



LET'S GO
low carb

Your Atkins food guide
for all phases



Welcome to low carb living

Welcome to Atkins and congratulations for making the first step on your low carb journey.

By making a few simple changes, and switching bad carbs for good ones, Atkins can help you can lose weight in a safe, healthy way – and keep it off for good. The power really is in your hands.

Nutritious meals that keep you satisfied

Unlike other diets that might leave you feeling hungry, with Atkins you can enjoy filling, nutritious meals right from the very beginning. The Atkins low carb diet isn't about going without, it's about making healthier choices that deliver effective weight loss results.

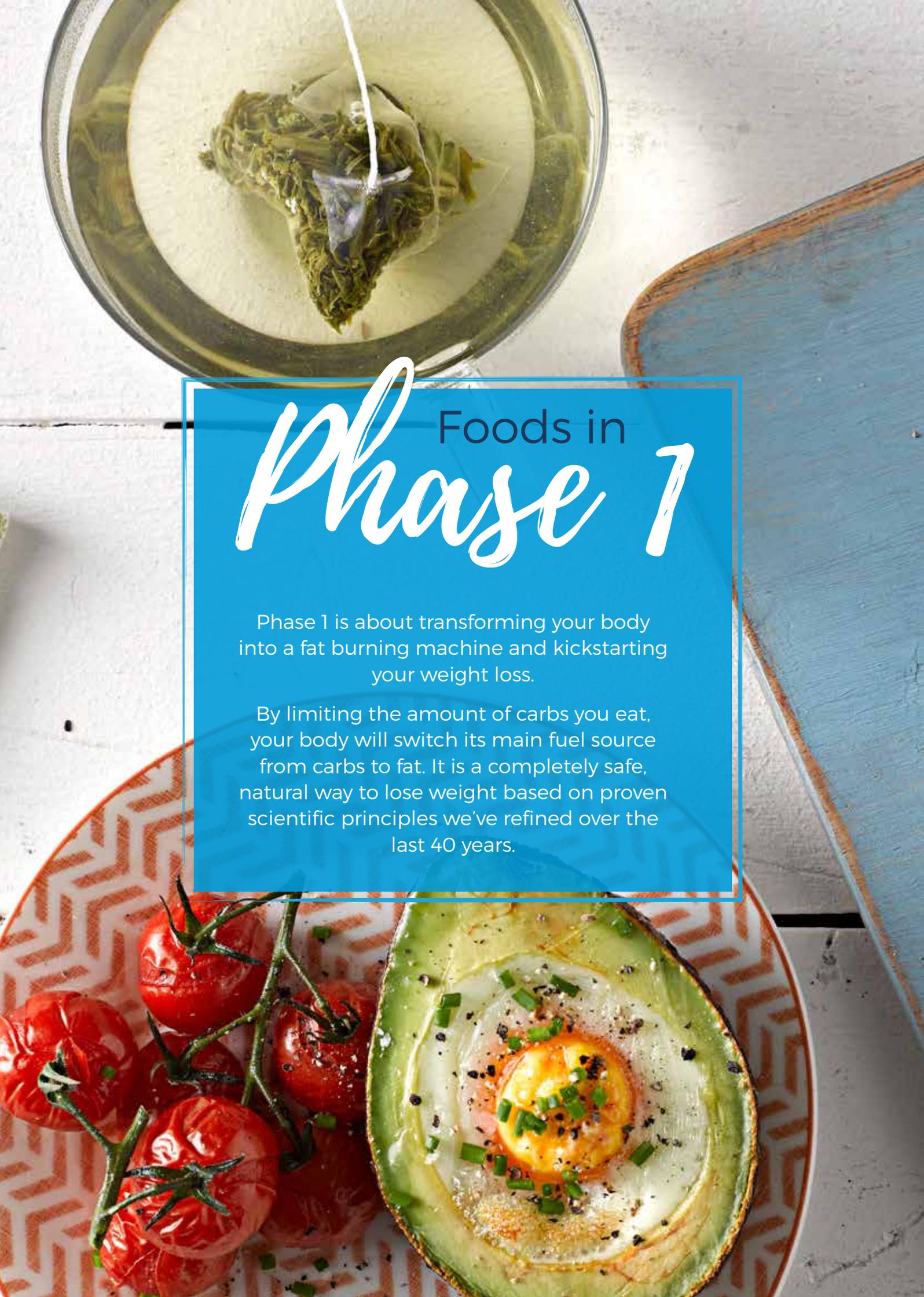
This guide will take you through the list of low carb foods you can enjoy as you progress through the different diet phases.

4 easy-to-follow phases

Our diet plan is broken down into 4 separate phases that take you from 'induction' right through to a 'maintenance' phase for when you've hit your goal weight. It's an approach that's based on proven scientific research that we've refined over the last 40 years.

- 4 phases to help you lose weight and keep it off
- Helps you find your carb tolerance level so you can maintain a happy weight long-term
- A varied, balanced low carb diet that keeps you feeling full
- Eliminates sugar cravings
- Boosts energy levels
- Support and inspiration throughout all stages



A top-down view of a glass of green tea with a tea bag and a plate of avocado with a fried egg and tomatoes. The glass is in the upper left, and the plate is in the lower right. The background is a light-colored surface with a blue wooden tray on the right.

Foods in *Phase 1*

Phase 1 is about transforming your body into a fat burning machine and kickstarting your weight loss.

By limiting the amount of carbs you eat, your body will switch its main fuel source from carbs to fat. It is a completely safe, natural way to lose weight based on proven scientific principles we've refined over the last 40 years.

Here's an overview of the low carb foods you can enjoy in Phase 1, along with a few to avoid:

Protein

Aim for **115-175g** (in weight) per meal, or **225g** if you're a larger man

We recommend you weigh your food in the first week so you get a feel for the size of your portions. From then on, it's ok to estimate.

If you don't have scales at home, here is a rough guide of portion sizes:

115g is **1** palm-sized fillet of fish, meat or tofu.

175g is a **1.5** palm-sized portion

225g is a **2** palm-sized portion

Fish, meat & poultry

ENJOY: Leave the rind and skin on your meat and poultry, it's a good source of dietary fat. If it's not to your taste, add a splash of olive oil or pat of butter to your vegetables instead.

AVOID: It's important to watch out for the carbs that can be found in some types of processed meats. Generally, you should avoid products that are bread crumbed, battered or flour coated. Also watch out for products that contain fillers or added sugars, for example hot dogs, sausages and deli meats, particularly breaded hams. You can still eat these products, but you do need to check their labels for carbs and make sure that you could these into your daily allowance. Limit oysters and mussels to no more than 115g as they do also contain carbs.

Acceptable low carb fish, meat & poultry:

Fish

- Cod
- Halibut
- Herring
- Salmon
- Sardines
- Sole
- Trout
- Tuna

Meat

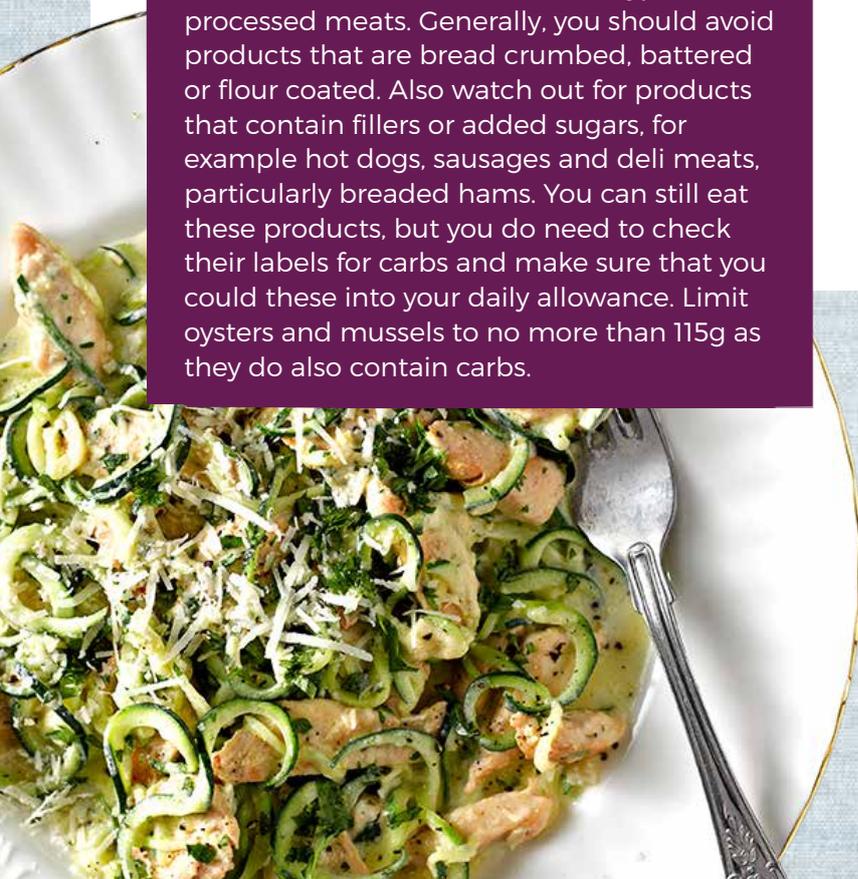
- Bacon
- Beef
- Ham
- Lamb
- Pork
- Veal
- Venison

Poultry

- Chicken
- Cornish Hen
- Duck
- Goose
- Pheasant
- Quail
- Turkey

Shellfish

- Clams
- Crab
- Lobster
- Mussels
- Oysters
- Shrimp/Prawns
- Squid



Eggs

You can enjoy up to 3 eggs per day on a low carb diet.

ENJOY: Eggs can be prepared anyway you like so get creative – fry, scramble, poach, or pop them in an omelette.

Cheese

115g (4 oz) a day – The equivalent of four individually wrapped slices or cubes the size of large dice.

ENJOY: Most cheeses contain less than 1g of carbs and are fine in this phase, with the exception of cottage cheese and ricotta, which you'll be able to add in Phase 2. Make sure you always select whole-milk products.

AVOID: Avoid low-fat cheeses, 'diet' cheese, 'cheese products', whey cheese or any cheese flavoured with fruit.

Here's a list of common low carb cheeses. Check the Atkins Carb Counter for a more extensive list:

- Blue cheese
- Brie
- Cheddar
- Cream cheese
- Emmental
- Feta
- Goat's cheese
- Gouda
- Mozzarella, made with whole-milk
- Parmesan
- Romano

Dietary fat

A healthy low carb diet includes a daily amount of dietary fat. Good sources of fat include:

1 tbsp of:

- Butter, hard or whipped
- Oils including extra virgin/virgin olive oil, flaxseed oil, grapeseed oil, sesame oil etc.
- Coconut oil
- Full fat mayonnaise

Other fat sources:

- ½ avocado
- Black or green olives
- Fattier cuts of fish such as salmon/mackerel; or fattier cuts of meat such as lamb or chicken thighs
- 30ml cream
- 40g cheese
- Eggs

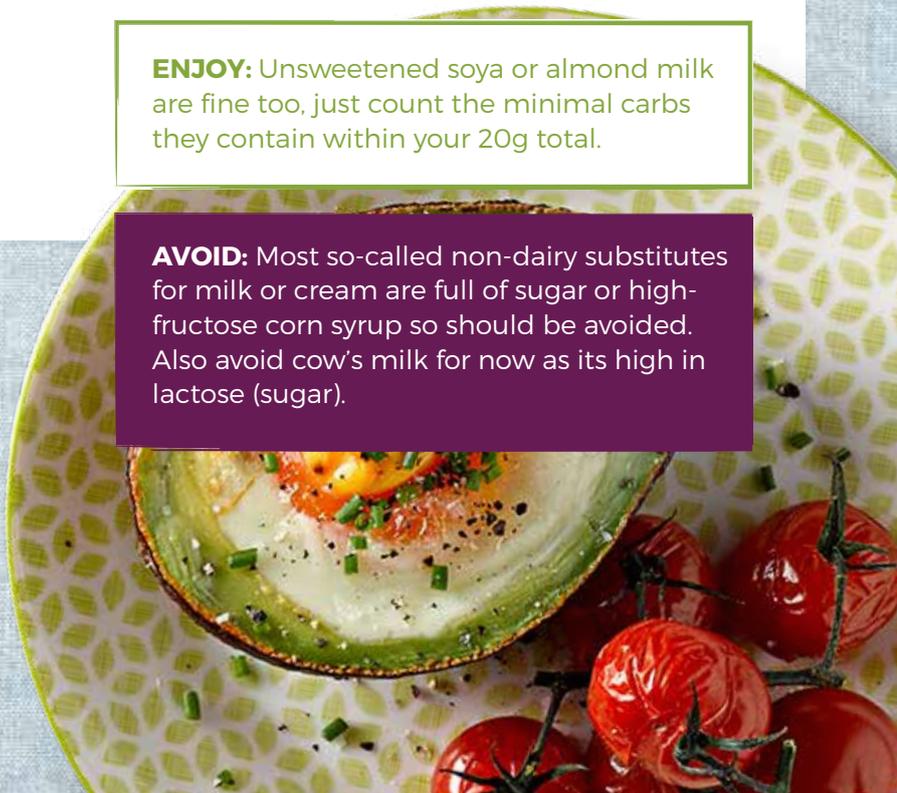
Additional Dairy Products and Dairy Substitutes

45ml (1½ oz) daily or a total of 2-3 tablespoons

- Sour cream
- Single or double cream

ENJOY: Unsweetened soya or almond milk are fine too, just count the minimal carbs they contain within your 20g total.

AVOID: Most so-called non-dairy substitutes for milk or cream are full of sugar or high-fructose corn syrup so should be avoided. Also avoid cow's milk for now as its high in lactose (sugar).



Carbs - Vegetables and salad

On the Atkins diet you have a **20g carb** daily allowance but **12g-15g** of this should be from vegetables.

Your 12-15g of carbs works out at about 175 g (6 oz) of salad leaves plus 200-300 g (7-11 oz) cooked vegetables.

ENJOY: There are lots vegetables to choose from in Phase 1, including salad leaves and other salad ingredients as well as cooked vegetables. If you stick to foundation veg, you can more or less eat as many vegetables as you like as it's very difficult to go over your carb allowance.

AVOID: Even though you might be tempted, avoid any salad dressings apart from full fat mayonnaise or olive oil as they are often high in carbs.

Acceptable low carb vegetables and salads:

Salad leaves

About 30 g (1 oz) or a big handful of each of raw salad leaves comes in at less than 1g of carbs:

- Bok Choy
- Chives
- Cabbage
- Endive
- Lettuce, all types
- Rocket
- Spinach
- Sprouts, all kinds
- Watercress

Other Salad Vegetables

A good way to ensure you stay within your low carb limits is to use our Carb Counter. It gives you everything you need to know about serving sizes and carb counts.

- Avocados
- Bamboo shoots, tinned
- Celery
- Cucumber
- Mushrooms
- Olives, black or green
- Onions
- Gherkins, dill or sour
- Radishes, Daikon
- Spring onions
- Sweet peppers, any colour
- Tomatoes

Vegetables

- Asparagus
- Aubergine
- Beans, French, broad, green
- Broccoli
- Cauliflower
- Swiss Chard
- Courgette
- Kale
- Mushrooms
- Okra
- Sauerkraut
- Spinach
- Squash
- Turnips



Beverages

ENJOY: It's important to stay well hydrated on a low carb diet and the best way to do this is to drink water. Water can be bottled, filtered, mineral, spring, sparkling or from the tap. Jazz up your H2O with a couple of tablespoons of lemon and/or lime juice if you wish.

AVOID: You may be surprised to know but most vitamin waters are full of added sugar. Make sure you check the labels and only the pick the brands with acceptable sweeteners and zero grams of carbs.

Acceptable low carb beverages:

- Coffee (caffeinated or decaffeinated, hot or iced) and espresso
- Tea (caffeinated or decaffeinated)
- Herbal teas and infusions without added sugar
- Soda water
- Diet fizzy drinks sweetened with non-caloric sweeteners, such as Diet Coke, Pepsi Max and Diet Lemonade
- Sugar-free tonic water
- Carbonated water - must say 'no calories'
- Unflavoured soy/almond milk
- Cream - single or double



Condiments and Seasonings

ENJOY: All fresh herbs are acceptable in Phase 1 and contain virtually no carbs. Small amounts of dried herbs, including basil, bay leaves, chives, coriander, cumin, oregano, rosemary, thyme, and others, plus salt and pepper are fine as are most spices and spice mixes such as chilli powder and curry powder.

AVOID: Lots of spice mixes contain added sugar, so make sure you check the labels.

Acceptable low carb foods:

- Celery salt
- Chilli peppers
- Garlic
- Ginger root
- Italian seasoning
- Lemon or orange peel, grated

Salad Dressings

ENJOY: You can enjoy any prepared salad dressing that has no added sugar and no more than 3g of carbs per serving (1-2 tablespoons). A better lower-carb option is to make your own vinaigrette with olive oil plus either vinegar, lemon or lime juice.

- Blue cheese dressing
- Caesar salad dressing
- Italian dressing
- Ranch dressing
- Vinaigrette

You can also have up to 2 tablespoons of lemon or lime juice a day.

Non-caloric Sweeteners

ENJOY: You can add sweeteners to your low-carb recipes to make some truly indulgent low carb treats. Count each packet as 1g of carbs, and consume no more than three per day. Although the sweeteners themselves contain no carbs, the powdered agent that keeps them from clumping has a small amount.

AVOID: Too much sweetener can cause tummy upsets so make sure you keep within our recommended daily intakes. If you're sensitive to sweeteners they can slow your weight loss down. If this happens, try cutting down or cutting out sweeteners.

Acceptable low carb sweeteners:

- Splenda or Sweetex (sucralose)
- Truvia (a natural product made from stevia)
- Canderel (a blend of aspartame, acesulfame-k, sucralose and stevia)
- Sweet'n Low (saccharin)
- Xylitol (available in health food shops and some supermarkets)



Which Carbs Are Off-Limits for Now?

There are some carbs that you should avoid during the Phase 1:

- Fruit (other than rhubarb, which is really a vegetable). Avocados, olives, and tomatoes – all of which are actually fruit – are fine
- Fruit juice (other than 2 tablespoons lemon and/or lime juice a day)
- Caloric fizzy drinks/juice
- Bread, pasta, muffins, tortillas, crisps and any other food made with flour or other grain products, with the exception of low-carb products with 3g of net carbs or less
- Any foods made with added sugar of any sort, including but not limited to pastries, biscuits, cakes, and sweets
- Alcohol in any form
- Nuts and seeds, nut and seed butters, and nut flours or meals, with the exception of flax meal and coconut flour. (Nuts and seeds are okay after two weeks on Phase 1)
- Grains, even wholegrains
- Kidney beans, chickpeas, lentils, and other pulses
- Starchy vegetables such as carrots, potatoes, sweet potatoes, and winter squash. Check the Atkins Carb Counter if you're unsure
- Dairy products other than cream, soured cream, single cream and aged cheeses. No cow's or goat's milk, yoghurt, cottage cheese, or ricotta for now
- 'Low-fat' foods, which are usually higher in carbs
- 'Diet' products, unless they specifically state 'low carbohydrate' and have no more than 3g of Net Carbs per serving
- 'Junk food' in any form
- Products such as chewing gum, breath mints, cough syrups and drops, or liquid vitamins, unless they're sweetened with sorbitol or xylitol. You can have up to three a day of those. Count 1g per piece
- Sauces which contain added carbs such as BBQ, cocktail, ketchup, pasta sauces etc.
- Tomato sauce, tinned or stewed tomatoes, tomato purée and tomato paste are all acceptable in Phase 1, as long as they contain no added sugar



Foods in Phase 2

In Phase 2, you will increase your carb intake by 5g increments to find your carb tolerance. You can now add nuts, seeds, berries and certain cheeses to your menu, as well as Atkins food products.

By increasing your carbs gradually, you'll find out exactly how many carbs you can eat while still working towards your goal weight. It'll form the foundation of your low carb lifestyle in the long term.

Remember, weight loss in this phase usually happens at a steadier pace than in Phase 1. Be patient, if you stick to a few rules, you will get to your goal.

Here's an overview of the low carb foods you can enjoy in Phase 2, along with a few to avoid.

Nuts and Seeds

ENJOY: Peanuts, cashews and soy 'nuts' are not true nuts, but can be reintroduced in Phase 2.

AVOID: Chestnuts are very high in carbs and should be avoided, as should salted nuts, because they are difficult to eat in moderation. Nut spread products like Nutella contain added sugars, so avoid them too.



Acceptable low carb nuts and seeds:

- Almonds
- Brazil nuts
- Cashews
- Coconut (fresh or grated and unsweetened)
- Macadamias
- Hazelnuts
- Peanuts
- Pecans
- Pine nuts
- Pistachios
- Pumpkin seeds
- Sesame seeds
- Soy "nuts"
- Sunflower seeds
- Walnuts



Berries, Cherries, and Most Melons

The fruits suitable for Phase 2 are lower in carbs than most other fruits. This is because their fibre content is relatively high and fruit sugar content is relatively low.

ENJOY: Always have berries or other Phase 2 fruits with cheese, cream, Greek yoghurt (acceptable in this phase), or nuts to reduce the impact on your blood sugar. You can also use them to garnish a salad, the oil in the dressing does the same job. Melon with prosciutto is a classic fruit-and-protein combo.

AVOID: If you're using frozen fruit, make sure it's not sweetened. Similarly, tinned fruit is fine in water or juice but avoid syrup.

Acceptable low carb fruits for Phase 2:

- Blackberries, blueberries, boysenberries, fresh currants, gooseberries, loganberries, raspberries, and strawberries
- Cherries, sour or sweet
- Unsweetened cranberries and cranberry sauce made with acceptable sweeteners only
- Melon: cantaloupe and honeydew (but not watermelon)

More Dairy Options

ENJOY: You can enjoy a wider range of dairy products in Phase 2. Make sure you go for whole-milk or full-fat varieties, including yoghurt.

AVOID: Remember, low-fat dairy products are higher in carbs so should be avoided.

- Cottage cheese (not low-fat)
- Ricotta cheese, made with whole milk
- Yoghurt or Greek yoghurt, natural whole milk, unsweetened
- Whole milk, fresh (limit to 4 tablespoons) or evaporated (limit to 2 tablespoons).

Pulses

If you want the extra variety in your diet, you can now add pulses. Alternatively, you may choose to wait till Phase 3 if that suits you better.

ENJOY: Pulses are a great filling addition to salads or as a substitute for rice. You can enjoy the dried, tinned or pulses that are sold fresh or frozen like green soybeans (edamame) and baby lima beans.

AVOID: Products such as baked beans are made with added sugar so you should avoid them. Hummus is fine, but watch out for bean dips made with sugar or starches.

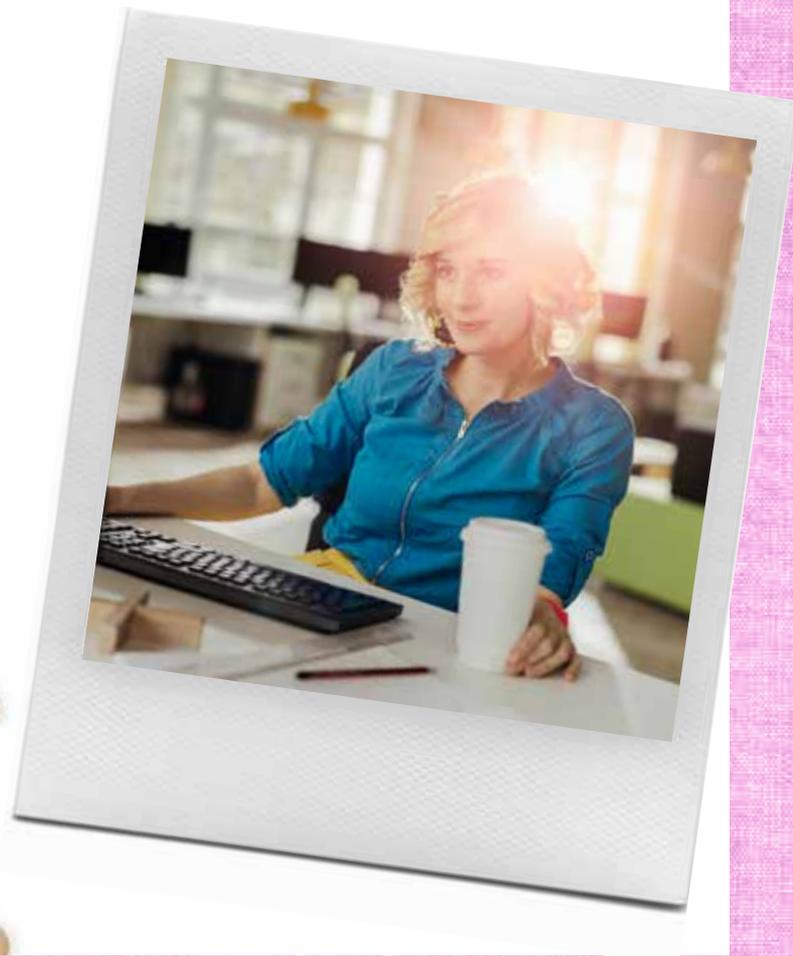
Acceptable low carb pulses:

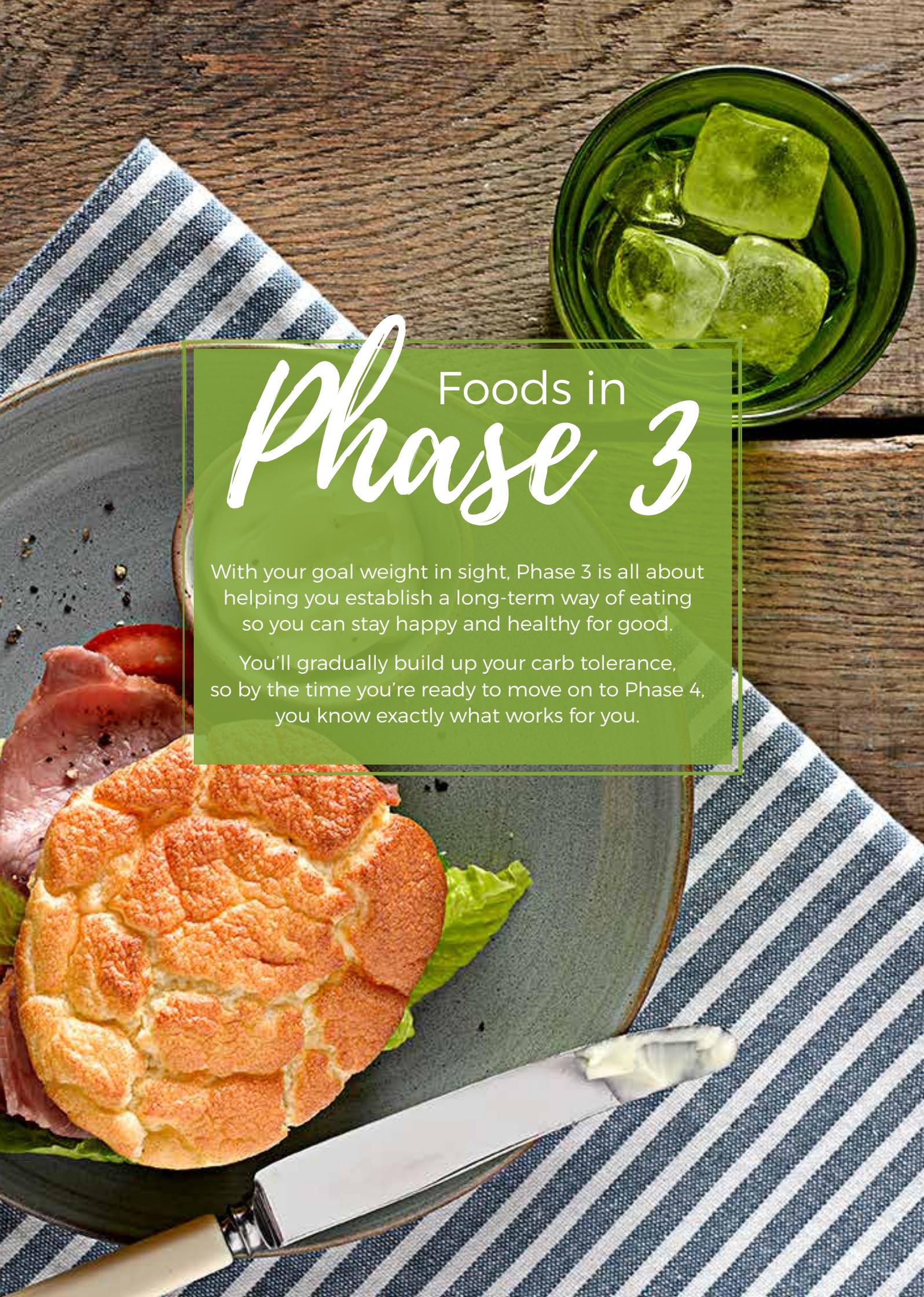
- Black beans
- Black-eyed peas
- Broad beans
- Butter beans
- Chickpeas
- Edamame
- Haricot or navy beans
- Hummus
- Kidney beans
- Peas, split
- Pinto beans
- Soybeans

Tomato and lemon/lime juice

In Phase 1 you could have 2 tablespoons lemon or lime juice; now you can have:

- 50 ml (2 fl oz) lemon or lime juice
- 125 ml (4 fl oz) tomato juice or tomato juice cocktail





Foods in *Phase 3*

With your goal weight in sight, Phase 3 is all about helping you establish a long-term way of eating so you can stay happy and healthy for good.

You'll gradually build up your carb tolerance, so by the time you're ready to move on to Phase 4, you know exactly what works for you.

Here's an overview of the additional low carb foods you can enjoy in Phase 3:

Other Fruits

Before adding extra fruit into your low carb diet, add pulses if you haven't already. However, if you're not a big fan of lentils and other beans, simply skip them.

ENJOY: As with the berries, cherries, and melon that you added in Phase 2, introduce these higher-carb fruits in small quantities, starting with one at a time and only once a day. Tropical fruits such as banana, mango, and pineapple are considerably higher in carbs than other fruits, so wait till you've seen how you tolerate other fruits before trying them. As long as it's made without added sugar, you can enjoy a small portion of jelly, jam, preserves, and fruit preserves made from Phase 3 fruits.

AVOID: Always try to have fresh or frozen fruit wherever possible, but make sure the frozen varieties have no added sugar. Tinned fruit in water or juice is fine, but avoid syrup.

Acceptable Phase 3 fruits:

- Apples
- Apricots
- Grapes
- Grapefruit
- Kiwi fruit
- Oranges
- Papayas
- Peaches or nectarines
- Pears
- Plums
- Pomegranates
- Watermelon

Starchy Vegetables

You've been eating plenty of foundation vegetables in the first two phases of the New Atkins Diet. After reintroducing other fruits, it's time to try to reintroduce the rest of the vegetable family. Like foundation vegetables, these vegetables are high in fibre and antioxidants; however, they're higher in carbs.

Acceptable Phase 3 vegetables:

- Beetroot
- Carrots
- Corn on (or off) the cob
- Jerusalem artichokes
- Peas
- Parsnips
- Potatoes, sweet and white
- Turnips
- Winter squash
- Yams



Whole Grains

Right at the top rung of the carb ladder are grains, which is why they are the last wholefood group to be reintroduced. Not everyone can tolerate grains and the products made with them, so go slowly and find out what works for you.

ENJOY: Products made with wholegrains are acceptable, but remember that the carb counts may vary greatly from one product to another. If in doubt, check the Atkins Carb Counter.

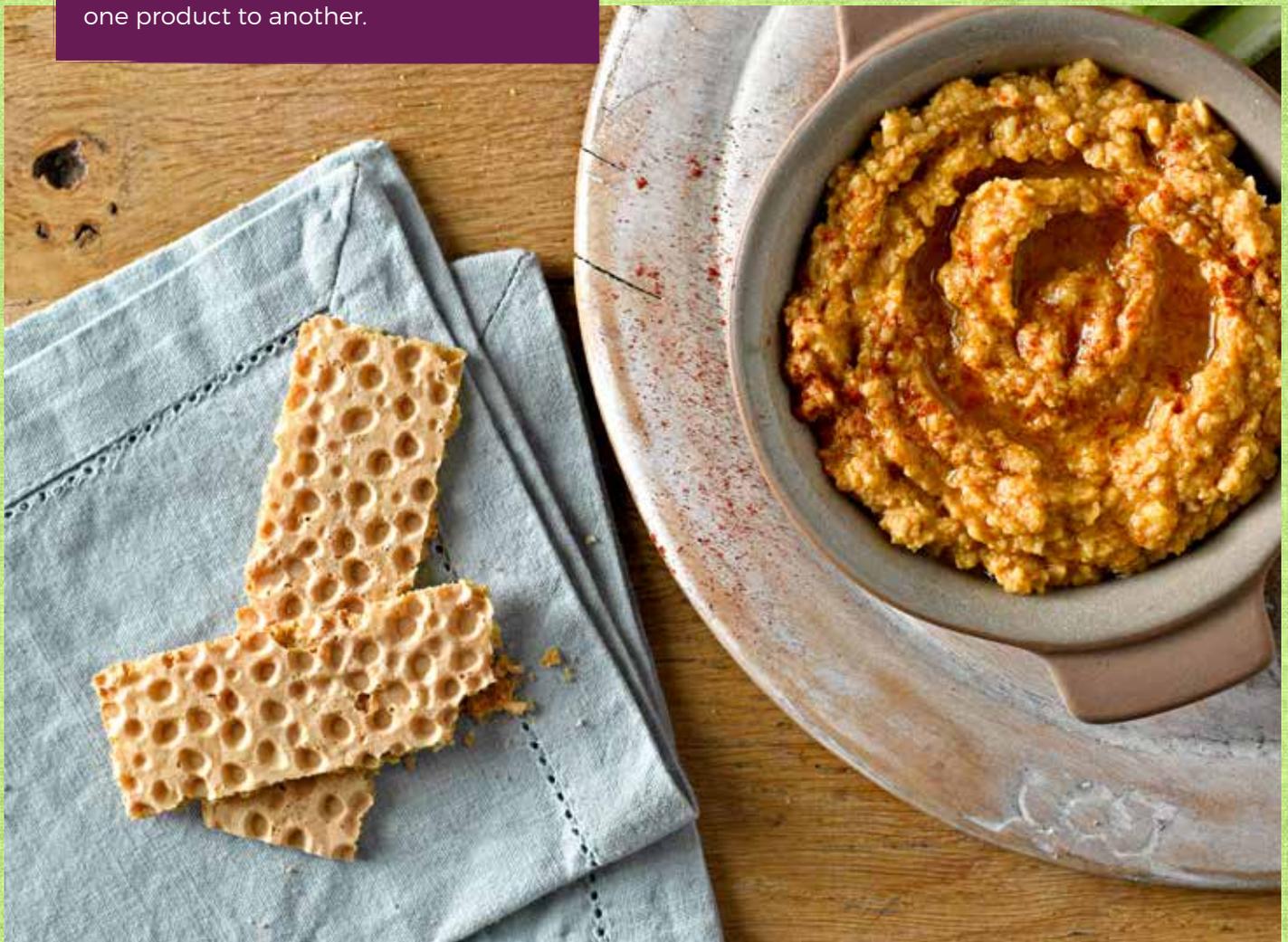
AVOID: Make sure you don't confuse refined grains such as white flour and white rice with wholegrains. Baked goods, including bread, pitta, tortillas, biscuits, and cereals made with refined grains are still a no-no, with the exception of low carb products. Products made with wholegrains are acceptable, but the carb count may vary greatly from one product to another.

Acceptable whole grains for Phase 3:

- Barley
- Cornmeal
- Couscous, whole-wheat
- Kasha (buckwheat groats)
- Wholemeal flour, wheat berries, bulgur, and cracked wheat
- Millet
- Oat bran and porridge oats (not instant)
- Quinoa
- Rice, brown, red, or wild

Milk

In Phase 3 you can also increase your daily intake of whole milk to 125 ml (4 fl oz), but continue to steer clear of low-fat milk and other low-fat dairy products. You also can experiment with low-carb products that have up to 9g of Net Carbs per serving.



The background of the page features a top-down view of a white ceramic plate with a blue floral pattern. On the plate are several strawberries, some of which are dipped in chocolate. A silver serving utensil with a perforated handle is visible on the right side. In the bottom right corner, there is a small bowl containing several pieces of chocolate, including a Hershey's Kiss and a Hershey's Kiss Supreme.

Foods in Phase 4

Phase 4 is all about helping you enjoy your healthier, low carb life in the future – and keeping you at the weight you're happy with. You can enjoy all the foods that are acceptable in all of the previous phases.

You know the ins and outs of low carb living off by heart by now, so you won't be surprised to hear that the work doesn't stop just because you've hit your goal. If you keep the carb balance that you've refined over the last weeks and months, there's nothing to stop you staying at your goal weight indefinitely.

If you do have a period where things slip and you gain weight or your cravings come back, don't panic. You can get back your 'Atkins edge' by simply dropping your carb intake by 10 to 20g to regain control.

Fancy trying something new?

We have lots of tasty low carb recipes waiting for you at [atkins.com](https://www.atkins.com)