Dawn Marie Martenz: Hi everybody, my name is Dawn. I am the recipe consultant for the Charlie Foundation for Ketogenic Therapies. And my background is that I have a 18-year-old daughter who lives with Dravet syndrome and she began the ketogenic diet in 2010 and she's been on that for most of her life. So life kind of took me here and we came along on this kind of a crazy adventure, but this is what worked to help stop her seizures. And ever since then I've been working with the Charlie Foundation helping to educate families and caregivers how to implement the ketogenic diet and carb recipes into their everyday life. So I'm curious to know, you can add this in the chat, if anybody here has been on a ketogenic diet or followed a low-carb diet for their epilepsy, I would love to know that. If anybody's had any experience with it, tried it, maybe it wasn't successful, all of it, or maybe you're interested in it.

So also thank you to cure epilepsy for having us here and letting us do this little demo. So I'm going to get right into it. And I'm sorry my countertop isn't a little prettier, but we'll make do. What I wanted to talk about today was some staple food items. And this is where a lot of people really kind of have a few high up and get a little bit nervous when they start thinking about low-carb foods. So if you could start those slides for me, that would be great. So when I say staple foods, really what I'm talking about is rice, which I have here and beans. And these are two foods that we eat on a regular basis in my house and I know a lot of other families rely on rice, beans, and these are traditionally much higher carb foods. So next slide if you can go to that. So when we talk about low-carb foods, transitioning to eating low-carb is often the hardest part. And so what we've developed here is a little process to shift from eating a hundred percent rice, which you see in this container, right?

This is just basic white rice, it's very high carb, very high glycemic, and it is not keto friendly at all. And no surprise the answer is cauliflower rice and this is the package that I've used. And what we do in this rice cooker, this is just your traditional plug in rice cooker that sits on the countertop is I have worked with cooking the rice in with the cauliflower. And what happens is the rice starch coats the cauliflower and it makes it so that the cauliflower is nearly unidentifiable in the rice. So oftentimes people will be okay with just eating cauliflower rice and they transition easily. And other times some people have a really hard time letting go of eating the starchy rice. So this is a way to slowly acclimate your taste buds or your loved one's taste buds to accepting the cauliflower rice. So the first phase of this would be appropriate for pre keto or lower carb diets, and it's just one bag of cauliflower rice and this is a 12 ounce bag plus one cup of rice in a rice cooker.

You add the correct amount of water for the rice, cook it together, mix it together halfway through cooking, and you've automatically cut your carbs in half. Second step would be increasing the cauliflower, decreasing the rice, and so on. And if you could go to the next slide. So what you see here are calculations from the keto diet calculator and you can see with step one, you've reduced the carbs to 30 net carbs, step two that's cut in half almost to 16 net carbs and so forth, all the way down to just below three net carbs. And that means that you're eating mostly cauliflower rice and just a little bit of traditional white rice. Next slide please. To further help with help low-carb diets. What this process also does and what we can think about is that you're lowering the glycemic index of the foods that you're eating.

White rice in particular has a very high glycemic index, meaning that it increases your glucose levels quickly versus cauliflower, which has fiber and less glucose in it, it increases your blood sugar much more slowly. So it would be smart and a wise choice for anybody that's interested in low-carb diets and improving their health to switch to cauliflower rice. You can take this a step further and you can cook this rice in the rice cooker and then simply put it in the refrigerator and let it cool completely. Now what that does is the starch in the rice converts to resistant starch, which is exactly what it sounds like it's resistant to your digestive track, meaning that it further reduces the glycemic index.

So there's only really one way to know if this is helpful for you, and that's to test your blood sugar after eating yourself at home with a monitor. Does anybody have any questions about that? Let me see. If not, I wanted to make this fun little meal, and these are little mini bean tacos and I call them crunchy tacos because they have this cheese coating on the outside that gets very crispy. Okay, now we're on the camera. Everybody can see the food, right? I'm not sure. Can you guys see my face as well? I'm not sure if you can see me talking or just my hands. However, okay, so like I mentioned, we also have... Okay, no face, just hands. Okay, so beans are another staple and there is a canned bean available in the grocery store. These are Eden black soybeans if you can see that. And these have the same texture, maybe just not quite as creamy as pinto beans, but just like any canned bean. You can see it breaks apart in my fingers.

They are in the can, ready to go, and they're great for a lower carb replacement. So these beans have 11 total carbs and six of that is fiber. So you're looking at less than five carbs per serving. One half cup is a serving, so that's quite a generous portion and significantly less carbohydrate than traditional black beans or pinto beans. So what I've done is take these beans from the can and rinse them and then just sauteed them with a little bit of onion powder and garlic powder and then added just a little bit of water and pureed them. And I just use the food processor and this is just a very basic refried beans. To increase the fat for ketogenic diets, I've added some bacon fat. This is just plain bacon fat that I've saved from cooking bacon. And that is the fat that's in these beans.

Now the beans, because they have a starchy consistency hold onto quite a bit of fat and you can really add quite a bit of fat if you're on a low-carb diet to puree beans and they hold onto it quite well. So right here, let see, I have this little mini dash cooker. The waffle makers are very, very popular and you see them in a lot of recipes online and you can find them at target. This one, if you can see is just a flat griddle and it doesn't have a waffle design in it. And this is preheated. So this comes in handy for so many fun things. You can make any type of low-carb pancakes, you can grill a single burger patty in here. It's just a really fun little device. And I'm a fan of these because like I said, I have an 18-year-old daughter and she really is working towards independently preparing some of her meals. So these devices are safer than her using the stove.

So the first thing I'm going to do is just spread some cheese in here. This is just plain shredded cheese and then just kind of let it start melting. And what I'm looking for is for this cheese to melt completely and I'll try and hold it up so you can see as well. And it's going to start bubbling up and it's going to get crispy around the edges. The product that I'm using, I have two different ways of making these, is these mission zero carbs, street taco, hopefully you can see this, shells. And you'll notice this sneaky little keto certified emblem on there. This means nothing. This means that they have worked the numbers in their favor to say that they're low-carb. If you're following a strict ketogenic diet for epilepsy, highly processed products like these, you do need to be a little bit more careful with. If you're just following a low-carb diet, this is a great starting place for you to move away from some of the higher carb foods.

This is how big they are. You can see in my hand, they're quite small. In the keto diet calculator, some of the fiber is not count so that these reflect a little bit higher carb than zero. But for low-carb diets, this is a great starting place and they don't taste any different than other tortillas. So my daughter doesn't mind them, I don't mind them. My son eats them and he is on a traditional diet. So okay, this is now the stage that we need and you can see that cheese is bubbling and kind of making a sizzling sound. So I'm just going to take this little tortilla, pop it right on top, and then take some of the refried beans that I made earlier and we're just going to spread that out.

We're going to let that cook for a minute. For seasonings, we have a couple different low-carb options. Hot sauce is always a good low-carb option. There we go. Just make sure it's chilies, salt and vinegar. And then my family really likes the tajin seasoning and this is basically chilies with dehydrated lime juice if you've never tried this. It's not spicy, it has a nice flavor. Okay, so all right, now all we're going to do is just fold this in half and see the cheese comes with the tortilla and makes a fun little bean taco. The second way you can do this is again, we're going to add the cheese. Does anybody else have any of these little mini dash makers? If you do, you can add that in the comments. I have a whole selection of them. I'm going to actually sprinkle some of the tajin on.

And this one we're going to make without the tortilla and it's just going to be the cheese shell. And this is really kind of a fun way to make a ultra low-carb unprocessed taco shell is with cheese only. That's only one ingredient and that's all you need. We're going to let this bubble away. Where do we stand with the cauliflower rice? Has anybody been enjoying that or not liking it? So there's a question up there, are the flavored, like you see the garlic herb, cauliflower rice, they do not have more carbohydrate listed on the package, but I would expect you could always add at least one gram of carbohydrate if there's a flavoring at it. That's just to be on the safe side. Again, if you're on a strict ketogenic diet, you would want to take that into consideration. If you're just on a low-carb diet, it's really not that important. And then I see another question. Does a regular stainless steel skillet and egg turner work? Absolutely. Although I would use a non-stick pan or I would bake this in the oven on parchment paper.

The other thing you can do is again, on parchment paper is microwave this for about one minute. Is there a substitute for cheese that I'd recommend. In this case, the cheese proteins are cooking and that is what is making it crunchy. So I don't think that a cheese substitute would work. I've never tried it to be completely honest with a vegan type cheese, but I don't expect that it would work because of the proteins that are not in there. Okay, so this one you can see I did not add a tortilla, I just spread the beans onto the cheese and with the non-stick pan, this just flips right over and as it cools, hopefully you can see that over there, this cheese becomes very crispy. In fact, I'll add some more here just like a chip. And sometimes we actually eat these chips and just microwave some quickly or throw a few rounds into this little cooker. This little stand right here has a W shape. This is a taco shell holder and this is a really great way to make a taco shell and I'll show you as soon as this comes out.

While that's cooking, I thought I would show you how to safely cut an avocado and not end up cutting yourself. So what you want to do is hold the avocado flat with your palm on the counter and then I'm just going to... That one's already cut. I'm just going to put the knife in the middle, but spin the avocado in my hand and I know that's a little hard to see to cut it in half and then you twist it open, half will have the seed, half will not. But to get the seed out, instead of doing this trick where you see people hit the knife into the seed, you just can simply squeeze it and the seed pops right out out. And then you can take your knife and you still get nice slices and then use the spoon and you can scoop out the slices and serve the alongside the little tacos.

Okay, let me bring my taco shell holder back and that just needs another minute. If you can see here, the middle is still a little gooey and the edges look a little more brown with tiny bubbles. I'm looking for the very small bubbles that are on the edges versus the bigger bubbles that you see here in the middle. So as soon as those big bubbles start dissipating and they all kind of become very tiny bubbles, that's when you know the cheese is done and it also has a sizzling sound versus a bubbling sound, if that makes sense. Has anybody made these cheese taco shells at home before? So now I'm just going to pull this out and lay it right over here. And as it cools, it will keep the shape of the taco shell holder. You can just do this if you don't have a little taco holder. You can also use just foil kind of scrunched up into a pyramid shape. Or you could use the edge of a bowl and that works too. Or you just keep them flat and break them into chips.

So it says you couldn't get them crispy enough without burning them. And let's talk about what type of cheese you would use that may have been the problem. I like to use just cheddar cheese, which is just shredded plain cheddar. The drier the cheese is, the easier these will be to bake. The more moist and soft the cheeses, the longer that these are going to bake because more moisture needs to cook out. Does that make sense? Okay. All right, good. So here you say we have, this is the cheese bean taco. Has anybody tried the black soybeans or even noticed them? And then this is the one with the tortilla shell, but the outside is crunchy and can you hear that? And they're really crispy and delicious and these have significantly less carbs than regular black beans in a regular tortilla shell. And then of course you could make a meal out of this, you would need extra protein. And for that, in my house, we would simply use grilled chicken or just some plain ground beef and make a complete meal with this. So does anybody have any other questions?

A good place to find all these ingredients. All these ingredients for me come from my local grocery store, which is giant. I'm on the East Coast in Virginia and Giant is a pretty basic no frills grocery store. So if I can find it there, most of the time people can find it in their regular grocery stores. You can always order things like this on Amazon or Thrive Market, which is an online grocery store. They always have the black soybeans that again, the brand is Eden. And this is the only brand that I've ever seen with the canned black soybeans.

And then I think there was a few questions that were submitted earlier and if we could put them up, let me check here. Okay, is there a time limit on how long one should be on the low-carb keto diet? And if you're experimenting or trying keto for epilepsy or another neurological health concern, then the basic minimum is always three months. And that is because it takes a while for the body to really become efficient at being in ketosis. And you want to give time for that to happen. The first couple of weeks are really a transition week, and then there's healing that happens after beginning the diet and following it for a while that may take time to present itself.

So another question is what do you do if your child is autistic and has a very limited diet, she will eat carbs being the majority of her likes. So this is exactly why I have kind of addressed that concern with this process. It's because we hear that a lot at the Charlie Foundation. People are very used to eating a high carb diet and rice is a staple, beans are a staple, other cereals. And really it just takes time and exposure to other foods. So always offering two choices before starting keto, especially with a child that's autistic. Kind of the best option would be is to offer a food that they're familiar with and then also offer a new food, but keep offering that new food over and over and over again. And hopefully eventually they will be willing to try it on their own versus feeling like they have no options.

Is the person that asked that in this, if you're here, just say hi. And I'm sorry, I have to toggle between. So how many total carbs in this meal? So this one taco shell that's just cheese is going to be about six net carbs with the beans and just the cheese. And then this one is going to be with the tortilla, sorry, is going to be a slightly higher, about eight carbs. Do you worry about high cholesterol and is there a way to manage cholesterol, more fiber? So high cholesterol, the dieticians and the neurologist are the best person to talk to about that. But generally no. What we've been told is that even if a child or an adult develops higher cholesterol while on the ketogenic diet, it's considered transient and does not leave a lasting impact. More fiber is always good. And avocados, for example, are one of the best sources of fiber on a ketogenic diet.

So my daughter from my personal experience has been on every ratio from four to one, which is the most restrictive form of the ketogenic diet, all the way to the lowest ratio, which she maintains to this day. And that is about a one to one ratio or a modified ketogenic diet. And she has never actually had high cholesterol. We do primarily use MCT oil and olive oil as her two main fats. There is butter, there is bacon fat from time to time, but no more than the rest of our family is eating. And then there's a question for what are the different versions of the ketogenic diet, the Hollywood version, the MAD, M-A-D version. Okay, so there is lifestyle keto, and that's what you see in the grocery store. That is packaged foods that are labeled kind of like these would fall into that category for lifestyle keto or a low-carb diet. And that's okay for anybody and everybody to eat. That just means there's less carbs and there's less sugar in your diet, and a focus on protein and fat and low-carb vegetables and other ingredients. So that is not a medical diet and that is just a starting place. And it can be helpful to start shifting your likes and your dislikes towards keto by utilizing some of those products.

In a medically supervised ketogenic diet, there are very few processed foods. So it is a whole foods based diet and that encompasses the one-to-one, two-to-one, three-to-one and four-to-one ratio diets as well as low glycemic index and the modified Atkins diets, otherwise known as MAD. There should be very few processed foods and the focus is on the fat and then followed by adequate protein and then additional as allowed up to your carbohydrate intake, low-carb vegetables and low glycemic fruits. So what is keto adaptation and what does it feel like? So keto adaptation basically is the state where your body is switching from using glucose for fuel, sorry about that, to ketones for fuel. And in that transition period, you can feel sluggish, have some brain fog, feel tired, sometimes like a low appetite, but that passes. Nausea is also kind of a common side effect and that passes within a couple days and with staying well hydrated and eating low glycemic foods.

So there was a question of, I think you said, what are the low glycemic fruits? And yes, you are correct. Olives and avocado are both fruits. This is a fruit and olives are fruit. And those would be among the two lowest glycemic fruits followed by berries, raspberries, blackberries, blueberries, strawberries, and then the highest glycemic fruits on the opposite hand would be your tropical fruits like pineapple, mangoes, bananas that you would want to avoid as much as possible. Okay, so the keto flu and how can you avoid it was another question that we had. And keto flu is similar to what is keto adaptation, and that's just feeling poorly while you're adjusting to eating a low-carb diet and using ketones for energy versus glucose. And again, that can be lessened with mild exercise like walking, staying hydrated with low sugar electrolytes and really just focusing on whole foods and avoiding many of the processed foods.

And then another question is how can I tell if I am in ketosis? You can tell that you're in ketosis, oftentimes the easiest is with a glucose meter. The Precision Extra and the Keto Mojo both have options for a ketone finger stick and it will tell you your ketone level. You can also use the urine strips and they will tell you if there's ketones detected in your urine, but you can also tell by your breath. Sometimes we'll have a slightly acidic smell to it and that goes away. But most of the time people can tell because they feel a surge in energy and your brain fog tends to disappear and you're thinking more clearly. So my top recommendation would be to get a meter that can test ketones, blood ketones, and that's the most accurate way for testing at home.

Okay, so I think that is the last question. Does anybody have anything else? This session is recorded so you can come back and revisit it and you can find lots more information on the Charlie Foundation website and you can also visit the Cure epilepsy site and they'll provide some links to our materials. All right, thank you Deb. She says, "Looks great." It was nice being here tonight, and if there's no more questions, then I will see you again soon.