

1) What's the primary benefit of the diet? Weight loss.

Our weight loss research with nearly 1000 women, including 200 on our new 2 Day Diet, and many serial dieters, shows that this new approach really can work, even when everything else has failed.

2) How will the diet help you avoid cancer?

The diet achieves good weight loss. Research shows that losing even a small amount of excess weight (five to ten per cent of your weight and keeping it off) can help reduce your risk of diseases like type-2 diabetes, heart disease and breast and bowel cancer and potentially 11 other weight related cancers. What's more there is evidence that losing weight with the 2 Day Diet may have even greater health benefits than those gained by using a standard weight loss plan. It brings about bigger drops in the hormone insulin than standard dieting. Insulin is linked to the diseases mentioned above.

3) Is it just breast cancer or will it help to prevent other cancers e.g. bowel, ovarian, prostate etc?

See above

4) Can the diet help if you already have cancer?

The research undertaken which led to the diet was not aimed at cancer treatments and anyone who has developed cancer should not embark on any dietary regimes without medical advice or supervision.

5) How can the diet help you prevent cancer reoccurring?

One of our current trials called the B-AHEAD study is assessing whether the 2 day diet can control weight after diagnosis of breast cancer. Ultimately we hope that application of this approach may help to prevent breast cancer recurrence.

6) Effect of the 2 Day Diet on average over a three month period?

Reduction of:-

- a. Weight by 6kg (13 lbs) / max 14.5 kg (32 lbs)
- b. Body Fat by 4.6 kg (10 lbs)/ max 11 kg (24 lbs)
- c. Waist by 6 cm/ max 19 cm
- d. Insulin by 12% / max 76%
- e. Cholesterol by 6% / max 34%
- f. Blood pressure by 11% / max 40%

7) What are the health benefits of following the diet if you don't need to lose weight?

If you have a healthy weight and waist measurement, two day dieting is probably not a good idea as we don't know the impact of the diet on healthy weight individuals. However having one restricted day a week appears to help you maintain a healthy weight and prevent weight gain.

8) What does clinically proven for weight loss mean?

The 2 Day Diet is based on research undertaken by Dr Michelle Harvie and Professor Tony Howell as part of their work for Genesis Breast Cancer Prevention. They have been involved in a number of studies looking at the preventative effect of calorie restriction on breast cancer over the past 12 years. The weight loss of those people taking part in the studies was of course carefully monitored. The most recent version of The 2 Day Diet in the book was the result of one specific study: "The acceptability and efficacy of intermittent a low carbohydrate diet for weight loss and its effects on biomarkers of breast cancer risks."

9) Is it clinically proven to prevent cancer?

We have used the 2 Day Diet to show that it is superior with respect to weight and fat loss than a standard continuous daily diet. Previously we have shown that women before the menopause who lose 5% or more of their body weight and keep it off have a 40% reduction of breast cancer risk compared

with women who continue to gain weight.

10) By what percentage will it reduce my risk of getting cancer?

Our study suggested that there was a 40% reduction of breast cancer if you lost and maintained 5% or greater weight before the menopause and a 25% reduction if you lost and maintained 5% or greater weight after the menopause. This is compared with women who continued to gain weight which is the norm.

11) Is it more effective than chemotherapy?

Chemotherapy is often given after the diagnosis of breast cancer. It is important to take the treatment if prescribed. Weight gain is common during chemotherapy and, it is likely that, if we could prevent this gain, survival from breast cancer may be improved. This question is the subject of our ongoing trials.

12) Does this diet work as well for men as for women?

There is no reason to believe there is any difference in response for men compared with women. However, most of our studies have been performed on female volunteers. Although a number of men working in our centre have successfully dieted using this approach.

13) How does the 2 Day Diet compare with other diets?

We have compared the 2 Day Diet with a standard low calorie healthy eating diet.

a. The 2 day diet was superior:-

1. 65% of women were able to stick to it over 4 months compared with 40% on the daily diet
2. The 2 Day Diet was associated with lower insulin levels
3. There was also more loss of fat and a lower loss of muscle with the 2 Day Diet

14) Why did we decide to write the book?

We have been impressed by the results in our trials comparing standard dieting to the 2-Day Diet, so we wanted raise awareness of this new approach. There has been an increasing interest in intermittent and two day diets, and as a result, untested regimens are now being promoted. We wanted to inform the public of the evidence-based 2-Day Diet which we have proven to work and which does not appear to have adverse effects.

The proceeds of the book will go directly to Genesis Breast Cancer Prevention and enable us to undertake further research in a bid to:

- Understand the mechanisms of the beneficial effects of the diet on different body systems and disease processes
- Develop assistive technology to give further support to dieters who are trying the 2-Day Diet
- Undertake larger and longer term studies in different populations – i.e. women receiving treatment for breast cancer and overweight women in the breast screening programme – as well as undertake a large national weight loss study with other obesity researchers whereby men and women are recruited from GP practices.

15) Is the diet safe for everyone?

The 2-Day Diet is designed for weight loss and should only be followed if you are overweight. The diet can be adapted to one day a week, which can help maintain a healthy weight and prevent weight gain. This can be followed if you are currently a healthy weight, but concerned that your weight is increasing.

You should not attempt the Intermittent Diet if you are a child, a teenager, pregnant, breastfeeding, suffering from depression or have an eating disorder. The moderately high levels of protein in this diet may pose problems for anyone suffering from, or at risk of, kidney disease. If you are taking medication, have diabetes or any other medical condition, seek advice from your GP before embarking on any diet and exercise programme.

16) Why two days?

We wanted to make a departure from the grind of dieting every day. For most people, daily dieting does not work because it is difficult to maintain. The two days, however, are achievable, allow long enough to reduce your overall calorie intake, retrain your eating habits and they may have additional beneficial effects on metabolism and disease risk.

17) Do I have to diet for two consecutive days?

We recommend that the two days are done together because many dieters find the second day as easy, if not easier than the first, as they have got into the habit of eating less. Doing the two days together also helps to ensure that you actually get round to doing the second day and it may have additional health benefits because it provides a prolonged period when the body is in a healthier metabolic state.

18) Is the diet suitable for vegetarians and vegans?

We have found that the diet should work just as well for vegetarians and vegans as for those who eat meat and fish. The key is to make sure that you include enough protein and don't overload on carbohydrates. There are a number of vegetarian, filling, high-protein foods you can include and you will find plenty of suitable recipes for your two restricted days, as well as the five unrestricted days.

19) How does this 2-Day Diet differ from other 5:2 diets?

The main difference is that you don't need to calorie count. You just follow simple rules: low carbohydrate, plenty of healthy protein foods and fat, and low carbohydrate vegetables and fruit.

The diet has been specifically designed by a research dietitian with simple rules so it is filling, satisfying, allows lots of choice, is nutritionally balanced, and is designed to lose fat and preserve muscle.

This diet has proved to be more effective and successful than standard daily dieting in our clinical trials. The other 5:2 diets have not been researched or clinically investigated.

The two days are consecutive, which we have found increases compliance and may have additional beneficial effects on our health than just one day at a time.

20) Can I adjust the 2-Day Diet to fit into my life?

The diet was designed to be 'do-able', and is based on Dr Harvie's experience of working with dieters for over 22 years as a dietician. The diet has simple rules, but sufficient choice to accommodate different tastes and lifestyles.

The book has meal plans which you can use or adapt to suit your preferences and lifestyle. You can change your two days each week to fit in around any events or occasions. The reason the 2-Day Diet is so successful is that it is adaptable and easy for people to fit in with their lives.

21) Why does the 2-Day Diet lose more weight than other diets?

Any diet will work if people stick to it, and the 2-Day Diet is a diet which people are more likely to stick to. Our volunteers find it easier to keep to two days of dieting a week rather than the prospect of daily dieting. They feel good and often energised on their two days and their enthusiasm to diet is reinforced each week by the two days.

An added bonus is that we find our two-day dieters are likely to eat healthily on their unrestricted days, which boosts the overall success of the diet.

22) Does the 2-Day Diet offer health benefits in addition to those achieved with weight loss?

The greater chance of weight loss with the 2-Day Diet boosts its health effects. The 2-Day Diet involves a 48 hour spell of low calorie and carbohydrate each week. We know that this brings about large reductions in the hormone insulin, which is likely to reduce the activity and growth of cells, and hence their chances of cells becoming damaged and starting disease.

You would not be able to sustain such low carbohydrate and calories on a daily basis long term, so the 2-Day Diet allows a way of the body to switch to a healthier metabolic state each week.

23) Will the diet be as effective if such items are removed from it? E.g. Salmon, dairy, avocado etc?

The recommended diets for the 2 restricted days and for the 5 unrestricted days within The 2 day diet are designed to provide the optimum balance of nutrients. Restricted days are low carb, and allow a generous number of servings of protein foods, healthy fats, low fat dairy and low carb vegetables. The unrestricted days allow a generous number of servings of high fibre carbohydrate foods, protein foods, healthy fats, fruit and vegetables. The book describes the optimum number of servings of these food groups for restricted and unrestricted days to achieve the right balance of nutrients. Each food groups contains a large range of possible alternative foods, for example salmon is just one of around 45 possible protein foods, whereas avocado is one of 15 different possible fat foods to choose from. With so much choice you should find a combination of protein, fat foods etc that you like to fit the diet by looking at the detailed food lists in the book. You are allowed 3 portions of low fat dairy foods on both restricted and non restricted days. You can use soy milk and yoghurt instead of dairy versions. Salmon is a healthy oily fish and a good source of omega 3 fats. If you don't like salmon try to include other omega 3 rich foods like other oily fish such as sardines, mackerel and fresh tuna (not tinned) and for vegetarians omega-3-enriched eggs, flaxseed, walnuts and rapeseed oil.

24) The previous Genesis 2 day diet was based on milk, why is the new diet different?

The first 2 day diet we tested was based on just having 650 calories from 2 pints of milk or yoghurt and fruit and vegetables on restricted days. This simple diet worked well for quite a lot of dieters but the limited choice meant a number of dieters got fed up with this diet over time. Realising there was room for improvement we set out to make The 2 Day Diet more tasty, varied and filling by allowing a wider range of protein foods and fats and therefore more likely to be followed. The new improved 2 day diet (on which The 2 Day Diet book is based) has turned out to be just that, with less hunger and more enjoyment of food and a bigger chance of being kept to.

25) Was there a problem with having too much milk in the original 2 day Genesis diet?

The original 2 day diet based on milk is safe, and has been shown to achieve good weight loss and reduce blood markers which indicate of risk of cancer and diabetes and heart disease. We are recommending the new low carb, high protein 2 day diet above the milk diet as we believe it is easier for people to keep to.

Many people worry that dairy foods may increase levels of growth factors specifically insulin like growth which may in turn increase the risk of cancer. There is no evidence that dairy foods are linked to breast cancer, in fact overviews of evidence suggest dairy has either protective or neutral effects of dairy on breast cancer risk. In addition, circulating levels of IGF-1 are minimally affected by dairy foods. Our original milk 2 day diet showed dramatic increases in blood levels of a protein which binds to IGF -1 in the blood. This will reduce any potential harmful biological effect of IGF-1 in the blood. We have not measured these binding proteins in our recent study, but the new 2 Day Diet is highly effective at lowering insulin which indicates these binding proteins levels will also be increased.

26) How can the diet help you prevent breast cancer reoccurring?

Being a healthy weight, preventing weight gain during treatment and having lower levels of insulin can reduce the chances of recurrence. The 2 Day Diet is an effective way to lose weight, and keep it off and brings about lower levels of insulin on restricted and unrestricted days. Our research to date has focussed on women who do not have breast cancer. One of our current trials called the B-AHEAD study is assessing whether the 2 Day Diet can control weight and insulin levels after diagnosis of breast cancer. Ultimately we hope that application of this approach may help to prevent breast cancer recurrence.

27) If I am a healthy weight can The 2-Day Diet help reduce my chances of recurrence?

Being a healthy weight and preventing weight gain during treatment and having lower levels of insulin can reduce the chances of recurrence. The first thing is to check that you are a healthy weight, and not carrying too much body fat in general (% body fat), or weight around the middle (waist measurement) as explained in Chapter 2 of the book. Sometimes we can appear to be a healthy weight, but may have too much fat, which would be good to lose. 1 restricted day of the diet will help maintain a healthy weight, and prevent the all too common problem of gaining weight. Our research has shown that for those people with a healthy weight, following the diet for 1 day each week will still lower insulin levels and most likely bring about beneficial changes. Because of this research, following the diet for 1 day per week instead of 2 is likely to be helpful for women who have been diagnosed with breast cancer, but there is no absolute proof and we need to undertake more research.

28) Is the 2 day diet better suited to men than women?

There has been much debate over whether 2 day diets are better suited to men than women. Some recent newspaper articles have raised concerns that 2 day diets may be harmful for women and may lead to diabetes or problems with fertility, and too much loss of muscle mass. Our studies have been performed on female volunteers and have shown to be effective for weight loss and improving health. Our 2 day diet which is low carb, high protein for 2 days and includes a healthy Mediterranean diet for 5 days/week has consistently shown that the 2 day diet leads to greater improvements in insulin function, and better control of blood sugars which would reduce risk of diabetes than a standard daily healthy eating calorie controlled diet. Our 2 day diet seems to be particularly good at burning fat and preserving muscle mass compared to daily dieting. There is a right for caution of losing muscle as well as fat mass for men or women who follow too strict a calorie restriction, especially if they have inadequate protein on restricted and non restricted days and particularly if they are not overweight to start and are not also partaking in regular physical activity. An earlier report from a study called the CALORIE study (of alternate day fasting i.e. no calories on restricted days) in normal weight women led to 40% of weight loss being lean and 60% as fat. With our 2 day diet only 20% is lost as lean and 80% as fat which is a good ratio.

The other concern is whether 2 day diets will affect fertility. Women following our 2 day diets still have regular menstrual cycles. However we would not advocate the 2 day diet for women who are imminently planning to conceive. Weight loss is advised prior to conception and not at the time of conception or during pregnancy itself. Our two day diet is no exception and should not be undertaken during these times.

The main focus of our trials have been women, however a number of men working in our Centre, and partners of our trial subjects have successfully dieted using this approach. **The 2 day diet is suitable for men and women.**

29) What are the health benefits of following the diet if you are a healthy weight?

The first thing is to check that you are a healthy weight, and not be carrying too much body fat in general (% body fat) or weight around the middle (waist measurement) as explained in chapter 2 of the book. Sometimes we can appear to be a healthy weight, but may have too much fat, which would be good to lose. One day of our 2 day diet will help maintain a healthy weight, and so prevents the all too common health problem linked to gaining weight. Our research has shown that one day of our restricted (low carb, high protein) day each week keeps weight and levels of insulin, cholesterol, blood pressure and inflammation down and would be safe for a normal weight person to undertake. We do not advise two restricted days if you are a healthy weight, with low or normal levels of body fat, likewise we do not recommend you undertake either one or two days of our diet if you are underweight (see BMI chart on website). The reason for this is because lighter people stand to risk losing muscle mass as they have less body fat, since fat protects us from losing muscle mass when we diet. It is important to note that loss of muscle could be a particular problem if you did not follow our low carb, high protein moderately restricted 2 day diet, but instead opted for a more severe calorie restriction and one which did not meet your required protein intake.

30) Can I have more vegetables and fruit than it says on the plan?

Vegetables are an important part of the overall diet and important to include. You can eat as many vegetables as you wish on the unrestricted days, we encourage at least five 80g servings in a day, but you can have as many as you wish. Do not eat unrestricted potatoes or beans pulses on these days as these count as carbohydrates and protein foods and not vegetables within the diet plan.

The restricted days need to be low enough in carbohydrate and high enough in protein for their maximal effect. It is important that you keep to just the permitted low carbohydrate vegetables on the restricted days of the diet. You can swap the fruit allowance for 2 additional vegetable portions on these days, so can have 7 vegetable servings in a day. You can also include up to ½ an avocado and 60g of soy or edamame beans from your fat and protein servings. Therefore you can include generous amounts of vegetables even on restricted days as well as the other protein, dairy and fat foods.

We recommend you keep to the suggested amount of fruit as it is quite easy to over consume on calories and carbohydrates from fruits.