

The Twelve Days of
Christmas

An alternative Xmas carol.
By Zoë Harcombe





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The Twelve Days of Christmas: By Zoë Harcombe

On the twelfth day of Christmas,
my friend Zoë sent to me;

Twelve real foods,
Eleven nutrition basics,
Ten myths of dieting,
Nine tips for cheating,
Eight lovely comments,
Seven thinking tactics,
Six calorie consequences,

A Five day plan,

Four did-you-knows,
Three craving causes,
Two other diets,

& A quote like you never have seen!



Twelve real foods

The fundamental principle of The Harcombe Diet is to eat real food. That means food as nature delivers it. Here are 12 examples of real foods and you need never reach for processed food again:

Real Food....	Processed Food
Oranges grow on trees	Carton's of orange juice don't
Fish swim in the sea	Fish fingers don't
Baked potatoes come from the ground	Chips don't
Cows graze in the field	Peperamis don't
Carrots and beetroot come from the ground	Vegetable crisps don't
Natural yoghurt comes form milk	Sugared & sweetened yoghurts don't
Apricots grow on trees	Dried apricots don't
Milk comes from animals	Milkshake don't
Butter comes from milk	Margarines and spreads don't
Steak & Chops come from animals	Hot dogs don't
Wholemeal flour is the whole grain	White flour isn't
Brown rice is the whole grain	White rice isn't

Eleven nutrition basics

We have a few “Fact Boxes” in The Harcombe Diet books and readers share how much they enjoy learning a bit about nutrition along the way. Don’t worry if you find these a bit technical - the body is pretty complex. You can just trust me and try the diet - it works! Here are 11 nutrition basics, for those who like the science:

- 1) All **food** is made up of carbohydrate, protein or fat - in different combinations.
- 2) The main combinations are carbohydrate and protein (vegetables, fruits, grains, pulses etc) or fat and protein (meat, fish, eggs etc). Protein is in virtually every food, so The Harcombe Diet just drops the word protein and talks about **carbs and fats**.
- 3) The best way to remember the difference between carbs and fats is that fats come from something with a face. All meat and fish were animals - with faces. Eggs, butter and cheese all come from animals - with faces. (The exceptions are oils like sunflower oil and olive oil, but don’t worry about these - the only fats you need to think about are the ones from the faces). Carbs come from the ground and trees: fruits, grains, potatoes and so on. If it isn’t an oil and it doesn’t come from a face, it’s a carb.
- 4) The two really interesting food groups are carbohydrates and fats. Why are they so interesting? Because one causes the body to release a substance called insulin and the other doesn’t.
- 5) **Glucose** is the main fuel needed by the human body. (It is the petrol in our car in effect).
- 6) **Blood Glucose Level** - Our body needs to keep our blood glucose level within a specific range (approximately 65 to 110mg per 100cc of blood if you’re interested).
- 7) The body’s blood glucose level is crucial to our well-being and it is also crucial to our desire to lose weight.

- 8) The **Pancreas** is an organ in the body located below and behind the stomach. One of its main jobs is to produce insulin.
- 9) **Insulin** is a hormone produced by the pancreas. When we eat a carbohydrate our body converts this into glucose and so our **Blood Glucose Level** rises. This is dangerous for the human body, so the pancreas ensures that insulin is released to convert the glucose into 'something' so that our **Blood Glucose Level** returns to normal.
- 10) That 'something' is called **Glycogen**. Insulin converts the glucose into **Glycogen** and this is then stored in our liver and our muscles. The liver has the capacity to store approximately 100 grams of glycogen. The muscles have the capacity to store between 250-400 grams of glycogen.

Putting all this together, we come up with the (11th) key fact

Every time you eat a carbohydrate, your body decides how much of the energy consumed is needed immediately and how much should be stored for later on. As your **Blood Glucose Level** rises, **Insulin** is released from the **Pancreas** and this insulin converts some of the **Glucose** to **Glycogen**. If all the glycogen storage areas are full, insulin will convert the excess to fatty tissue. **This is why insulin has been called the fattening hormone.**

Ten myths of dieting

The Harcombe Diet goes against traditional diet advice and here are Zoë's top 10 myths of dieting to explain why:

- 1) **To lose 1lb of fat you need a deficit of 3500 calories by eating less and/or doing more.** Hands up everyone who is trying to live on barely 1000 calories a day (forget exercise for now) and hasn't lost a single pound for weeks, let alone the 2lbs a week, every single week that this formula promises you will lose. If this worked, women needing 2000 calories a day would lose 7 stone, 6lbs (104lbs) each year, every year! Tens of millions of people, all over the world, are proving this formula wrong every single week and yet this 'fact' is the basis for virtually all diet advice. The next time you see the 3500 formula, ask exactly where it comes from and ask for proof - you won't get any.
- 2) **You must exercise to lose weight.** Exercise is a great thing to do, but it has a small impact on weight loss relative to what you eat. As a simple example, you can eat in 1 minute what can take 1 hour to exercise away. Do you want to eat a Big Mac ® and then have to walk 10 miles, or do neither?!
- 3) **Graze - eat little and often.** This is what cows do and look at the size of them! We are told this will keep our blood sugar 'topped up'. Our blood sugar needs to stay stable (not topped up!) Any time we eat a carbohydrate and raise our blood sugar, our body releases a substance called insulin to get our blood sugar back to normal. Insulin is called the fattening hormone for good reason, so we should leave it well alone and not 'wake it up' by grazing all day long. Eat three substantial meals a day and snack as little as possible.
- 4) **Eat anything in moderation:** Why do we tell smokers never to have another cigarette again and we tell alcoholics never to touch another drink and then we tell food addicts "have one biscuit; just don't eat the whole packet"! It is so much easier not to eat any biscuits/cakes/sweets than it is to try and eat only one. If you are one of the many people who can't eat these things in moderation, don't even start.

- 5) **No calories = no problem:** People think it's fine to live on black coffee and diet coke - they don't contain calories so why not? Caffeine and sweeteners have been shown to wake up insulin in much the same way as sugar and other carbs. Now that you know insulin is the fattening hormone, don't wake it up even for zero calorie things.
- 6) **You need to lose fat not water.** The average human is approximately 50% water so you are always going to lose fat **and** water as you lose weight. At the start of a diet more water will be lost than fat (because your body raids the 'energy store room' and there is 4 times as much water as energy in there) and you will carry on losing water as you lose fat. So long as you are still drinking enough, and not taking diuretics to falsely lose weight, this water weight gone still counts and you will look and feel slimmer. (Think about it - a 20 stone person who is approximately 50% water isn't going to lose 10 stone of fat only and turn into a puddle!)
- 7) **Eat when you're hungry.** The chances are that you are thirsty, not hungry. It is estimated that 75% of people are dehydrated much of the time, so they are 'hungry' for liquid, not food. Fruit can be 95% water and even meat can be 75% water, so your body is probably trying to get you to drink.
- 8) **Pregnant women are eating for two.** No - they need no more calories in the first trimester and barely 300 calories a day more than normal in the final stages of pregnancy. The average baby only weighs about 7-8 lbs at birth, and the fluids around it add up to not much more than a stone, so there is no need to put on more than a couple of stone during pregnancy
- 9) **There's no such thing as a bad food, only bad diets.** Sugar, sweeteners and transfats can hardly be called good foods and (Zoë believes) they have no place in a good diet. We have no need for them and such 'empty calories' just mean we eat other things to get our much needed nutrients
- 10) **Fruit should be a big part of a healthy diet.** Fruit is a very nutritious food, but we are better off eating more vegetables and salads and going easy on the fruit. Fruit is too high in carbohydrate to be eaten freely whilst trying to lose weight.

Nine tips for cheating

Phase 3 of The Harcombe Diet is about how to 'cheat' and maintain your weight. That is - how to eat what you want without putting any pounds back on. Here are 9 top tips for cheating:

- 1) **Cheat all at once.** If you want a box of chocolates eat the box, but don't eat one or two chocolates continually throughout the day. The Harcombe Diet uses what we know about how the body uses or stores fat and we need to minimise the number of times the pancreas is asked to release insulin.
- 2) **Eat as few ingredients as possible.** The fewer processed ingredients you can attack your body with the better. If you really fancy a bag of crisps/chips then have a bag, but pick the one that has the simple ingredients potatoes and vegetable oil. The ingredients in a well-known global brand of crisps/chips, for example, are: dried potatoes with citric acid, monoglycerides of sodium phosphate; vegetable oil; corn meal; wheat starch; maltodextrin; water; salt; seasoning; spices; flavouring; acetic acid; malic acid; sodium acetate; sodium citrate; mono and diglycerides and dextrose. Please don't ever be that nasty to your body.
- 3) **Have a strategy for getting your blood glucose level back to normal.** If you eat a processed food, your body will almost certainly release too much insulin and this will make your blood glucose level fall below what it was before you ate the substance. Your body will then demand food to get your blood glucose level back to normal. This is the time when you are most at risk of craving another processed food. So, be prepared for this to happen and have something healthy to hand when you feel your blood glucose level drop. An oat biscuit or a square of 85% cocoa dark chocolate will help to get your blood glucose level back to normal.
- 4) **Don't eat your normal meal AND cheat.** If you are going to have a box of chocolates for lunch then make that your lunch. Don't have your steak and salad as well, as your body will just store the fat in the steak when you eat carbohydrates.

- 5) **Don't waste cheating.** If you are going out for dinner don't start on the crisps and nuts beforehand- you know you'll eat them all as soon as you start so don't even have one. Ditto, don't eat the white bread at the start of the meal and fill yourself up on something that isn't even that tasty. Save your cheating for something really special from the menu instead.
- 6) **Never forget that insulin is the fattening hormone.** Carbohydrates stimulate the production of insulin, the fattening hormone, but so does caffeine. You may like to have full caffeine coffee and (diet) cola in Phase 3 but this must be counted as cheating. Every time you have caffeine, you stimulate the production of insulin. If this is really how you want to use your cheating then do so. (Zoë prefers dark chocolate). Cheating connoisseurs never forget that the key to cheating is to minimise the production of insulin.
- 7) **Get to know your body.** Really get to know your body, exactly what you want, how much you can get away with and how you will feel when you do cheat. Make informed choices and if a clear head and a great night's sleep are more important to you than a sugar induced stupor then make the best choice for you. If you want that sugar, however, then ...
- 8) **Have what you want, what you really, really want.** To misquote the Spice Girls, if you want chocolate, get the best that you can find and afford. Don't settle for a confectionery bar bought from the petrol/gas station, which is more sugar than chocolate. Buy some top quality chocolates and indulge. Keep them all to yourself, enjoy every one and feel the joy of eating something knowing you are in control of your eating.
- 9) **Just because you can cheat doesn't mean you have to.** The Harcombe Diet lets you eat all the foods that are healthy and nutritious - fruits, salads, vegetables, whole grains, animal and vegetable protein. You will not miss out on anything by not eating processed foods again so, if you don't have any urge to 'cheat', then don't.

Eight lovely comments

The Harcombe Diet opens with 8 pages of testimonials and new ones come in every single day - by email from club members, on YouTube, on blogs, on Facebook and so on. Please check out www.amazon.co.uk for book reviews - we are launching the books in the USA, Australia and New Zealand in 2010 and hopefully similar reviews will soon follow in these regions. Here are 8 lovely comments for starters:

- 1) *"This diet is the celebrity secret you've been waiting for - and it beats Atkins, South Beach and The Zone by a mile!" Ashley Pearson, Showbiz Editor.*
- 2) *"A diet book that really works. I tried the kick start plan and lost 10lbs in five days." Octavia Walker, Sunday Mirror.*
- 3) *"Is this the ultimate diet?" Christine Fieldhouse, The Daily Express.*
- 4) *"I would promise anyone my life savings that they will lose weight, even in the first two days, if they try this eating regime". Christina - fan.*
- 5) *"After a lifetime of dieting and just getting fatter and heavier I believe I will now reach my 60th birthday next year and be at or near my ideal weight because of your inspiring work. Your book is like my bible, I read it day and night and it is now full of notes and high-lighted passages! Thank you for explaining why I have always found it so difficult to diet and lose weight and for making it so easy to do so now." Chris - fan.*
- 6) *"THANKYOU, THANKYOU, THANKYOU!!! I was locked in a cycle of bingeing and starving until I read your book. I lost 11 lbs in phase 1 and am now in phase 2 with another 7 lbs lost. I have a couple of stone to reach my natural weight, but am so confident that I can achieve this with your diet, and then maintain it. I am amazed that I'm not craving the junk I used to eat and am relishing the new healthy way of eating. I have also bought the recipe book and am looking forward to trying out the recipes. Thank you again - your book was worth every penny spent." Michelle - fan.*

- 7) *“Zoë, I am going to get there, thanks to you. I couldn't believe my eyes when I weighed this morning - I've lost a phenomenal 10lbs already and this is only the beginning of Day 4! What's more, no hunger cravings whatsoever, and with the added benefit of my arthritic knees having stopped complaining. What joy to find a route back to a normal size - thanks once again for being caring and generous to share your findings and research. I also wish you huge sales for your book - perhaps this is the answer to the fat epidemic the Government is so worried about!” Neris - fan.*
- 8) *“Praise be for you and your book!!! I have just read it from cover to cover and identified so strongly with it that, at times I was moved to tears...in a very positive way of course! Never has text jumped up from the page and screamed, 'this is you.....you don't have to go on like this!' In a matter of hours, you have blown all of my self destructive theories about my perpetual failure out of the metaphorical water. I can now see that I have been equipped with the knowledge to work towards that very slim and shiny Holy Grail! Jackie - fan.*

Seven thinking tactics

The USP (Unique Selling Proposition) of The Harcombe Diet is the discovery that there are three physical causes of food cravings (see the third day). Zoë believes that food addiction is mainly physical. However, there will be some mind games sabotaging your success and Zoë's books can help you overcome these. Here are 7 of them:

- 1) **I'll start tomorrow - I'll enjoy that pizza, chocolate, biscuit today - I can be good tomorrow.** Every diet starts tomorrow. Every time you say you will start tomorrow you are doing two things:
 - a) You are putting off the day you take control of your eating and, therefore, your life. You are putting off living, rather than existing. You are letting your addiction rule you, rather than ruling your addiction.
 - b) More seriously you are making it even harder to take control with every day that you continue to be ruled by food. Food addiction does not reach a certain level and then plateau. It gets worse and worse the more you feed your addiction. The characteristics of addiction are that you need to consume more and more to have the same high and before long you need to consume more and more just to avoid the low - the highs are no longer there. With every day that you delay tackling food addiction it just gets worse. Yes you can start tomorrow - but it will be even tougher to crack tomorrow. **You have to do this sometime so do it now.**
- 2) **I deserve it.** No matter how productive or tough a day you have had at work or at leisure you do deserve to be nice to yourself. Eating processed food is not, however, being nice to yourself. You deserve so much more than this. You deserve to live not to exist. You deserve to be free from food cravings. You deserve to be nourished and full of nutrients, not stuffed and full of empty calories. You deserve to be in control of your life not controlled by food. You deserve so many things but 'junk food' is at the bottom of the list.

- 3) **I really want that chocolate bar, muffin, tub of ice cream.** Of course you do. You are physically craving it. You are addicted to it, so you want it as badly as a smoker wants a cigarette or an alcoholic wants a drink. You would do anything to get it, which is precisely why you must not have it. You must not give in. You need to break the addiction, otherwise you will continue to have your life ruled by food and will continue to overeat and be overweight for life. You will also continue to be dopey, bloated, exhausted and everything else that goes with food addiction. All your energy needs to be focused on not giving in to the cravings and ending the addiction.
- 4) **I'm going to a dinner party tonight - it would be rude not to eat whatever is put in front of me.** Eating out is pretty easy on The Harcombe Diet. Skip the carbs, as carbs outside the home are nearly always refined ones - white rice, white pasta etc. Fill up on prawn cocktail, casserole, meat, fish, vegetables and any fat/protein that is offered. Hopefully you know your hosts well enough to let them know that you are doing something positive for your weight and your health. Good hosts care about you and will be understanding and accommodating. A good host does not push dessert on someone trying to lose weight. They do everything that they can to make their guests feel comfortable and relaxed.
- 5) **It shouldn't go to waste.** If you are worried about food at home going to waste - why is stuff you might crave there? Stop buying processed foods. Get rid of all processed foods at home before you start Phase 1. Your family need to support you - they can benefit from healthier eating too. No one in your family, or any other family for that matter, needs processed carbohydrates so have wholemeal versions to hand instead.

If you are worried about the children's leftovers try to understand why. Does this come from your own childhood? Are you carrying a subconscious 'rule' that plates must be licked clean? The food was supposed to be in your child's tummy by now so why should it matter throwing it away? Don't let any daft views on waste ruin your health.

- 6) **I'm on holiday or I'm in a restaurant - I won't get the chance to eat all of this lovely stuff tomorrow.** You also won't have a chance to be slim tomorrow unless you start taking control of your eating today. Also - you will actually have a chance to eat all this 'lovely stuff' again. You can come back to the restaurant, or return to the same holiday resort, in the future. Food doesn't ever go away. How often have you eaten something because it was there not because you needed or even wanted it? If there is a box of chocolates, or a celebration cake, being shared out at work don't give in. You can buy and eat an entire box of chocolates or cake on your own tomorrow if you want - I bet you won't want to once the moment has passed.
- 7) **I've eaten something I shouldn't have, so I'll eat what I want today and then start again tomorrow.** No one ever ruined a day's eating with that first mouthful. It is what you do after that first mouthful that ruins the day's eating...

What do we say to ourselves? I've blown it today so I might as well eat what I want and then start afresh tomorrow. We can't be 'good' today so we will be 'bad' today and then 'good' tomorrow. And can you recall the relief and excitement you feel once you have made that decision? You suddenly 'allow' yourself to eat whatever you want. You may even get quite excited at the thought of what you will have.

On The Harcombe Diet, you don't have 'good' days and 'bad' days any more - or rather you don't have them like you used to. A good day now is a day when you are nice to yourself and your body. A good day is when you nourish your body and feed it with vitamins and minerals and nutritious food. A bad day is when you are nasty to yourself and your body. This is any day when you binge or starve, or count calories, or try to give your body less food than it really needs.

If you have one slip up on this diet just get straight back on track. Don't beat yourself up. Don't make it worse and don't blow things out of proportion - *'I've had one small slip so it is the end of the diet.'* This is nonsense and you know it. Don't look for excuses to give up.

Six calorie consequences

Following 20 years of research into weight loss, obesity and overeating, Zoë has concluded that the **only** way to lose weight and keep it off is to work with your body - never against it. The current advice to count calories/eat less/eat low fat etc is destined to have your body fighting you all the way. Here are 6 reasons why - the consequences of counting calories:

- 1) **We get hungry & our body tries to get us to eat.** This alone ruins most diets. Your body doesn't know you've read a diet book - it thinks you've landed on a desert island. It will send out many signals to try and make you eat - shaky hands, rumbling tummy, irritability, inability to concentrate; indecisiveness and an unusually high preoccupation with food. Many people experience these symptoms at c. 11am and 4pm on a daily basis, when their blood sugar drops, and this is the most dangerous time for the munchies.
- 2) **Our body stores fat and uses up lean muscle.** Lean muscle uses up more calories (energy) than fat does. Back to the desert island situation - your body is in survival mode when you try to eat less, so it needs to 'dump' the part of you that needs the most energy. This is the lean muscle - so that needs to go first. Your body hangs on to the fat a) because it uses up less energy and b) because it is going to be a valuable reserve if you are on the 'desert island' for a long time.
- 3) **Our metabolisms slow down.** Your body does this to conserve the limited energy that is now coming in. This then means that you will need fewer calories to live on and you will put on weight if you try to eat the number of calories that used to maintain your weight.
- 4) **We increase the proportion of carbohydrates in our diet.** Fat has (approximately) nine calories per gram while carbohydrate has four, so calorie counters choose carbs over fats every time and thereby increase the proportion of carbohydrates in their diet (and this encourages that fattening hormone, insulin).

- 5) **We reduce the variety of food eaten.** We tend to go for the regular favourites that give us ‘the biggest bang for the buck’ (the most food for the fewest calories). We probably have a set breakfast - our calorie counted bread, or cereal, every day. We probably have a set lunch also - a shop bought calorie-counted ready meal or calorie counted sandwich or cereal bar. We may vary the evening meal a bit more, but it is still likely to have the same ingredients in it and always more carbs than fats. This leads directly to food intolerance (see the third day).
- 6) **We weaken our immune systems** and this leads to all three conditions that cause food cravings (see the third day). This happens because:
 - a) We are not eating as much fuel (calories) as our body needs;
 - b) We have cut back on fats, which are essential for our immune system;
 - c) We develop nutritional deficiencies by not eating enough calories and fats and by eating a limited variety of foods.

So - start a calorie controlled diet and end up with the three conditions that cause insatiable food cravings. It really is as stark as that. To find out more about any of these conditions please see “Stop Counting Calories & Start Losing Weight: The Harcombe Diet.”

Five DAY PLAN

Phase 1 of The Harcombe Diet was designed by Zoë to be the perfect diet to overcome the three physical conditions that cause food cravings. Zoë did not set out to design a diet that would lose people 17lbs in five days and yet, this is the current record for Phase 1. As a bonus, the most common themes in the endless testimonials are: *“I’m not hungry”*; *“My cravings have disappeared”*; *“I feel great”*; *“I’ve got more energy than I’ve ever known”* and *“This is the last diet I will ever need”*. Here is a sample five day plan (*):

DO’s & DON’T’s

Unless specified, eat as much as you feel that you need to; you should not feel hungry.

You can have unlimited amounts of any salads and vegetables - except for mushrooms (these feed Candida) and potatoes (these are too high in carbohydrate and can cause problems with Candida and Hypoglycaemia).

Drink as much water as you need to, as well as herbal or fruit teas, decaffeinated tea and coffee (no milk or sugar).

Unless stated, all foods can be cooked in any way - roasted, fried, grilled, baked, poached, steamed etc.

You can snack between meals on crudités (batons of carrots, celery, peppers, cucumber etc) or natural live/bio yoghurt (great for attacking Candida), but try and get used to eating only three big main meals a day.

Replace any meal that you don’t like with any other meal (don’t have more than one rice/porridge meal a day) and even have the same breakfast and main meals every day, if this works for you.

DAY 1:

Breakfast Bacon & Eggs

Lunch Salmon Steak with a selection of vegetables and a large side salad

Dinner Brown rice (50g dry weight) & vegetables (not potatoes) stir-fried in olive oil

DAY 2:

Breakfast 100g Brown rice cereal (100% puffed rice cereal - in the Gluten free section in supermarkets) - no milk

Lunch Salad Niçoise (a tin of Tuna, or a tuna steak, on a bed of salads. You may like to add hard boiled eggs, olives and anchovies - optional)

Dinner Real meat! (Steak or pork chops or lamb etc) with any amount of vegetables (not potatoes) & salad

DAY 3:

Breakfast Plain or ham omelette (2-3 eggs, knob of butter, ½ teaspoon mixed herbs, ground black pepper, chopped ham (optional) - whisk the eggs until fluffy, add the herbs and pepper, melt the butter in an omelette pan and add the eggs (and ham), cook slowly until it becomes firm. If you stir it you will end up with scrambled eggs - see day 5!)

Lunch Chicken and/or beef strips stir-fried in olive oil with vegetables

Dinner Stuffed peppers - (boil 50g dry weight brown rice, stir fry chopped, mixed, vegetables in olive oil and then mix the rice & veg and fill a de-seeded pepper shell. Bake in a medium oven for 20-30 minutes, until the pepper is soft to a fork touch)

DAY 4:

Breakfast 50g Porridge oats with water (literally put 50g of dry oats in a bowl and pour boiling water on top to the consistency you like)

Lunch Chef's salad (a large mix of salads, grated carrots, grated beetroot - be really creative, with cold cuts of meat and/or hard boiled eggs)

Dinner A large whole fish, like trout or mackerel, with plenty of vegetables and salad

DAY 5:

Breakfast Scrambled eggs (no toast) or soft boiled eggs with Crudit  'soldiers'

Lunch Roast or grilled chicken & salad and/or vegetables

Dinner 50g dry weight Rice pasta in home made tomato sauce (stir fry an onion and a clove of garlic in olive oil, add a tin of tomatoes, 2 teaspoons of basil and ground black pepper and simmer the sauce until the rice pasta is ready)

(*) Please refer to *"Stop Counting Calories & Start Losing Weight: The Harcombe Diet"* for details of Herxheimers reaction and symptoms that may occur during the first five days. The withdrawal symptoms from sugar and caffeine particularly can be quite unpleasant.

Four did you know?

The Harcombe Diet turns current diet advice upside down. We are told by public health advisors and dieticians “*Base your meals on starchy foods*” (that’s how we fatten cattle, by the way) and “*avoid saturated fat like the plague*” but do eat “*mono unsaturated fat*” - lots of olive oil, like Mediterranean people do. The Harcombe Diet says eat real food in the form that nature intends you to eat it and not processed food in the form that manufacturers intend you to eat it. Then you don’t need to worry about salt, cholesterol, fat - anything - nature sorts it all for you. Here are 4 ‘did you know?’ to help you decide which advice you think is best to follow:

1) **Fat:** Did you know that olive oil has 6 times the saturated fat of pork?

So why are we told to avoid meat but to consume plenty of olive oil? Real meat and olive oil are both great things to consume - they are real foods. The main fat in pork, beef, eggs and lard is monounsaturated fat, so why are we not told this? We should be told to avoid *processed* meats and *transfats* like the plague and to eat animals until the cows come home!

2) **Sugar:** Did you know that sugar is the only ‘food’ that we consume with no nutritional value?

Sugar has no vitamins or minerals (or protein or water for that matter) and therefore provides what we call ‘empty calories’ - calories but nothing else. We have no need for sugar and Zoë firmly believes that our weight and health would be substantially improved without it. Americans eat 32kg of sugar per person per year; UK consumption is 38kg per person per year and Australians consume a whopping 56kg of sugar. This means Americans eat c. 350 empty calories a day, the British eat just over 400 empty calories a day and the Australians eat over 600 calories each day, with no accompanying nutrients. Imagine if we made just one change to our diets and stopped this empty fuel consumption?

3) **Cholesterol:** Did you know that there is no such thing as bad cholesterol and good cholesterol?

Cholesterol is not water soluble, so it cannot be transported freely in the blood-stream to where it is needed. It needs to be carried in something and it is carried in things called lipoproteins. LDL stands for Low Density Lipoprotein and HDL stands for High Density Lipoprotein. LDL carries cholesterol from the liver out around the body to do its cell repair and other jobs. HDL carries cholesterol, which has been used by the body's cells, back to the liver for re-use (re-cycling in effect). Neither LDL nor HDL is cholesterol - they are carriers of cholesterol - and neither is 'bad' or 'good'. LDL would more accurately be called 'a carrier of fresh cholesterol'. HDL would more accurately be called 'a carrier of recycled cholesterol'. Cholesterol, by the way, is absolutely vital for the health of every single cell in your body. You may want to think twice before allowing anyone to lower yours.

4) **Evolution:**

Did you know that if anything in real food, fat or otherwise, were responsible for a killer disease like heart disease, the human race would have either died out or evolved not to need meat, fish, eggs and animal products. As there is no evidence of either, maybe modern foods are more likely responsible for modern illness?

Three craving causes

Whilst suffering bulimia at Cambridge University, UK, Zoë set out to answer the million dollar question “*Why do we overeat? When all we want is to be slim.*” The determination to answer this question took Zoë through masses of research and to a huge and completely new discovery: there are three very common physical conditions that cause insatiable food cravings. The Harcombe Diet tells you what these are, have you got them, how did you get them, how do you get rid of them and, most importantly, how they cause food cravings and for what. Understanding these conditions will be the secret to you getting slim and staying slim. Here are the 3 definitions for starters:

- 1) Candida is a yeast, which lives in all of us, and is normally kept under control by our immune system and other bacteria in our body. It usually lives in the digestive system. Candida has no useful purpose. If it stays quiet and in balance, it causes no harm. The problem starts if Candida multiplies out of control and then it can create havoc with our health and wellbeing. Candida has been shown to cause insatiable food cravings - particularly for all sugary foods, bread, cakes, biscuits, fruit/fruit juices and vinegary/pickled foods.
- 2) Food Intolerance means, quite simply, not being able to tolerate a particular food. This is different to Food Allergy - Food Allergy is the really serious, life threatening, condition where people have nut, or strawberry allergies, for example. Food Intolerance develops when you have too much of a food and too often and your body just gets to the point where it can't cope with that food any longer. Food Intolerance can also make a person feel horribly unwell. The real irony is that Food Intolerance causes people to crave the foods to which they are intolerant. You are most likely to be intolerant to anything you have daily and feel you couldn't live without.
- 3) Hypoglycaemia is literally a Greek translation from “*hypo*” meaning ‘under’, “*glykis*” meaning ‘sweet’ and “*emia*” meaning ‘in the blood together’. The three bits all put together mean low blood sugar. Hypoglycaemia describes the state your body is in if your blood sugar levels are too low. When your blood sugar levels are too low, this is potentially life threatening and your body will try to get you to eat. Hypoglycaemia can cause cravings for any carbohydrate - even fruit.

Two biggest losers

There have been some fantastic success stories from people who have done The Harcombe Diet. Here are two that have been posted on open forums - the record for Phase 1 and a pretty speedy medium term weight loss - 30lbs in 5 weeks! An even bigger loss came in by email: "I lost 70lb on this programme. It was easy to follow. I never felt hungry" and many Facebook fans are sharing their progress on the discussion pages:

1) 17lbs in 5 days - posted on one of Zoë's blogs:

"Like so many I too am an expert on calorie counting for many years and like so many I am still overweight. I received your book from Amazon last Wednesday 5th August, I read it through in 2 hours and I began in earnest on Thursday morning. You have completely overwhelmed me with your simplistic approach. IT ALL MAKES SO MUCH SENSE! I was afraid to weight myself at the beginning of the diet but medical intervention forced me to be weighed 3 days later on Sunday 9th August and the scales said 14st 4lbs. I weighed myself today, that's four days later and I weighed 13st 1lb!!! That's over a stone!! I am flabbergasted! I feel fantastic I love my food. I can't wait to wake up in the mornings to feel fantastic all over again. I am going to purchase your recipe book as soon as I have finished this comment. THANKYOU THANKYOU THANKYOU". Pat

2) 30lbs in 5 weeks - posted on You Tube:

"Hi Zoe, bought the book, it's a super read, I have lost 2 stone 2lbs in 5 weeks so Many Thanks."
Techi60

One quote like you have never seen

And finally, let us put the time that humans and our direct ancestors have been on the planet into a relative timescale:

“If we have been eating food in the form that nature intended for 24 hours, agriculture (large scale access to carbohydrates) developed four minutes ago and sugar consumption has increased twenty fold in the last five seconds. I wonder which food is more likely to be responsible for obesity, diabetes, or indeed any modern disease...”

Zoë Harcombe.



About the Author:

Zoë's passion is now her vocation. Zoë spends her time researching and writing about obesity, diets and weight loss and she works exclusively in this field. She is author of the best selling book *The Harcombe Diet: Stop Counting Calories and Start Losing Weight* which was the follow-up to *Why do you overeat? When all you want is to be slim*.

The result of 20 years' research into the causes of overeating, Zoë's books go against traditional diets and are the first to address the three fundamental medical conditions that cause food cravings and therefore the compulsion to overeat. This understanding has helped thousands of people lose weight quickly, easily and healthily through *The Harcombe Diet* approach.

During her teenage years Zoë suffered from both anorexia and bulimia, which she battled for several years while becoming the first person from her state school to graduate from Cambridge University. The early years of her career were then spent fighting food cravings to rival any drug addiction.

During her 20's, Zoë suffered from all three of the medical conditions detailed in her books but no longer suffers from any of them and knows how to make sure they, and food cravings, never return. Having been free from food addiction for over 10 years, Zoë decided to put her years of experience and research onto paper, creating the heart-felt, revolutionary diet book, *Why do you overeat?*, followed by *Stop Counting Calories & Start Losing Weight*. Having experience of so many different aspects of weight, eating problems and dieting has been absolutely invaluable in helping Zoë to help others.



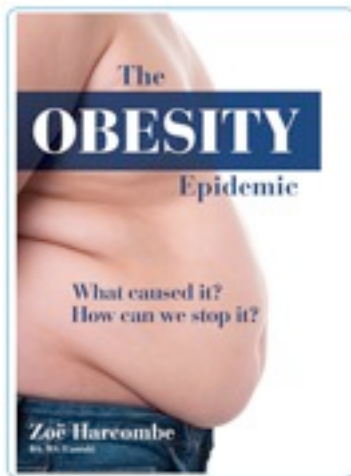


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Zoë's most recent work is a weighty (excuse the pun) book, with over 400 academic references, called [The Obesity Epidemic: What caused it? How can we stop it?](#) It was the result of two years full time research, following the many years of background research, and it challenges every premise held currently by the diet industry. At the end of this book not even the 3,500 calorie theory or five-a-day remain standing.

Zoë lives with her husband, Andy, a rescue dog and cat in the beautiful Welsh countryside. She is a member of The National Obesity Forum, Mensa and The Chocolate Society.

To find out more about Zoë and/or The Harcombe Diet, please visit:



www.zoeharcombe.com
www.theharcombediet.com
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