

The Paleolithic Solution - Episode 29

1. Question from Sundog:

Hello Robb!

Long time listener, first time caller. Nine years ago, mine and my partner's health plummeted after some prolonged solvent exposure coming over from the neighboring apartment and compounded by a black mold infestation in our apartment. Our health steadily declined for the first several years but in the last three we seem to have leveled off at about 25% functional capacity. It has left us nearly fully housebound, bedridden about 8-10 of our waking hours a day and completely knackered. In my never ending search to find a way back to health for us, we swapped to a strict Paleo lifestyle just over three months ago and have seen a small improvement. We are in our early 30's, have been diagnosed with Chronic Fatigue Syndrome, Multiple Chemical Sensitivity, and Fibromyalgia. Our allergies are crazy bad to most chemicals which has left us homeless in a tent for the last eight years.

I had a couple of questions about leaky gut, supplement inactive ingredients, and the Now Super Enzymes.

1. I have no doubt our gut is leaky as a sieve and we have been taking aloe, slippery elm, and marshmallow for six months to try and aid this. We use lots of organic coconut oil with our cooking and about a month ago started taking copious amounts of Kirkland fish oil (13.5g/day, we both weigh ~170 and are working up the amount). Two weeks ago we removed all eggs and nuts, have been dairy free since going Paleo. We haven't been able to afford grass fed meat yet, but do buy hormone and antibiotic free. Any ideals on how long a bad leaky gut problem can take to heal and/or experience greatly reduced inflammation? Anything else that you know of which we could try to do to help speed this up?

2. We have been taking Source Natural's Pancreatin 8x enzymes for six months and I recently picked up a bottle of the Now Super Enzymes to give them a whirl as they have the HCl the other ones lack. At 2 caps per meal I had a bit of a bad aftertaste which I suspect was the HCl as it reminded me much of smells from chem lab years ago, but no heat. Tried 3 caps for two meals but though there was no heat, it produced a surprising amount of burping, a general sour feeling in my stomach and later my gut, and even more of a bad aftertaste. Any thoughts? Too little, too much?

3. Lastly, our doctor has us on many, many supplements to help with the lack of nutrients our body had been absorbing from our very poor diet. I'm a bit concerned the added 'inert' ingredients in the capsules might be tossing a wrench in us trying to remedy the leaky gut. Are there some non-obvious things I should watch out for on the ingredient list?

Thank you very much for all the time and effort both you and Andy put into these podcasts. I have learned an incredible amount of information and feel very strongly that you have already helped my partner and I make healing progress we might otherwise have been much slower to achieve. Also, I attended Butte College for couple years at one point in my travels so hearing you and Andy chatting about Chico always feels like a little piece of home.

Have a beautiful day, Lisa/Sundog

2. Question from Gil:

Hey Robb,

I love the podcast and website. It has converted me to a completely new way of eating.

Some stuff about me:

I'm 6'4", 236lb, and one of those steering wheel fat measurement things says I'm at 18% body fat.

I have switched to eating completely paleo, with the only exception being that sometimes my budget can only afford meat from Winco. I get London Broil whenever I can, but sometimes they don't have anything and I have to get fattier cuts of meat. Whenever I do get grassfed meat, I get fatty cuts and eat less fat. I eat a 19 block zone diet with 5 blocks carbs and replace the rest with fat. I get mI just switched from a meals program at my dorm which did not serve very helpful choices. Although this would be the only non-paleo food I ate, I would always feel miserable afterward and my sleep was wrecked. This also hurt my training schedule, and while I used to train six times a week, I am now working back up to it, training about 4 times a week now. I Crossfit and play soccer, and am looking at joining an MMA studio. I love MMA and would love to get back into training for it. I have been a schedule before (when I wasn't eating paleo) where I would train Monday through Saturday (alternating weight lifting and kickboxing), and never burnt out for 6 months. As such, I would love to do a high amount of work, but if I need to resist and stay at the 4 times a week to lean out that's fine. I eat fat and protein for recovery meals. I have a fairly regular schedule and sleep 8-10 hours a night. I store fat around the navel, which makes me think I might have elevated cortisol levels.

My question:

First, even though I have gone completely paleo before, for longer than a month, my weight and leanness stayed almost exactly the same. All the factors were the same. I don't seem to have leaned out at all, and the only sign of anything is that I didn't feel like crap all the time after eating. I dialed EVERYTHING I could think off. Why didn't I lean out? And why am I not leaning out now? How long is this supposed to take? Am I doing enough work or too little? Is it possible that I'm not eating enough?

Thanks,
Gil

3. Question from Ryan:

Hey Robb and Andy,

Thanks for another excellent show with some great questions and answers – very informative and entertaining as always.

I have a question regarding adrenal fatigue; I've just read Adrenal Fatigue: 21st Century Stress Syndrome by James L Wilson and in it he recommends increased sodium intake for sufferers of adrenal fatigue. This seems to be an across the board recommendation for Adrenal Fatigue/Chronic Fatigue Syndrome. With a Paleo Diet being particularly low in sodium, would you support this recommendation?

Another question which I may regret asking is regarding meal frequency for adrenal fatigue recovery – it also seems to be an across the board recommendation for adrenal fatigue to eat at regular intervals in order to limit cortisol release. This is obviously at odds with your general recommendations but could it have merit in this instance?

I know you've received a number of questions regarding adrenal fatigue so I'm hoping it will feature on a podcast soon but I would love to hear your thoughts on diet, exercise and

supplementation for this condition – particularly on your own experiences and that of your trainer at NorCal. I have read your blog post on the topic and am keen to hear more about a recovery protocol. It's obviously individual but how much exercise is OK? Is it mainly glycolytic work we need to eliminate or cut way back on?

Thanks again for all you do. Sorry for the long question again. No need to put it on the show but if you could work it into a general recommendation it would be very much appreciated.

4. Question from Tony:

Robb, while listening to episode 22 and the discussion re: pavlovian insulin response to pictures of food, it made me wonder re: intermittent fasting. First, I have my diet in check and I am performance based priorities. I have been playing with IF and found it to be more like torture than beneficial. I am a grazer for food so fasting was painful but I digress. If we can see food and cuz a possible insulin response, wouldn't fasting cause an even greater insulin response thereby blunting the positive effects? Someone like myself who is a natural grazer, would they be even more affected? I guess this is kind of like your reference to a big meal vs little meal and insulin response. I know my tinkering with this caused me to fantasize about food more often during fasting periods, with the occasional mid meeting drool episode. Thanks

5. Question from Alex:

Hey Robb, great news on the book, can't wait to buy several copies.

I just finished reading some Michael Pollan (Omnivore's Dilemma and In Defense of Food) and was thinking about his assertions about the state of Nutrition Science ie. studies are based on reporting by subjects that is mostly lies or fabrications, and that our understanding of most Nutrition Science is based on nutritionism and the reductionist study of one or a few nutrients or lifestyle factors at a time and not a more holistic interpretation of these problems

As a nutrition science researcher, what do you think about the state of this young science and the validity of research methods commonly applied in the field?

6. Question from LA:

Hi Robb,

Do you have any advice for hard-gainers? My husband has been trying to gain weight since high school and cannot seem to do it. We transitioned to a paleo diet back in October, with him still eating oatmeal every morning and sometimes rice or beans. He is terrified to drop them because he is so lean. He does drink 4 gallons of whole milk per week, but it hasn't seemed to make much of a difference.

How lean, you ask? The man is 36 years old, 6'4, 165lbs and 3-5% bodyfat. Our calculator might be a bit off, but you can see every muscle, all his ribs (front and back) and veins. I will send you a picture if you want, but he is truly one of the leanest people I have ever seen (don't call him skinny though...he gets very offended).

Training: We own a small MMA gym, so he does Muay Thai/BJJ with conditioning 4x per week (approx. 75 minutes), heavy weightlifting 1x per week (he can clean well over his bodyweight), light yoga 1x per week (rest day) and swimming 1x per week. We also commute to the gym and work, so he bikes quite a bit. His performance is good, but he really wants to gain weight.

Thanks so much for all the information you provide!

7. Question from DamnDirtyApe:

Robb,

Just discovered your site – love the podcast and I'm going through them all in sequence from the beginning.

I have been eating very Paleo now for a little over a month and love it (aside from diet coke, which I am really really having difficulty cutting down due to a lifelong addiction of 3-5 cans per day)

I have been getting my wife to adopt the tenets as well, but she has two main sticking points I was hoping you could address:

1) She has had minor IBS ever since getting E.Coli while in Mexico doing charity work in high school. On a 3 week paleoesque diet she has generally felt good so far, but is convinced that a daily portion of greek yogurt is good for the flora in her stomach. Plus she craves the stuff. Do you think cutting it out is critical, and is all that pro-biotic stuff really valid?

2) My wife has also been getting minor stomach cramps after eating heavy veggie laden meals and I'm thinking this might be due to her sensitive system/IBS tendencies

She also get monthly nausea due to the ortho-evra patch and wants to include some sort of mild bread or starchy stuff when the nausea and cramps happens to help settle her stomach. In your opinion what would be the least damaging go-to food for that? white bread? sweet potatoes? white rice? saltines? (her preferred choice). Also what would be your worst, "last resort" foods – bran muffins? wheat/rye bread? beans?

Hope to hear your input. Keep up the great clog and podcast.

8. Question from Nainoa

I have heard you comment a few times that you should work out according to how you are designed, that training long and hard if you're an explosive athlete can lead to excessive cortisol production. Well I am nearly 100% fast twitch. At 300 lbs I can out sprint the average man, I can out shuttle my semipro football teams skilled players. However, when I run in excess of 70yds I look like your average fat guy again.

I am willing(or trying to be willing) to forsake my strength and power to make sure I don't die at 58 like my dad. I dream of climbing crap, doing Edo like balancing stuff, running, swimming, and doing Parkour. Is it just not in my cards? I try to program in occasional 3-5k runs but they smash me and ruin the rest of my workouts. Should I worry about losing weight before I start trying to run? Should I expose my CNS more to the stress of my bouncing gerth so it gets used to it? If I succeed at losing weight living Paleo will I still not be able to train for endurance without counter-productive cortisol?

You have no idea how thankful I am for your work. I never take for granted that you are giving me access to info that will extend and better my life. Thank you.