

# Experts divided on merits of popular weightloss plan

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PORT Elizabeth dieticians are divided on the effectiveness of Banting, the new diet craze which has taken the city by storm.

While one praises the controversial way of eating, most call it a health hazard.

Banting is a high-fat, medium-protein, low-carb eating plan that encourages participants to enjoy the fat content of their meals.

Port Elizabeth health coach Tanya Wyatt said that, as someone who had been

studying banting for more than 10 years, she thought it one of the best ways to diet.

"All diets are problematic. The diet looks at insulin-resistant people, carbohydrate-resistant individuals – more especially since he [Professor Tim Noakes] has diabetes himself. The diet works better with European descendants but it has worked with some African and Indian descendants too," Wyatt said.

But others say the Noakes diet is careless and can have severe health side-effects for some weightloss hopefuls

Dietician Margaret Galpin said she

would not endorse banting as it was not suitable for everyone and should only be done under the supervision of a doctor.

"Banting causes additional stress to the kidneys. For women, it increases the chance of breast cancer, decreases bone mass and can effect depression."

St George's Hospital dietician Rene Smalberger said there was not enough scientific background for her to endorse the

Tim Noakes diet. "It is an unhealthy diet and people have fallen ill because of it.

"It is not nutritionally adequate, it does not have enough vitamins, minerals, proteins, carbohydrates and fats in a ratio needed for your body to function optimally," Smalberger said.

"The diet does not take any other pre-existing medical conditions into consideration, and I do not endorse it."

The Noakes eating plan has come under much scrutiny from dieticians and doctors. Experts remain divided on the benefits or lack thereof of banting.

For die-hard banters, the meal plan includes a "bulletproof coffee", which is a cup of coffee blended with a teaspoon of coconut oil and a teaspoon of butter.

The majority of dieticians in the city have spoken out strongly against the diet.

Dietician Magda Black said it might not be sustainable. "I believe healthy eating habits are more sustainable in the long run if you want to lose weight."

**Healthy eating habits are more sustainable if you want to lose weight**