Banting Basics

Thank you for downloading our Banting Basics article. The information contained in this document will provide you with a broad overview of what Banting involves. We hope it will also answer some questions you might have about this wonderfully liberating way of eating and approach to weight loss.

Why do we get fat in the first place?
In one word, “Insulin”. Carbohydrates that you eat like fruit, bread, pasta, rice, potato, cereals, sugar etc., all get converted to glucose in your blood stream. Your pancreas then releases insulin to shuttle the glucose out of your blood stream and into your cells where it can be used for energy. Excess glucose is then stored as fat. So the more carbs you eat, the more insulin you will produce and the more weight you will gain. Insulin is a fat storage hormone and you therefore want to have as little of it in your blood stream as possible. The good news is that by following a low carb diet, you can effectively regulate your blood sugar and therefore your insulin.

Where does the word Banting originate?
William Banting was a London undertaker who was going deaf. He consulted an ENT, Dr Harvey to help him regain his hearing. Banting also wanted to lose weight as he was struggling to walk down stairs and to tie his own shoelaces. Harvey had attended a series of lectures in Paris, given by Claude Bernard, which persuaded him that reducing carbohydrates and sugar would benefit obese and diabetic patients. Harvey helped Banting to lose all his extra weight by following these principles. This excited Banting so much that he decided in 1863 to publish his first Letter on Corpulence which explained how he lost weight and gave guidelines of which foods to include and which to exclude. Hence why the diet became known as the Banting diet.

What does the eating plan entail?
Banting involves eating REAL food, as close to its natural state as possible and the best quality you can comfortably afford.
You will need to:
• Cut out all sugar and artificial sweeteners
• Eliminate grains such as bread, pasta, rice and cereals
• Avoid toxic seed oils such as sunflower and canola oils
• Stop eating processed and fast food
• Eat a good amount of healthy fats such as butter, cream, lard, olive oil, coconut oil, fat on meat, nuts and avocado
• Eat a moderate amount of quality protein (preferably free-range and grass-fed) such as eggs, fish, fowl, pork, beef and lamb
• Eat a variety of nutritious low carb vegetables such as spinach, courgette, broccoli, cauliflower, eggplant, cabbage, fennel, green beans, gem squash etc.
What are the benefits of Banting?
The most obvious benefit is weight loss. The other benefits that one could experience are:

- Reduced belly fat
- You lose fat, not muscle
- It is easy to stick to
- Increased energy levels
- Better skin and teeth
- Improved focus and concentration
- Stable blood sugar and therefore fewer mood swings
- Reduced risk for disease such as diabetes, heart disease and Alzheimer’s
- Stronger immune system
- No need to snack since hunger and cravings are reduced
- Reduction or elimination of allergies
- Helps autoimmune diseases such as arthritis, Hashimoto’s and Crohn’s
- No more bloating and puffiness
- Better and more restful sleep
- Lowered triglycerides
- Increased HDL “good” cholesterol

Are carbs bad for everyone?
No, carbs are not bad for everyone. Some people metabolise carbs very well and can afford to eat them without gaining weight. If you are overweight it is very likely that you are carbohydrate intolerant and would therefore benefit by reducing your carbohydrate intake to a level that allows you to return to a healthy weight for your frame. If you are insulin resistant or diabetic, then you need to eat low carb to control your blood sugar. The Banting diet recommends getting your carbs from vegetables, berries and dairy products.

However, EVERYONE can benefit from avoiding carbs from grains such as bread, rice, corn, cereals, pasta and baked goods. Gluten (a protein found in most grains) is inflammatory and dramatically affects your blood sugar balance. Wheat also contains an appetite stimulant, resulting in you eating more than you need – making it very difficult to control your weight. Grains also contain phytic acid, which prevents the body absorbing calcium, magnesium, iron, copper and zinc. This can put you at risk for bone-related disease such as osteoporosis.

When I start Banting, will I feel fantastic straight away?
Not necessarily. Some people experience what is known as the low carb flu. Symptoms include headaches, nausea, upset stomach, brain fog, fatigue, irritability, thirst and chills. The “flu” can last anywhere between 2 days and a few weeks. Each person is different, although most feel better within a week. Your body has been used to burning
glucose for energy from all the carbs you have been eating. Now your body has to learn to burn fat for fuel instead. This transition phase, as your body tried to adapt itself, is what causes the above symptoms.

**Won’t all the cholesterol I am eating clog my arteries?**
No it won’t. We have been lied to and science does not support this hypothesis any more. Cholesterol is a very powerful antioxidant that your body needs to stay healthy. The real culprit behind clogged arteries is chronic inflammation in your blood vessels, which is a direct result of a low-fat, high-carb diet as well as eating too many Omega 6 fatty acids in toxic seed oils and trans-fats.

**Is it an expensive way of eating?**
It can be, but doesn’t have to be. Many people are finding that their grocery bills have decreased due to the fact that they are no longer buying fruit, pre-packaged convenience meals, fast food and treats. They are also eating less. If you choose to bake your own Banting treats with ingredients such as nut flours, xylitol and coconut flour then you might find that it gets expensive. These treats are not necessary and one can Bant very effectively without them.

**Will I always have to eat this way?**
This is not a ‘quick fix’ diet, which allows you to go back to your old eating patterns and behaviours once you have lost the weight. If you want to keep the weight off, then yes, you will need to eat this way for the rest of your life. Once you have lost your excess weight you will be able to experiment with increasing your carbs a little bit at a time to see what your body can tolerate without putting weight back on or getting your old sugar cravings back.

**What would a typical day’s eating plan look like?**

- **Breakfast** – 2 Eggs fried in butter and some wilted spinach
- **Lunch** – Tuna and avocado on salad greens with homemade mayo
- **Dinner** – Roast chicken (skin on), green beans drizzled with olive oil and red peppers roasted in coconut oil

Or

- **Breakfast** – Bullet coffee (coffee with butter and coconut oil)
- **Lunch** – 2 slices of Banting seed bread with butter, cheese, tomato
- **Dinner** – Lamb kebabs topped with creamy tzatziki, mixed salad drizzled with olive and cauliflower rice fried in butter and garlic

Snacks could consist of a small handful of nuts or berries.
Can I still eat out?
Eating out when Banting is actually very easy. Most restaurants are happy for you to swap the starches like chips, rice or potato for vegetables or a salad. Some progressive restaurants are even offering pizzas with cauliflower bases. Be wary of breaded items, BBQ sauce, which is high in sugar and foods deep-fried in vegetable oil. Where possible request food items to be grilled or fried in butter or coconut oil. Don’t let your waiter even put the breadbasket on your table, especially if you are very hungry. Stick with coffee and pouring cream or strawberries and whipped cream as a way to finish up your meal.

Won’t all the saturated fat put me at risk for heart disease?
The science proves that saturated fat does not cause heart disease. It was only in the last few decades that fat was demonised and that hypothesis was based on bad science and has subsequently been debunked. So eat butter – it is good for you!

What does the term ‘carbohydrate intolerant’ mean?
Most people who are overweight are carbohydrate intolerant (or resistant) to some degree or another. It means their bodies just don’t metabolise carbohydrates well, turning most of it to fat. Just like someone who is lactose intolerant should avoid dairy, those who are carb intolerant should avoid carbs. The scary thing is that you can also be slim and be carbohydrate resistant. Not all diabetics are overweight but they have developed this disease because their bodies no longer metabolise carbs properly. It is therefore important for people to check their fasting glucose and insulin levels at least once a year.

How much fat, protein and carbs should one eat?
Everyone needs to experiment for themselves to work out what ratios of these macronutrients work well for them. For protein, the general guideline is 0.8 grams per kilo of body weight. This will also differ depending on whether you are an athlete, pregnant or elderly.

Yes, you will still include carbs. It is a low-carb diet, not a no-carb diet. Again everyone needs to figure out the level of carbs their body will start burning fat. For some it might be as low as 25 grams per day while others will still lose weight consuming 100 grams per day. This will depend on how carb intolerant you are. The more intolerant, the lower your carbs will need to be. No-one should really drop below 20 grams per day, because then it means they are hardly eating any vegetables, which are full of good stuff like fibre, vitamins and minerals.
The high fat component of the diet is what helps you eat less because fat is satisfying and takes away your hunger for long periods of time. If you speak to anyone who is Banting properly they will tell you that they only eat about twice a day, with no need to snack in-between meals. It is actually a very liberating way of eating. The diet works very effectively for weight loss because it allows you to naturally and effortlessly reduce the quantity of food that you eat. Compare that to other eating plans, which advocate reducing calories and eating low fat. One might lose weight on these diets, but they are not sustainable long-term and people invariably put the weight back on. No one wants to be hungry all the time.

**Can I still drink alcohol?**
Yes, you can but it will definitely slow down your weight loss by disrupting your liver function. We suggest that you try to avoid alcohol as much as possible, especially while you are trying to lose weight. If you really want a drink, stick with dry wine (red or white), whisky, brandy and vodka. But remember: You cannot burn fat in the presence of alcohol!

**Why is fruit not encouraged on this eating plan?**
Fruit is high in carbs. It also contains fructose which gets stored as fat in the liver and causes weight gain. Most people will be fine including low sugar fruits such as berries a few times a week. There are no vitamins, minerals or fibre in fruit that cannot be obtained from vegetables.

**What can I drink?**
- Tea and coffee served black or with cream (milk contains too many carbs)
- Water (plain, sparkling or flavoured naturally with mint, ginger, lemon)

**Is Banting a ketogenic diet?**
It can be, but it doesn’t have to be. You don’t have to be in ketosis to lose weight. Some people feel fantastic when they follow a very low carb ketogenic diet (20 to 30 grams of carbs a day). Others feel better when they include a little more carbs in their diet. Ketogenic diets have several advantages over more moderate low-carb diets. In addition to faster weight loss, these include higher energy levels, the absence of hunger and minimised sugar cravings.
If you want to know whether or not you are in ketosis you will need to purchase a blood ketone meter and ketone test strips. The Freestyle Optium brand is available in South Africa. If your reading is between 0.5 and 3 mmol then you are in ketosis and can be assured that you are burning fat.
How quickly can I expect to lose weight?
Everyone is different. There are so many factors involved. Men generally seem to lose weight more easily on this diet compared to women. Medications that the person is on can also interfere with weight loss such as anti-depressants or cortisone. Many women struggle with slow weight loss due to hormonal disorders such as Polycystic Ovarian Syndrome (PCOS) and estrogen dominance. But we believe that taking all of this into consideration; Banting is still the most effective and healthy way to lose weight.

What do I need to do to achieve success with Banting?
1. Set goals for yourself and commit 100% for at least 6 weeks
2. Get organized and plan and prepare your meals
3. Always have Banting friendly food items in the cupboard such as coconut milk, tuna, pilchards, nuts and biltong
4. Preferably cut out all alcohol
5. ONLY eat when hungry and not because it is a meal time
6. Avoid too much caffeine and find ways to reduce your stress levels
7. Don’t indulge in too many Banting treats
8. Try not to snack
9. Watch out for hidden carbs in foods such as sausages
10. Believe that you CAN lose your weight and keep it off (even if other diets have failed you in the past).
11. Persevere, be prepared to experiment and NEVER give up.
12. If you feel that you cannot walk this journey alone, then contact a knowledgeable Banting Buddies coach who can help, advise and support you.

At Banting Buddies, our goal is to help people lose weight and get healthy. We believe education and support is the key to weight loss success. Banting Buddies therefore offers one-on-one, weight loss coaching programmes and support groups that empower you with the knowledge and skills to make wise food choices. Your coach will motivate, advise and encourage, while holding you accountable to your goals.

Banting doesn’t involve expensive pills, shakes or injections. No weighing food or counting points. The time has come for everyone to enjoy REAL food, feel satisfied after a meal and get their health and waistlines back.

Keep an open mind, believe that change is possible and make a promise to yourself that you are worth the effort.

“Your life does not get better by chance, it gets better by change.” - Jim Rohn