# Experts weigh up 1990s diets: which should make a comeback in 2025?



# Revisiting 1990s Diet Trends: Are They Worth a Second Chance?

In the ever-evolving landscape of weight loss solutions, many are turning to modern pharmacological advancements such as Ozempic. The medication, which utilises semaglutide, has been heralded for its dramatic weight loss results. However, for those wary of pharmaceutical side effects, traditional diets and exercise remain viable alternatives. Yet, the journey to discover an effective and sustainable weight loss plan can feel bewildering amidst a sea of nutritional fads.

As we reflect on decades past, particularly the 1990s, one can see a fascinating array of weight loss trends that have risen and faded into obscurity. This was a transformative period when Generation X embraced pop culture icons like Nirvana and the Spice Girls, all while navigating the ups and downs of trendy diets. Although some diets from this era persist, others have rightly been relegated to history.

Sydney-based dietitian and author Susie Burrell examines the diets from the '90s and beyond, spotlighting those worthy of revival in 2025 and those best left behind.

### Diets to Avoid

Among the more controversial dietary concepts is the Alkaline diet, famously endorsed by figures such as supermodel Elle Macpherson and Spice Girl Victoria Beckham. This regime suggests that shifting the pH balance of the body through food choices can spur weight loss. However, Burrell emphasises the absence of scientific backing for this premise. “While the notion of consuming 'alkalizing foods' might seem appealing, the body naturally maintains a steady pH level in the bloodstream regardless of dietary intake,” she elaborates. Thus, she advises consumers to resist the temptation to invest in this unfounded diet.

Another infamous contender is the Atkins diet, which gained prominence in the '90s, particularly after endorsements from celebrities like Julia Roberts. This low-carb, high-fat approach aims to achieve ketosis—a metabolic state where the body burns fat for energy. Although effective for some, Burrell cautions against its long-term sustainability. Side effects such as constipation and sugar cravings can plague followers, rendering it less appealing for long-term adherence. Expressing her scepticism, she states, “There are much better programmes out there that provide more balanced nutritional intake.”

The carnivore diet, a more recent addition to the fad diet list, has elicited both interest and scepticism. It restricts food intake to animal products exclusively, with advocates claiming benefits like improved blood pressure and significant weight loss. However, the consensus remains that this restrictive approach lacks nutritional variety and balance, heightening the risk of deficiencies. Nutritionists warn that while some may find initial success, its long-term effects resemble those seen with other extreme diets—unsustainable and potentially harmful.

### Diets Worth Trying

In contrast, several eating plans from the past are gaining fresh attention for their more balanced approaches. The 5-Factor Diet, crafted by Harley Pasternak in the mid-2000s and endorsed by celebrities like Katy Perry, stands out for its structure of five small meals each day comprising specific components. Burrell finds this balanced regime appealing, noting its potential benefits for weight loss and overall health. “Nutritionally, this diet translates into a relatively healthy way to lose weight, provided one can manage the preparation of those five precise meals daily,” she remarks.

The Zone diet, which promises weight loss through a balanced macronutrient ratio of 40% carbohydrates, 30% protein, and 30% fats, also deserves consideration. Popular amongst A-listers such as Jennifer Aniston, it encourages a wholefood-based approach rather than reliance on specially formulated products. Burrell advocates this plan as a sustainable option, stating, “It supports slow yet consistent weight loss without the need for strict portion control.”

Additionally, the Mayr Method, established by Austrian physician Franz Xaver Mayr, emphasises gut health and encourages mindful eating. This approach combines calorie limitations with a focus on fresh, whole foods, promoting a holistic view of weight management. Although its initial detoxing phases may come off as stringent, Burrell asserts its overall tenets encourage a more sustainable lifestyle.

Then there’s intermittent fasting, which, unlike many 1990s diets, is supported by a growing body of scientific research. Methods like the 16:8 plan allow for eating during an eight-hour window followed by fasting, aiming to curb calorie intake while offering significant health benefits. “The science is there,” remarks Burrell. “Intermittent fasting, particularly the 16:8 method, is relatively straightforward and effective for those looking for a manageable weight-loss strategy.”

### Conclusion

Navigating the world of weight loss can be daunting, particularly with intermittent reinforcement from both traditional and modern diets. While some past fads are rightly left behind, others may provide valuable frameworks for those looking to adopt healthier lifestyles. As Burrell suggests, approaching weight management from a balanced, informed perspective is far more beneficial than chasing fleeting trends or celebrity endorsements. With the right tools and knowledge, healthier living does not have to feel like an uphill battle.

## Reference Map:

* Paragraph 1 – [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/femail/health/article-14678419/Susie-Burrell-90s-diet-trends.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490)
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1. <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/femail/health/article-14678419/Susie-Burrell-90s-diet-trends.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.forbes.com/sites/brucelee/2021/04/21/are-there-health-benefits-to-the-carnivore-diet/> - The article discusses the carnivore diet, which focuses exclusively on animal-based foods. Advocates claim numerous health benefits, including weight loss and improved blood pressure. However, health professionals warn that this diet lacks nutritional balance and may lead to deficiencies in essential vitamins and minerals found in plant foods. The consensus is that while some individuals may experience short-term benefits, the long-term sustainability and health impacts remain questionable.
3. <https://www.healthline.com/nutrition/alkaline-diet-101> - This comprehensive resource explores the alkaline diet, which posits that foods can affect the body's pH and overall health. It outlines the basic principles of consuming alkaline foods and avoiding acid-forming options. Despite its popularity, the article critiques the diet for lacking scientific backing. Experts highlight the body's adeptness at maintaining pH levels, suggesting that the diet may be more of a fad than a viable long-term health strategy.
4. <https://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/325130> - This article provides an overview of the Atkins diet, emphasizing its low-carb, high-fat approach aimed at achieving ketosis for weight loss. While documenting its history and celebrity endorsements, the piece also details potential side effects and challenges in maintaining ketosis. Nutritionists express concerns about the diet's long-term viability, advocating for more balanced eating patterns that don’t compromise health or nutritional intake.
5. <https://www.health.com/nutrition/what-is-the-zone-diet-7594939> - The Zone diet focuses on a macronutrient balance, advocating for 40% carbs, 30% protein, and 30% fats. This article explains its principles, famous endorsements, and how it functions to support long-term weight loss. It emphasizes eating within specified time frames and consuming whole foods rather than processed products. While the diet is generally seen as sensible, some question its restrictive nature and suggest moderation instead.
6. <https://www.webmd.com/diet/what-is-the-mayr-method-diet> - The Mayr Method diet, originating from the insights of Dr. Franz Xaver Mayr, emphasizes gut health and mindful eating. This article delves into its principles, including strict calorie limits and cleaning the digestive system. It outlines initial phases involving fasting and restrictions on certain foods. Although more suited for short-term detox at health retreats, the diet suggests incorporating fresh, whole foods for sustainable weight management.
7. <https://www.healthline.com/nutrition/intermittent-fasting-guide> - Intermittent fasting, particularly the 16:8 method, is explained as a dietary approach focusing on when rather than what you eat. This article discusses the various forms of intermittent fasting, covering its benefits such as weight loss and blood sugar management. Studies backing its efficacy are highlighted, presenting it as a flexible and scientifically-supported option compared to more traditional or restrictive diet plans, making it suitable for long-term health.