THE ATKINS DIET: Very high protein and fat, very low carbohydrate (only 20 grams per day in initial phase; can increase up to 40-60 carbs per day in later phases). Eat: Meat, poultry, fish, eggs, butter, mayonnaise, cheese, milk, vegetable oils, some vegetables. Don’t eat: fruit, bread, pasta, grains, starchy vegetables, nuts, seeds or beans in the initial phase; small amounts may be added back in during later phases.

THE MEDITERRANEAN DIET: Up to 40 percent total fat, low saturated fat, moderate protein and carbohydrate. Eat: Grains, beans, vegetables, fruits, fish, poultry, low-fat dairy, olive oil and other vegetable oils high in mono- and polyunsaturated fats. Don’t eat: Red meat, eggs, sugar, butter, full-fat dairy, processed foods.

THE ORNISH DIET: Very high carbohydrate, very low fat (only 10 percent of daily calories from fat). Eat: Beans, legumes, fruits, grains, vegetables, non-fat dairy. Don’t eat: meat, poultry, fish, fats or oils, nuts, seeds, high- or low-fat dairy, sugar, white flour, white rice.

LEARN: Low fat, high carbohydrate, based on the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Food Guide Pyramid. Eat: Grains, vegetables, and fruits; moderate amounts of meat, poultry, fish, beans, nuts, and dairy; small amounts of oils and sugars. Don’t eat: No foods are prohibited, but number of servings per day of each food group is emphasized.

THE SOUTH BEACH DIET: Moderate carbohydrate with a low glycemic index (GI), moderate protein and fat with emphasis on unsaturated fat. (Lower-GI foods cause blood sugar to rise and fall more slowly.) Eat: Lean meat, poultry, fish, nuts, fat-free or low-fat dairy, eggs, vegetables, vegetable oils. Don’t eat: Bread, rice, pasta, potatoes, fruit, full-fat dairy in Phase One; small amounts may be added back in during Phases Two and Three.

THE ZONE: Balance of 40 percent carbohydrate, 30 percent protein, and 30 percent fat in small meals 5-6 times a day. Eat: Vegetables, lean meat, poultry, fish, vegetables, most fruits, vegetable oils, low-fat dairy. Don’t eat: White flour, white rice, pasta, bread, bananas, carrots, fruit juice, eggs, red meat, full-fat dairy.