perfect companion to the Keto-Green 16 diet because this type of workout also regulates several hunger and weight-gain hormones.

• **Enjoy greater physical energy.** On Keto-Green 16 your body starts burning more fat for energy, rather than carbs or sugar. This occurs because without carby or sugary foods, your body taps into fat stores for fuel. And by avoiding sugary foods, which cause fleeting energy highs followed by fast crashes, you won’t have those energy slumps that lead to a lack of productivity and concentration.

• **Develop sharper thinking.** Your brain is a hungry organ, constantly taking energy from the bloodstream in order to send and receive electrical signals twenty-four hours a day, creating complex thoughts and emotions.

The brain possesses the ability to metabolize glucose and ketones for energy. The best source of glucose is from a diet
rich in low-carb vegetables and fruit—like the Keto-Green 16 diet. The brain, however, hates glucose obtained from refined sugar. This kind of sugar is known to ruin cognitive function and memory. You won’t be eating any brain-destructive sugar on this plan!

On the Keto-Green 16 diet, you’ll be limiting your carbs to 40 grams daily or less. Consequently, your hungry brain dials 911 and says, “Hey, I need more glucose fast!” Your liver answers the call by converting stored fatty acids into ketone bodies to serve as a backup fuel source. They are shuttled to the brain to keep it happy, satisfied, and operating at maximum capacity.

Compared to glucose, ketone bodies are an ideal energy source for the brain. They supply more energy per unit of oxygen consumed by the brain, provide that energy at a faster rate, help regulate weight-control hormones like leptin and insulin, and reduce free radicals associated with brain inflammation. The net effect of ketone bodies on the brain is sharper thinking and prevention of neurological disorders and conditions.

The brain loves to run on these natural chemicals! Across the board, nearly everyone in my studies reported sharper mental focus, clearer thinking, and vanishing brain fog. This shift in fuel source from glucose to ketones is especially essential if you’re in perimenopause or postmenopause.

**Monitor how well your body is reacting to the diet.** By using interpretive tools such as test strips to measure ketosis and alkalinity, a monitoring system for glucose that does not require pricking your finger, and your scale (which will no longer be the enemy), you’ll have quick and reliable feedback on how your body is functioning and adapting to my plan.

**Create tasty, filling menus.** Using my delicious Keto-Green 16 recipes, made from ingredients available at your grocery store (no obscure specialty foods), you’ll love every bite as you watch the pounds fall off.
Keto-Green 16 is a take-the-bull-by-the-horns approach to weight loss. It doesn’t come with a guarantee of no effort on your part. It calls for a commitment to eating specific fat-burning and alkaline-boosting foods, intermittent fasting, and getting more active. Yes, I’d say it’s challenging, but what doesn’t challenge you won’t change you! Indeed, what’s challenging is always worth doing—especially for looking great, feeling energetic, and enjoying life more. Start with an open mind and let the rapid changes Keto-Green 16 produces in the way you look and the way you feel be the indicators of whether it is worth that effort.

I know you’ve had frustrations with diets throughout your life. So have I. But no more. The benefits of this plan are so great that you’ll embrace it as a way of life.

Let’s get going. You can do this!

—Anna Cabeca, DO
Chapter 2

Just Give Me 16 Days

You’re about to start the best and easiest way to burn fat, trim your waistline, balance hormones, and boost your energy. What you’ll do over the next sixteen days will rapidly change the way you look and feel, while building a foundation of disease prevention for the rest of your life.

That’s a big promise, I know! Proof that it works: In August and September 2019, I conducted two studies with forty-three women and several men on the Keto-Green 16 diet. In the first study, participants (ages forty-nine to seventy-one) lost up to eleven pounds, trimmed one to two inches off their waistlines, and improved their diastolic blood pressure (the bottom number, which describes the pressure on the arteries between heartbeats).

The participants also filled out a Medical Symptom Toxicity Questionnaire before and after the sixteen-day program. This assessment looks into issues such as digestion, presence of headaches or brain fog, skin health, eating behavior, eyes, energy levels, and more. On average, the participants had major drops in their score, meaning that their bodies had started functioning more normally and at a higher level of health.

Results were similar for the second study, with a few differences.
The subjects in this study ranged from fifty-one to seventy-five years old and were 90 percent women. My primary focus was pounds lost and inches lost around the waist. The average weight loss among participants was 5.5 pounds in sixteen days. Some people lost twelve to thirteen pounds during the study! As for belly fat, the average number of inches shaved from the midsection was 1.14 inches, with some participants losing as much as 2.2 inches. With a similar outcome, you might be able to drop a size or two in sixteen days!

How I Developed This Diet

My journey into the world of nutritional medicine really began from a serious hormone imbalance I experienced after my toddler son died in a tragic accident. His death left me bereft, grieving, traumatized, and broken in so many ways. Eventually I had to pull my life and my family back together, despite suffering from lingering PTSD. I delved into the underlying effects of trauma in my book *The Hormone Fix*, as well as many aspects of my own healing journey through grief and trauma.

There was so much of my life that was out of control. I was devastated physically, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually. To make things worse, I was told that I’d never be able to have another child because I was infertile. I tried infertility drugs, but they all failed.

My doctor’s bag was empty!

So I took a sabbatical and traveled around the world on a healing trek, looking and praying for answers. What I discovered helped me in so many ways, including reversing my early menopause (brought on by the PTSD) and then allowing me to conceive a child at age forty-one.

By the end of the trip, my doctor’s bag was full! I had learned about diet, herbs, spirituality, and other healing tools. As a result, I restored myself. I lost more than eighty pounds. I renewed my hair, skin, and vitality. And best of all, I came back reinvigorated to help thousands of women like myself.
I still had struggles, though. PTSD simmered under the surface of my soul. My marriage crumbled and I got a divorce. I was burned out. Then, when I was forty-eight, twenty pounds piled back on my body—seemingly overnight. I was sick of the constant weight battles and had enough. I knew I had to do something fast.

**Keto On!**

I felt that a ketogenic diet might work for me because it takes pounds off rather quickly and it has positive effects on brain health and clear thinking—which I needed desperately as a single mom charged with supporting my family.

A conventional ketogenic diet is one that is very low in carbs, high in fats, and moderate in protein. It burns fat very efficiently, but there are side effects, such as “keto flu,” which makes you feel strange, like you have the real flu. Its symptoms include fatigue, diarrhea, nausea, body aches, and headaches. Although a keto diet can foster clear thinking, it can also make you feel moody and mentally unstable—what I call “keto craziness”—as the brain shifts from using glucose to an alternative source of energy (ketone bodies). I experienced all of this, and I felt terrible—not what I needed!

While I was trying to figure out what was wrong with me, I tested my urine using simple pH strips you can get at any pharmacy. My own test showed that I was highly acidic. That was an aha moment. When the body gets too acidic, we are much more vulnerable to getting sick. No wonder I felt so terrible on a keto diet.

I decided to further change my eating habits to make my body more alkaline. I began eating more greens and drinking bone broth. Within days of making these changes, I felt more energetic. My mind was even more clear and focused. The weight started peeling off, and I lost those twenty pounds in no time. I felt great.

I then undertook some research and found a journal article published in 1924 in the *Biochemical Journal* from the Biochemical Laboratory in Cambridge, England. It evaluated a ketogenic diet
with alkalinity and implied that the combination could be very benefi-
cial and therapeutic.

I dug into the science even more and learned that if you stay on a
pure keto diet too long, your body may become acidic, creating
chronic inflammation that forces your body to hold on to its fat
stores. This is especially true for women—I’ve seen this play out
numerous times among my female patients. (It does not happen as
much with men, most likely because they have ten times more tes-
tosterone than we do, thus cooling the inflammation.) For women,
getting alkaline is a key factor in undoing that inflammation and all
its negative effects.

Because this keto-alkaline approach that I created worked so
well for me, I began putting clients on it via my online Magic Meno-
pause programs. The participants began breezing through meno-
pause and its symptoms. They lost weight, reached their happy
weight, rejuvenated their appearance, felt more energetic and
healthy, and balanced their hormones. Thousands of women have
now experienced these amazing results.

As for me, I’m fifty-three with four daughters, the youngest of
whom is eleven years old, and I’ve never felt better, thanks to add-
ing alkaline foods and an alkaline lifestyle to a healthy keto diet. I
feel fabulous, physically and mentally, and I want that for you too.
The Keto-Green 16 diet is the next right step for you.

The Keto-Green Difference: An Overview

Some general background first. The Keto-Green 16 diet is low-
carb. In fact, I advise that you restrict your carbohydrate intake to
no more than 40 grams a day. As we get older, we simply cannot
process carbohydrates like we did in our youth. Carbs tend to im-
pair insulin’s job of processing fuel properly—that’s the insulin re-
sistance I explained in Chapter 1 (see page 14). As a result, the body
stores more fat than usual, especially around the belly. Reduce
carbs, and you prevent insulin resistance and the fat accumulation
that comes with it.
Unlike conventional keto diets, my plan is a super-healthy approach that focuses on “keto-clean” foods and de-emphasizes “keto-dirty” foods. Keto-clean foods are whole, unprocessed foods that are high in fiber and low in carbs but are still packed with other nutrients. Examples are high-fiber veggies, green leafy vegetables, nuts and seeds, avocados, coconut oil, and ghee. Dirty-keto foods are items like bacon grease, pork rinds, and processed cheeses. Even low-carb packaged convenience foods such as protein bars and other snacks count as dirty keto and are to be avoided.

My diet is high in fat, but it focuses on the right fats, such as olive oil, olives, avocados, coconut oil, nuts, and seeds. They taste delicious and make your food more palatable. Plus they’re filling.

Keto-Green 16 is moderate in protein, preferably unprocessed, organic, and grass-fed beef, organic and free-range poultry, wild-caught fish, and vegetarian protein sources. Protein is a great metabolism booster. Research has found that people who eat more and better-quality protein have much less belly fat and are less prone to gaining it.

The real all-stars of this diet are alkalinizing vegetables, particularly leafy greens like spinach, lettuce, kale, chard, beet greens, mustard greens, collard greens, and sprouts. Cruciferous veggies like cabbage, broccoli, Brussels sprouts, and cauliflower also play starring roles. These are just a few of the many satisfying veggies you can eat. They are very low in carbs and high in nutrients, vitamins, and antioxidants. And they’ll help keep your body alkaline—a healthy internal state of well-being and metabolic efficiency. You’ll start dropping weight like crazy and feel on top of your game.

Very important: You’ll soon discover that the Keto-Green 16 plan layers in intermittent fasting, a super-easy lose-fat strategy. We practice it already without realizing it. It’s called sleeping! On my plan, it involves going without food from dinner one day to a later breakfast the next day—a period of sixteen hours. You’ll discover that intermittent fasting on this plan is a real game-changer, one that you’ll want in your weight-control toolbox for the rest of your life.
And one more thing. I believe in “feasting” meals too. This is a healthy and fun carb-up day, typically every seven to ten days. It keeps our bodies metabolically flexible. Good choices for these “feasts” are sweet potatoes and fresh fruit; my guilty pleasure is dark chocolate. Also, this practice keeps us from feeling deprived and better able to stay on track 90 percent of the time.

Keto Explained

When you restrict carbohydrates on a keto diet, you reduce the production of glucose and therefore reduce the production of insulin. Your body looks around for something other than glucose to burn for energy. What does it burn? Stored fat! A ketogenic diet works by keeping the body’s carbohydrate stores almost empty. This stimulates the production of glucagon, which unlocks your fat stores. Your body starts burning its own fat for energy, helping you lose weight quickly. It will also burn the fat you’re eating in your diet.

Keto dieting is definitely an effective way to lose weight. A 2018 report out of Framingham State University found that after five months on a keto diet, overweight adults burned about 250 more calories daily than people who followed a high-carb, low-fat diet. This study, published in the British Medical Journal, also showed that dieters on a keto-type diet had increased energy expenditure—aka a faster metabolism—than those on higher carb diets. Don’t be surprised if you quickly feel much more energetic on Keto-Green 16!

When your body doesn’t have carbs, it goes into a metabolic state called ketosis. In ketosis, your body gets its energy from ketone bodies in your blood. Ketone bodies (ketones for short) are molecules produced from the breakdown of fat. After about three days without carbs, most of your carbohydrate stores will be depleted. Your body goes into a hyper-fat-burning mode and produces ketone bodies for fuel instead of glucose.
As you continue to eat this way, you become “fat-adapted,” which means that your body primarily uses fat as energy instead of glucose. Normally our bodies run on a fuel mix of glucose and fat, but in a non-fat-adapted state, the body taps into glucose first. Once you are fat-adapted, though, your body is in a continual state of fat-burning. It doesn’t even miss the glucose it used to get from carbs.

Ketones are especially critical for the brain. Most of your body, including your muscles, can run on fat, but the brain can only refuel on either ketones or glucose. A keto diet increases the number of mitochondria—the energy factories—of brain cells and all other cells of the body. Those mitochondria prefer ketones as fuel. This probably accounts for the feelings of mental clarity and energy you’ll experience on this diet, as well as a faster metabolic rate. In fact, I draw the analogy that glucose is to ketones as gasoline is to jet fuel—ketones are a supercharged form of brain fuel.

A keto diet optimizes blood sugar and insulin levels. One study among people with type 2 diabetes found such dramatic glucose improvements that they could stop taking or reduce their diabetes medications. (Please never reduce or discontinue any medication without your doctor’s approval.) Among its other duties, insulin is designed to store fat, so when insulin levels go down, fat-burning goes up.

One of the other benefits you’ll notice from being in ketosis is less hunger. You’ll feel fuller for longer, partly because of the good fats and clean proteins you’ll be eating, but also because ketosis changes your levels of the hunger hormones ghrelin and leptin. Specifically, the diet decreases hunger-creating ghrelin and increases hunger-suppressing leptin, so you feel more satisfied and have fewer cravings.

Not only does ketosis help you tame hunger, burn overall fat, and encourage weight loss, but a study published in the journal *Endocrine* found that the diet targets inflammatory visceral (belly) fat in particular. Remember, visceral fat is considered a risk factor for heart disease, cancer, and diabetes because it wraps around key organs and leaks toxins into them.
A ketogenic diet can sometimes be difficult to stick with, but here’s what I’ve seen among my patients: Once they get into the swing of things and see results, keto becomes much easier. They know what foods to eat and avoid, their cravings and hunger vanish, and they start dropping pounds and feeling fabulous. Sometimes people even ask them if they’ve “had some work done.”

**Alkalinity, Explained**

In simple terms, an alkaline diet is a way of eating that emphasizes non-acidifying foods over acidifying ones. You make your food choices around those that lower the acid levels in your body and increase its alkalinity. My Keto-Green 16 plan emphasizes many healthy, alkalinizing foods. I discuss acidity versus alkalinity extensively on my website, dranna.com, so be sure to check it out for extra credit.

In a substantial amount of research, a more optimal alkaline pH status in the body has been found to:

- Support bone health and lean muscle mass
- Reduce pain and inflammation
- Lower risk of disease (cardiovascular disease, hypertension, insulin resistance, diabetes, and metabolic disorders)
- Support the healthy balance of electrolyte levels our bodies require for quality sleep, circadian rhythm control, and cortisol management
- Help the body burn fat

So what exactly does pH mean? It stands for the power of hydrogen or the total hydrogen ion concentration in a solution. PH levels are expressed on a scale from 1 to 14 to specify how acidic or alkaline a water-based solution is. Higher pH numbers are alkaline
(also referred to as base) and lower numbers are acidic (acid). A PH of 7 is generally considered neutral.

The human body works hard around the clock to maintain a slightly alkaline pH level in the blood, and to do so it must clear out any excess acid. Your body has a precise mechanism for maintaining its blood acid-base balance, and the mechanism ensures that the pH of blood doesn’t shift much at all. It is tightly controlled by the kidneys and lungs to stay at around 7.4. This is critical for human life, because even a small variation in blood pH is life-threatening. This tight regulation declines with age, and there can be an increase in metabolic acidosis because most modern diets are acidic. That’s another reason why eating alkaline is even more important as we get older.

While the blood pH stays in a very small range, the rest of your body varies in pH level. Your stomach, for example, is very acidic, typically maintaining a pH of less than 3.0 so that it can fully break down the food you eat and kill ingested pathogens. The pH of your vagina is 3.8–4.4, which is protective and kills off unwanted bacteria, but this pH increases as we age. The skin has a pH below 5. By contrast, the pH of the intestines and pancreas is 8.0. Most cells work best when they are on the alkaline side. The pH of urine, however, fluctuates and serves as a window on what is happening at the cellular and hormonal levels. Ideally, it is good to see the pH of urine at about 7.

PH levels are not just about what we eat but also about how we live. After intense exercise, we expect our pH to be more acidic; after a relaxing day in nature, it will likely be more alkaline. Stress and the resultant elevated cortisol are highly acid-promoting. Every time I walk on the beach in the morning and test my alkalinity afterward, I find that I easily stay alkaline all day. When you discover this for yourself, it will be a huge aha moment.

Current research shows that eating alkaline-forming foods supports the body’s natural pH balancing act. Foods on the alkaline end of the scale include vegetables (particularly greens), fermented vegetables (like sauerkraut and kimchi), low-glycemic, low-sugar fruits, and various healthy fats. If you eat enough alkaline-forming
foods, your body has better access to vital minerals such as calcium, phosphorus, and magnesium—all of which help improve hormone balance.

As for weight loss, an alkaline diet assists the body in burning fat. First, alkalinity (along with a low-carb diet) decreases levels of cortisol, a hormone responsible for belly fat. When you burn fat, the body releases toxins. Alkaline foods also support detoxification and help usher toxins from the body.

Second, an alkaline diet helps you work out more intensely. Researchers at Saint Louis University have found that alkaline diets improved physical fitness of individuals in comparison to acidic diets. Improving your exercise performance can translate into greater weight loss and more energy.

Third, an alkaline diet protects muscle, the most metabolically active tissue in the body. With more muscle, you burn more calories, even at rest. A study looking at a diet rich in potassium and magnesium (ample in fruits and vegetables), as well as a reduced acid load, found that such a diet preserved muscle in women. The researchers noted: “Although protein is important for maintenance of muscle mass, eating fruits and vegetables that supply adequate amounts of potassium and magnesium are also relevant. The results suggest a potential role for diet in the prevention of muscle loss.”

To reduce acid load, you’ll want to watch out for acid-forming foods. These include sugar, processed foods, breads, pastas, grains, starchy vegetables, artificial sweeteners, sodas, many meats, and alcohol. They stress your digestive system and cause weight gain, a bloated and fatter belly, sluggish thinking, and tiredness. There are a couple of reasons for this that have been validated by science.

First, there is now increasing evidence to suggest that an acidic diet may be independently associated with the risk of developing type 2 diabetes. A diet with a high acid load can reduce pH toward the lower end of the normal range, which may in turn lead to the development of insulin resistance (a precursor to type 2 diabetes). Conversely, reducing dietary acid load with an alkaline diet may be protective and prevent type 2 diabetes, according to a 2016 diet published in Biochimie.
Second, as a study published in 2016 in *Osteoporosis International* reported, an acidic diet can accelerate the loss of muscle tissue, especially in women age sixty and older. We do not want to lose muscle with age! Muscle loss slows down metabolism and makes us look older. We need muscles to burn calories, stay mobile, and be vibrant. The researchers further stated that “an alkaline diet be beneficial for preserving total lean mass in senior women, especially in those with low protein intake.”

Many of us eat a more acidic diet due to our unhealthy food choices (processed foods in particular), but even those who eat healthfully may be unaware of the very different mineral profiles that our foods today have versus what our ancestors ate. Today’s farming practices and mineral-poor soils, coupled with the large amount of toxins that foods are now exposed to (including pesticides, antibiotics, and hormones), impact the acidic effects of much of what people eat. In a typical Western diet, there has been a significant increase in sodium and a decrease in potassium, for example. In fact, the ratio of potassium to sodium has reversed and changed dramatically: It used to be 10 to 1, but now in the typical Western diet it is 1 to 3! These changes can impact many of our body’s most important processes.

I am not saying we need to completely avoid acidic foods. We need a balance of healthy (organic, grass-fed, and so forth) acidic foods in our diet. The important thing for your best health is the ratio of alkaline to acid in what is on your dinner plate. You need to be looking at the net effect of your diet on your acid-base balance. You can accomplish this using the 80/20 rule. Consume a diet that is 80 percent alkaline (a lot of veggies) and 20 percent acidic (protein and healthy fats). In my women’s restorative health programs, we talk about visualizing an actual plate with the healthiest proportion of proteins, healthy carbs (veggies), and healthy fats. (See pages 82 and 83 for ideal Keto-Green 16 plates.)

Also, go organic for higher mineral content and fewer toxins. Non-organic options are likely grown in mineral-depleted soils that are also exposed to toxins. Organic foods optimize your alkalinity.
Keto versus Keto-Green

I am often asked to explain the difference between a keto diet and my Keto-Green plan. For a simplified answer, see the following chart.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE KETO DIET AND THE KETO-GREEN 16 DIET</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>KETOGENIC DIET</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Favors many acidic foods such as meats</td>
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<tr>
<td>Allows more acidic fats like butter and bacon</td>
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<tr>
<td>Is based on the ratio of eating 60 to 75 percent of your daily calories from fat, 5 to 10 percent of your calories from carbs, and 15 to 30 percent of your daily calories from protein</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limits fruits to berries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has potential side effects such as dehydration, nausea, and other issues stemming from eating too many acid-forming foods</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can build up acidic toxicity in cells</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tests urine ketones only</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Test, Don’t Guess: Measuring Ketosis and Alkalinity

To ensure you’re on target to experience all of the wonderful benefits of this diet, it’s going to be important to measure your levels of ketosis and alkalinity by testing your urine throughout the day (every time you go to the bathroom), using special test strips. In fact, I encourage you to do this through the entire sixteen days. You’ll gain valuable information on how well you’re burning fat, as well as your alkaline status, and the feedback is motivating. When I’ve asked an audience of keto dieters if they’ve been testing for ketones, typically fewere than 10 percent raise their hands.

You can purchase ketone test strips and alkaline test strips in any pharmacy, or you can use my dual-purpose test strips available at dranna.com. They measure ketosis and alkalinity on the same strip and are much handier than using two different strips. Whatever test you use, the results are rapidly expressed as a color change. The pinker the strip, the higher your level of ketosis; the greener the strip, the more alkaline your body. Whatever pH paper or strips you buy will come accompanied by a color chart to compare your results to, so judge your results by that.

How to use my dual-purpose strips:

1. Hold the strip away from the little test pads.
2. Pass the strip in your urine stream or dip it in a urine-filled cup.
3. Set the strip flat on absorbent paper.
4. After forty seconds, match the ketone test pad to the ketone color chart. You want to see pink.
5. After sixty seconds, match the alkaline test pad to the alkaline color chart. You want to have a pH of at least 7; anything less is acidic.

Throughout this book, I’ll give you tips on how to get alkaline and stay there, plus how to maintain ketosis over the next sixteen days.
Measuring Your Glucose Levels

In early 2019, I decided to learn how different foods and beverages affected my glucose levels. What raises my blood sugar? What keeps it steady? Rising glucose means more insulin is being churned out—a factor that might impede my fat-burning ability.

I purchased a device called the Freestyle Libre. It is a continuous glucose monitoring system consisting of a handheld reader about the size of a cellphone (or you can obtain the readings from a smartphone with an app) and a sensor worn on the back of your upper arm. The sensor has a thin, flexible filament that inserts painlessly just under the skin. It makes contact with a thin layer of fluid that surrounds the cells of the tissues below your skin, in order to measure glucose every minute. The sensors last two weeks and store up to eight hours of data, displaying it on a graph so you can see if your blood sugar is on an upward or downward trend. It is a great tool for people with diabetes because the readings help them adjust their insulin dose or food intake accordingly.

What I discovered was interesting. Coffee raised my glucose levels—which it does in some caffeine-sensitive people. But low-sugar red wine did not—which is good because I enjoy a nice glass of robust red wine every now and then. On the other hand, I had a sugary cocktail at a party one time, and my blood sugar registered at 220 (normal is around 88).

I also discovered that if I start my day with stressful thoughts, as opposed to positive morning meditation and prayer, my blood sugar shoots up 30 or more points. Once when I was delivering a keynote speech, even though I was fasting, my glucose reading was in the 150s for thirty minutes; another time, when I was doing an intense boxing routine daily, my blood sugar zoomed to 190 even though I was fasting! This makes sense—cortisol and stress increase the release of glucose to help the body function optimally—but this fascinates me.

Monitoring your own glucose with the Freestyle Libre device is optional and not required to get great results on this diet. It is part of the self-discovery detective work I recommend, however. Know-
ing which foods spike your blood sugar can be helpful when trying to eliminate stubborn fat. Additionally, it is important to see how quickly your blood sugar returns to normal. Ideally, it should take one to two hours to go from spike to recovery. If your blood sugar stays high, it’s important to see your physician in order to find out what’s going on with your health.

Abigail, one of the women in my study, lost eight pounds in the first six days of the study. She also decided to use the Libre to monitor her glucose. Based on her Libre data, her fasting blood sugar remained in the 80s (very healthy) during the study, and her HbA1c—which measures a person’s average level of blood sugar over the past two to three months—dropped to a healthy 5.4 from 6.0 in thirty days. She told me it had not been that optimal in years. And Abigail reported, “More importantly for me, my brain is really clear and I have so much energy.”

The Freestyle Libre is a great tool for additional feedback on how the diet is working for you. You can purchase it over the counter for approximately $40, but in some places you may have to ask your doctor for a prescription. See the appendix “Keto-Green 16 Resources” on how to obtain this system for your own use.

Why 16?

When I developed this diet, I did not select the figure of sixteen days arbitrarily (although I love the idea of “sweet sixteen”!). I happened to know that in numerology, the number 16 symbolizes the energy required to make decisive goals and pursue them—which we certainly need to become the healthy, vibrant individuals we’re meant to be. But from a scientific and medical standpoint, I knew that within just fourteen to sixteen days, we doctors can measure discernible and positive changes in a person’s physiology, weight, body composition, and metabolism—changes that happen quite quickly when dietary shifts are made. We don’t have to wait months and months.
Based on my 2019 studies and other clinical research, the following benefits can potentially be achieved in just sixteen days.

**Drop Pounds Fast**

In a study of thirty-eight obese patients conducted at the Charles University Medical Faculty in Prague in 1990, three groups were put on a high-protein, low-carbohydrate diet (similar to a ketogenic diet). The groups’ diets varied in the number of calories, but were all low-calorie diets. After sixteen days, the average weight loss among participants was between eighteen and twenty-three pounds—over a pound a day! Though probably not typical for most dieters, that’s pretty impressive and goes to show what the right mix of nutrients can do. Comparatively, in my own studies, participants lost up to a pound a day, on average.

**Protect Your Cardiovascular Health**

In 2003 Australian researchers studied eighteen women and thirteen men, ages twenty to seventy years old, to compare the effects of two lipid-lowering diets on risk factors for cardiovascular disease. One of the diets was similar to my Keto-Green diet because it was enriched with good fats—monounsaturated fatty acids, or MUFAs. The other diet was a high-carbohydrate/low-fat diet. Both diets were high in a phytochemical called lycopene, found in tomatoes, papaya, mangos, red cabbage, and red bell peppers (foods that are also on the Keto-Green 16 plan).

The participants followed one diet for fourteen to sixteen days, then switched over to the other diet for another fourteen to sixteen days. That way, each patient served as his or her own control. At the end of the study, the researchers concluded that the MUFA-enriched diet was the heart-healthier of the two. The MUFA diet significantly lowered triglycerides in the blood and raised HDL cholesterol (the “good” cholesterol, for which higher numbers are better). Both of these factors play a huge role in enhancing heart
health. What’s wonderful is that these changes happened in just sixteen days.

I was encouraged by this study, since heart disease is the leading killer of women, and it can be prevented by eating healthy fats and plant foods high in lycopene. Plus, this study shows that you can overturn cardiovascular risk factors in a relatively short time.

The results of my own studies also found a blood pressure advantage. Normal blood pressure is vital to heart health. When your blood pressure is taken, it’s expressed in two numbers—one number on top (systolic) and one on the bottom (diastolic), like a fraction. For example, 120/75 mm Hg is ideal.

Systolic pressure refers to the amount of pressure in your arteries during the contraction of your heart muscle. Diastolic pressure measures your blood pressure when your heart muscle is between beats. Both numbers are important in determining your heart health. Numbers higher than ideal indicate that your heart is working too hard to pump blood throughout your body. Most participants in my studies were able to reduce their diastolic blood pressure by several points to reach 80 or below.

Get Control over Insulin and Glucose Rapidly

Keto-Green 16 is abundant in high-fiber vegetables, which help with glucose and insulin control and regulation of the hunger hormones. There is also a vegan version of the diet, which further amps up these veggies.

I included this plan for vegetarians and vegans, as well as anyone who wants to take a break from animal foods. Fasting from meat and other animal products is beneficial for your health—and a smart move to do at least once or twice a year for sixteen days each time.

Here’s an example of what I’m talking about: After only sixteen days on a diet free of meat, dairy, and eggs (like my Vegan Keto-Green 16 plan), many people with type 2 diabetes might be able get off insulin altogether, with a doctor’s permission. This rather amazing outcome was shown in a study of a vegan-type diet high in plant
fiber that was followed by twenty lean participants receiving insulin therapy for diabetes. They followed the diet for an average of sixteen days. Over the course of the study, doctors were able to lower the daily doses of insulin for each patient. Eleven patients discontinued insulin injections altogether. This study is a remarkable example of what can happen in just sixteen days, especially in terms of regulating insulin.

**Alter Your Gut Bacteria for the Better**

Inside your gut are trillions of healthy bacteria, collectively known as your microbiome. They work to metabolize nutrients, make vitamins, and detoxify harmful forms of estrogen that you are exposed to from the environment.

Scientists have found that people who live traditional, natural-food lifestyles (which population studies suggest are probably alkaline) have higher gut microbiota diversity than city dwellers. In one experiment, U.S. and Venezuelan researchers analyzed the microbiota of seven urban dwellers (five adults and two children), then had them stay in a rainforest village for sixteen days. When their samples were analyzed again, the results showed that their microbiota had changed to resemble the healthier condition of the local villagers.

Digestive health also improved in most of the participants in my studies. Participants reported less constipation, bloating, gas, spells of diarrhea, nausea, and heartburn.

This all goes to show that with natural foods such as vegetables and fruits, you can alter your gut flora for the better—and do it in as few as sixteen days.

**Lose Inches Quickly**

Candidates for weight-loss surgery are often put on low-calorie diets prior to surgery in order to further reduce their body fat. Usually these diets are of short duration, and they restrict fattening foods—similar to Keto-Green 16. The results can be quite remarkable. Researchers at the William Beaumont Army Medical Center
in El Paso, Texas, for instance, put forty very obese people on a 1,000-calorie-a-day diet for fourteen days prior to weight-loss surgery. Thirty-eight patients lost weight on the diet, with an average loss of 5.2 pounds. Twenty-five patients lost three inches of fat around their waistlines—pretty impressive for just fourteen days of dieting.

In my studies, the loss of inches at the waistline was just as notable—between one and three inches on average.

So—are sixteen days meaningful and magical? You bet they are. A lot can happen in sixteen days. Isn’t that sweet!
CURRY SKILLET CHICKEN WITH COCONUT CILANTRO SAUCE AND CAULI-RICE

SERVES 2

CAULI-RICE

1½ tablespoons olive oil
4 cups cauliflower rice (see box on page 204)
Sea salt
Freshly ground black pepper

CHICKEN

1 teaspoon turmeric
½ teaspoon sea salt
½ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
½ teaspoon cumin
½ teaspoon ground coriander
8 to 10 ounces boneless, skinless chicken thighs
1½ tablespoons ghee

SAUCE

½ cup coconut milk kefir
Juice and zest of 2 large limes
¼ cup chopped cashews
1 cup chopped cilantro
Sea salt

pickled ginger

Heat olive oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat. Add cauliflower rice. Season with salt and pepper. Cook for about 5 minutes on medium heat, stirring occasionally, until cauliflower is tender. Place in a medium bowl and set aside.

In a small bowl, combine turmeric, salt, pepper, cumin, and coriander. Evenly coat all sides of chicken with seasoning mixture. In the same skillet used for the rice, heat ghee over
medium-high heat. Add the chicken to the skillet and cook for 4 to 5 minutes per side or until chicken is cooked through. Remove from heat.

In a blender or food processor, combine kefir, juice, zest, and cilantro. Blend until fully combined, and season lightly with salt.

Serve chicken on a bed of cauliflower rice with coconut sauce on top. Garnish with chopped cilantro and chopped cashews, and include a serving of pickled ginger on the side.
GARLIC LIME MEATBALLS
WITH KIMCHI FRIED CAULI-RICE

SERVES 2

MEATBALLS
10 ounces ground beef
3 cloves garlic, minced
Juice and zest of 1 lime
½ cup almond flour
2 tablespoons olive oil
¼ cup finely chopped cilantro
½ small onion, finely diced
1 teaspoon sea salt
½ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper

KIMCHI FRIED CAULI-RICE
1 tablespoon olive oil
2 cloves garlic, minced
½ small onion, sliced
1 cup chopped kimchi
1 tablespoon grated fresh ginger
2 tablespoons coconut aminos
2 heads baby bok choy, leaves separated
3 cups cauliflower rice (see box on page 204)
Sea salt
Freshly ground black pepper
2 green onions, sliced
2 tablespoons toasted nuts

Preheat oven to 400 degrees.
In a large bowl, combine all ingredients for meatballs. Using your hands, make 2- to 3-inch meatballs and arrange them on a parchment-lined baking sheet.
Bake meatballs for 20 to 25 minutes, turning them about every 5 to 6 minutes.

While meatballs cook, prepare the fried rice. Heat oil in a large wok or skillet over medium-high heat. Add garlic and onion and cook for about 1 minute. Add kimchi and cook for another 2 minutes. Stir in ginger, coconut aminos, and bok choy and cook for about 2 minutes. Add cauliflower, season with salt and pepper, and cook for 3 to 4 minutes, or until cauliflower is tender. Garnish with green onions.

Serve fried cauliflower rice with meatballs and a serving of toasted nuts.
NOT YOUR MAMA’S CABBAGE SOUP

SERVES 2

5 to 6 cups bone broth
3 cloves garlic, minced
1 small jalapeño, seeded and minced
2 tablespoons grated fresh ginger
1 leek, white and pale green parts only, chopped
2 stalks celery, chopped
¼ cup lemon juice
2½ cups chopped cabbage
1 cup cauliflower florets
10 ounces skinless, boneless chicken breast, cubed
1½ teaspoons sea salt
1 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
2 cups chopped bok choy
3 cups spinach, kale, or other dark leafy greens
½ cup chopped parsley
2 cups broccoli spiralized into “noodles” or sliced and boiled until tender

Combine broth, garlic, jalapeño, ginger, leek, celery, lemon juice, cabbage, cauliflower, chicken, salt, and pepper in a large slow cooker. Cover and cook on high for 2½ hours.

Add bok choy and spinach, cover, and cook for another 30 minutes. Stir in parsley and adjust seasoning.

Serve soup in a bowl over 1 cup prepared broccoli “noodles.” On the side, include a serving of nuts and pickled ginger if desired.