



Twists and Turns of Fad Diets

1960

Robert Cameron introduces the Drinking Man's Diet, which claims people can lose weight by eating steak and drinking red wine. Cameron subsequently undergoes coronary bypass surgery.

1967

Dr. Irwin Stillman publishes the *Quick Weight Loss Diet*, describing how he overcame middle-age obesity and a heart attack by cutting carbohydrates and consuming large quantities of water.

1972

Dr. Atkins' Diet Revolution, a high-protein, low-carbohydrate diet, promotes ketosis, in which a semi-starving body burns fat for fuel. Atkins is called to testify before the Senate Select Committee on Nutrition and Human Needs in 1973 because of charges against the diet from the American Medical Association.

1973

At age 25, Richard Simmons begins his career as fitness guru, video master and author by opening a Beverly Hills restaurant and exercise studio.

1978

The Complete Scarsdale Medical Diet, by Dr. Herman Tarnower, is the latest of the popular high-protein, low-carbohydrate diets.

1979

The restrictive Pritikin Program recommends a high-fiber diet with less than 10 percent of calories from fat, no added salt or sugar and regular aerobic exercise.

1980

Diarrhea is a common side effect of the six-week Beverly Hills Diet, which starts dieters off with 10 days of nothing but fruit and water.

1988

The liquid diet Optifast, made famous by Oprah Winfrey's 67-pound weight loss, becomes infamous when Winfrey gains all the weight back and then some.

1991

Robert Pritikin, following in his father Nathan's footsteps, publishes *The Pritikin Weight Loss Breakthrough* as part of the new Pritikin Program.

1996

Fen-Phen (fenfluramine and phentermine) is the diet pill of choice with an estimated 6 million Americans taking the appetite suppressant. Fen-Phen is pulled from the shelves in September 1997 because 25 percent to 30 percent of the people who took fenfluramine experienced some heart valve damage.

1995

High-protein diets make a comeback. In *Enter the Zone*, Barry Sears recommends eating lots of protein, fruits and vegetables, while greatly reducing carbohydrates, such as pastas, breads, rice and potatoes. The book sells approximately 400,000 copies.

1996

Protein Power, by Michael and Mary Eades, claims the amount of carbohydrates required by humans for health is zero. Barry Sears' follow-up to *Enter the Zone*, titled *Mastering the Zone*, spends 18 weeks on Publishers Weekly Bestseller list.

1997

Dr. Bob Arnot's *Revolutionary Weight Control Program* hits the stands, calling refined carbohydrates the dietary equivalent of "crack" because "you need them all day in order to feel good."

1998

SugarBusters!, by H. Leighton Steward, Morrison C. Berthea, Sam S. Andrews and Luis A. Balart, claims all sugar is toxic and that potatoes, corn, white rice, white bread, sodas and beer must be completely eliminated from the diet. *SugarBusters!* spends 25 weeks on the New York Times bestseller list.

Dr. Atkins *New Diet Revolution* is a slightly modified version of his 1972 book, referring to insulin as the "fat-producing hormone." Atkins' recipes call for heavy cream, butter and cheese and recommend bacon and eggs for breakfast everyday.

Eat for Your Type, by Dr. Peter D'Adamo, argues that blood type is an evolutionary marker of which foods each person will process well and which will be useless calories.

1999

Raw food diets claim that cooked foods lose the natural vitamins, nutrients, and enzymes necessary to build a strong immune system.

2001

The 'New' Atkins Diet is the same low carb – high protein plan with a more liberal maintenance plan.

South Beach Diet is just a new twist to low carb – high protein plans. The emphasis this time around is on 'good' carbs and 'good' fats and avoiding 'bad' carbs and 'bad' fats.

Dr. Phil's ultimate weight solution emerged as well. It divides foods into categories that elicit high or low response and focuses on cognitive restructuring.

Sources: "Never Satisfied," by Hillel Schwartz (Free Press, 1986);
"The Diet of the Century," Ladies Home Journal, April 1998