



A QOD, QTD, Q?D Diet

BOOK REVIEW

By Ted Fourkas

The QOD Diet by John T. Daugirdas, MD, White Swan Publishing, Willowbrook, IL, ISBN-10-9774614-0-8, 147 pages, \$18.95

THIS IS A SHORT BOOK. About a third of it is appendices - including a log of the author's trial of the diet. Some text is filler, such as a chapter on fasting by different religions. It is short because it promotes a simple idea: You can lose weight by a semi-fast every other day.

Dr. Daugirdas, a retired kidney specialist, would probably not recommend treatment not verified by controlled studies. But he has written a book for hundreds or thousands of readers absent any controlled study.

So he trots out caveats: don't try this diet if you're a child or over age 60, if you have heart problems, if you're diabetic, if you have to restrict sodium or potassium intake, if you're a binge eater, if your blood pressure is too high or too low, or if you're taking medications affected by food intake. Or if you don't like vegetables.

But if you're a suitable candidate, cut back to about 400 calories (500 with exercise) every other day and gradually lose up to 25 pounds. The key to the diet? It avoids a change in metabolism - which dooms most diets by kicking into "starvation mode" after a few days.

"Every day" in medical shorthand is q.d., from the Latin *quaque die*. "Every other day" in similar shorthand is q.o.d. - the same Latin separated by an English word, *other*. That's where the book title comes from. (Latin for "every other day" is actually *quaque altera die*, or q.a.d., which apparently no one uses.)

When I told the Editorial Committee I might review this book, I was met with skepticism bordering on derision. "Diets don't work." "You have to change your life style, and exercise."

And then committee members flat out challenged me to try it out. So I did, even though I'm well over the 60-year limit. I'm reasonably healthy, and semi-fasting appeared to be benign.

I adopted several of the author's recommendations. A breakfast of egg whites (for protein) and tomato juice (for potassium and sodium). Vegetables for lunch and dinner. No bread. No alcohol. Coffee is ok, but it is a diuretic, so avoid caffeine in the afternoon.

I actually used a fat-free egg product, microwaved to scrambled egg consistency and topped with chipotle tabasco sauce (better tasting and less spicy than the original tabasco sauce). Lunch was typically a package of spinach sprinkled with lemon juice. For dinner, I opted for smaller portions. I also made an important change for regular eating days: no more big seconds at dinner (though I sometimes have a "half second").

I discovered after a couple of semi-fasting, or "off" days, that q.o.d. did not work. Food was constantly on my mind. The solution was semi-fasting every *third* day (which neatly

abbreviates to q.t.d. in both Latin and English). But in a few weeks I settled on a more convenient schedule - twice a week, typically Sunday and Thursday (for which there is no suitable abbreviation).

The result: on the day I wrote this review, I had lost 15 pounds over 162 days. Not very impressive, but not painful, either. I don't mind the "off" day, and often look forward to it. I have felt no side-effects, not even a lack of energy the author warns against. The biggest surprise: interrupting my usual evening highball a couple of times a week has lessened my desire or anticipation for an alcoholic drink.

And I suspect I can maintain this q.?d. diet for months to come - if only to claim it works. That is, *quod erat de-monstratum*, q.e.d.

t4kas@comcast.net

Sierra Sacramento Valley Medical Society
5380 Elvas Avenue #100 • Sacramento, CA 95819
916.452.2671 PH • 916.452.2690 FX • Email: info@ssvms.org

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