

The Paleolithic Solution - Episode 33

1. Question from Shea:

Hello Rob,

I have been diagnosed with Hashimoto's disease and have been on thyroxine for the past year. Is there anything I can do with Paleo or any diet (adding any foods, drinks, supplements) to balance my thyroid levels to normal so I can discontinue thyroxine use? Thank you so much!

2. Question from Becky and Paul:

Aloha,

Our son has severe nut allergies and we are trying to find good alternatives to almond butter, almond flour, etc. Can you please give us some guidance? I was looking at Quinoa flour but can't find whether it is a good source?

Thank you,

3. Question from Erik:

Robb,

Thank you for the podcast, they have been informative and I look forward to learning something each week. I recently competed in the South Central Regional in Ft. Worth at what is called Hell's Half Acre, but it only resembled hell if they turned up the heat. I definitely notice performance drop offs in the summer as the heat turns up in Texas, as our box relies on industrial fans but no central air. My question is there a way to eat within paleo to work on countering some of the effects of triple digit heat or a generally warm natured condition. I spoke with Sam Nix and he mentioned that you spoke about the topic at a Nutrition Seminar in San Diego a while back, but I haven't heard about the topic on the podcast, and Summer is here.

A little background, I am 29yo 5'10" 185lbs and as soon as I start warming up I pour sweat, the trainers are thinking of getting me a mop bucket with my name on it if that gives you a picture of my post workout condition. I have been eating paleo with 1 cheat a week usually dark chocolate covered almonds pecans or ice cream since January. My hydration averages between 2L and 1 Gallon of water a day depending on level of intensity heat etc. I drink two cups of coffee a day. I have been known as a sweater in all sports I have competed in so this is not a new condition. I generally run very warm and get hot in situations where others are comfortable. Not sure what would be relevant so I tried to put as much as possible.

4. Question from Anthony:

Thank you so guys for the great shows each week, with several of the members of my box listening each week, the total listener ship in Southwest Florida is getting bigger every day.

I'm a 35 year old law enforcement officer and affiliate owner.

I follow a paleo diet with off the rails cheat meals usually every two weeks. At 5'-10" and 170# I maintain between 7-9%BF.

My lifts and WOD times are average, Fran in 4:40, Helen 8:32, C&J 230#, DL 365#, Snatch 170#.

I just recently competed in our Sectionals and again with an affiliate team at Regionals. At

sectionals I finished right in the middle of the pack and at smaller local events I normally finish quiet well (top 5).

I have just recently gotten into 5,3,1 and love the program, I generally use OPT's programming however for GPP.

My goal for 2011 is to advance through Sectionals.

If you were me, how would you spend the next year of training and eating. My problems are; I tend to feel a bit skinny and feel I might be better off 10# heavier but I have always been a hard gainer. Between running a box and being an LEO I think I have developed circadian rhythm sleep disorder. Regardless of what time I go to sleep, usually 3:30am, I wake up at 7:33am.

Thanks again for putting out a great show every week.

5. Question from Julien:

Hi Robb,

Can I just say that my fiance(Lisa) is a MASSIVE fan as am I. She wishes you did more podcasts as she hangs out every Wednesday morning here in OZ for the new ones. Anyway back to me(haha), I know you have probably covered this before but I am still a little confused, which is not hard, on pre work out meals. I have been on paleo for approx 4mths now with very minimal dairy(a smidge in my long machiato and my protein shake). I have just finished my protein powder tub and would prefer to stay away from the protein shakes all together. I have been having a shake with BCAA's, Glutamine and Flax Seed oil pre workouts wether it's Crossfit Style or strength conditioning the rest of my meals through out the day seem to be perfect. My weekly morning schedule is Crossfit 2 times a week, Strength once a week, agility/plyometrics once a week with one day of boxing on the bag(5x3minute rounds). I also train Brazilian Jiu Jitsu 3 times a week, in the evenings, as I have fallen in love with the sport and have started to compete. My educated fiance,thanks to you guys, makes me a omelette with 3 whole eggs some sweet potato, nutmeg, cinnamon and frozen blueberries every morning for post workouts which I find gives me great recovery. So to finally get to my question could you suggest some pre work out meals for me? I prefer to ask you as I can't always rely on my fiance to do it all for me. Any help would be greatly appreciated. Please let us know if you ever have the chance to come to Australia as we would be honoured to have you here in our beautiful country. Keep up the awesome job!!!!

6. Question from Dave:

Hi Robb and Andy,

G'day from your only listener in Australia! :) (I'm sure you're pretty sick of that joke by now). Absolutely love your work and podcast and look forward to each week's episode.

Apologies in advance for the long question (please feel free to edit as required), but I hope you can help me or confirm for me that I'm on the right track. I know my condition is not typical of the type of thing you see on a day-to-day basis, but hey, you da man! And I respect your thoughts. I figure you might be up for a bit of a challenge! :-)

10 years ago I was diagnosed with Hepatitis B. I found out about my condition via a life insurance policy blood test, and to say the least I was completely floored by the news when I found out. Like many people with this disease, I have no idea how I contracted it (never taken intravenous drugs, no tattoos etc), and never remember getting any symptoms of the acute phase of the disease. I have always been quite fit and healthy - no athlete material, but just general good health.

For the past 10 years I've been getting annual liver function blood tests and have had regular ultrasounds to check for cirrhosis and scarring - so far so good. This bug has just been sitting there dormant - viral replication has been non-existent and liver function tests have all been normal - until this year. Viral replication has crept up and my ALT level (a marker for liver damage) is creeping up to just over the high side of normal. My liver specialist is not considering drug treatment just yet, but holy cats! I'm starting to get concerned that this is all starting to go the wrong way.

Rewind a couple of years, I started going lacto-paleo after finding the incredible Dr Mike Eades and Mark Sisson (and later the equally incredible Robb Wolf), and have found this experience to be nothing short of sensational. Removing wheat has been the single best thing I have done, I would say. I'm now 43 with 3 kids and feel like superman. My parents, who have been Primitivist low-fatters since the 80's, think I'm crazy but in the same breath keep complementing me on how great both me and my wife look.

Where am I going with all this? Now that this virus has reared its ugly head, I've been doing a heap of reading on the virus and also on diet and nutrition. All - and I mean ALL - the dietary recommendations for Hep B sufferers are around low fat, high carb and low protein diets, apparently due to the load that fat and protein puts on the liver. Common recommendations are also around eating several smaller carb-based meals during the day rather than fewer larger meals. This apparently also spares the load on the liver. What are your thoughts on these things? How taxing on the liver, really, is a high fat and moderate protein diet, and spreading out meals throughout the day? Is this just conventional "wisdom" junk?

From what I know now from people like yourself is that I should be staying away from anything that would increase inflammation in my body (logical, since Hep B is an inflammatory disease). This would include staying away from any gluten products, omega-6 oils and processed foods - basically a paleo-type diet. I have read that saturated fats protect the liver from damage, so I expect that these would be good for me in my situation, especially coconut oil for its anti-viral properties.

Some personal stats: I'm 5'6", 150lb, I do some bodyweight exercises a couple times a week and intermittent sprints about once a week. I take 1g fish oil daily as well as a liver tonic shot of Milk Thistle (17.5g), Selenium (50mcg) and Taurine (500mg), but that's about it. I'm no cross-fitter maniac by any means, but just like to keep active and have enough energy to keep up with my kids (which I do).

Anyway, I think that's probably enough. I appreciate any information or thoughts on my condition on what I might be doing right or wrong, or anything else I should be looking to do to keep myself healthy. While I'm not expecting any miracle cures, I'll be satisfied if this little bugger is kept under wraps for the rest of my life and does not wreak any damage on my liver!

7. Question from Shawna:

Question from Shawna:

Hi Robb,

I sent in a question on sleep/adrenal burnout a few months back (yes, you are a busy man!) and haven't had my question answered yet so thought I'd add some updated info to it if possible?

I've given up the melatonin and tryptophan I was taking on weekdays and have been taking 200mg Magnesium every night at bedtime plus the 40mg in my multi-vitamin for almost a month now. I have been consistently sleeping worse since this change, waking up way more often during the night, with difficulty falling back asleep. I did expect this to happen for a week or two while my body adjusted but would have hoped to see some improvements by now. I've been off school for close to a month, so had hoped the decrease in stress would also help improve sleep with no avail.

I've gone through my food log and tried to identify foods that are triggers to my worst nights sleeps- but have not found anything that jumps out at me.

My plan for the next month is to go super strict paleo- no fruit at all, and lower carb veggies only to see if total carbs make a difference to my sleep- not that I've been gorging on fruit/high carb veggies. I'm also getting a whole bunch of blood tests to see where things stand.

Thanks for any suggestions you have!

Original Question

Hi Rob,

On your podcasts you've asked for more history so hopefully I've offered everything you need to get a good background!

30y, Female, 5'5", 114lbs, Approx 11%bf

-Chronic sleep issues 15yrs+

-Was on birth control pills for 10 years, have discontinued over 1.5 year ago due to increased side effects (mood changes)

-Diagnosed with adrenal burnout 2yrs ago and worked with homeopath to support adrenals and immune system through series of UnDa drops, Omega 3's, probiotics etc. (Had to stop seeing homeopath in September 2009 due to return to school and reduced budget)

-When hormones measured in Spring 2009- saw increase in testosterone- but still reading low on chart, minimal changes to Estrogen/Progesterone (2008- Testosterone was not even reading on test it was so low)

-Still struggling with falling asleep, sleeping through night and feeling rested upon wake up

-If travelling and sleeping in other beds, almost always sleep poorly even with being strict on diet, even after several nights in one location (bring own pillow and sleep mask)

-Have changed mental outlook/thought process to eliminate old pattern of worrying/planning/thinking before bed, now am able to turn off my brain, don't count hours on the clock etc.

-Sleep in basement, cool, very dark, blackout blinds, no tv/computer before bed, read 1/2hr before bed

-Use sleep hygiene protocols for consistent bed time routine- eg. In bed same time every night, consistent wake up times, aiming for 8+ hours/night (have been using these for over a year)

-Recreational crossfitter, moderate activity, over training led to burnout so I watch my activity level closely and have gotten really good at listening to my body to know when I need to back off in training

-Northern climate low light during winter (Calgary)

-Husband works shift work, 2 nights out of 8 nights I sleep alone (sometimes sleep better, sometimes worse)

-I find having a snack (P/F) just before bed helps to decrease my waking ups, but some times has no effect on falling/staying asleep. I've tried snacks when I wake up, again with inconsistent results.

Diet:

-Full strict paleo since January 2010 (not a huge shift from where I was)

- Went to low carb zone 6m prior, 9P 9C 35F, saw some improvement
- Noticed there was a huge tie in sleep to wheat and dairy- waking several times at night, feeling "hung over" the next day (made connection from occasional exposure to wheat/dairy)
- Last five years have eaten very clean diet recommended by holistic nutritionist, with little processed foods/sugar, reduced previous gluten intake but still had occasional gluten and would have dairy on daily basis (cottage cheese or white cheddar/mozzarella only)
- From 2000-2002 was strict gluten/dairy free, good quality food- sleep patterns erratic/inconsistent, frequent waking/difficulty falling asleep, no sleep aids taken at this time
- Avoid anything with food coloring in it (especially tartrazine and Red #5)
- Vitamins and supplements- currently taking Vit C-2g/day, B50 Complex, D- have recently increased from 2000iu to 4000iu due to cold/flu season, Prairie Naturals Cal/Mag Force, Genestra- Super EFA Liquid- 1 tsp/day or # pills of Webber Naturals Omega-3 900mg
- Taking melatonin and 5HTP (tryptophan) for past 10 months after using prescription sleeping pills for 8 months (too many side effects without consistent results)

-James Wilson (Adrenal Fatigue- the 21st Century Stress Syndrome) suggests many ways to improve sleep through diet that contradict Paleo nutrition (eg. Whole grain toast with peanut butter or cheese on whole grain cracker) I've also read that in order to activate 5HTP the more complex carbs taken with it work better than something like fruit/veg. He suggests melatonin use to promote sleep for adrenal burnout recovery.

-In Lights out: Sleep, sugar and survival- he suggests taking other supplements before bed and completely avoiding the melatonin because it suppresses your natural production, yet after speaking with Pharmacists they have not heard of this.

-Prior to melatonin use I was sleeping between 3-5 interrupted hours/night and am now able to sleep through 60-70% of nights (6-8hrs sleep depending on how long it takes me to fall asleep) with a few really bad nights in the month. I'm hesitant to give up melatonin because it's the only thing that has given me results without nasty side effects.

I know I'm doing a lot of right things with diet, exercise, have seen fantastic results in all other areas, with little change to my sleep, despite a lot of effort to improve it. I'm looking for recommendations on any other ways you know of to improve quality/consistency of sleep through diet so that I don't have to rely on taking melatonin forever. Is this as good as it gets for me? The next year is tight financially until I graduate and start working again, so changes to foods are easier to make than taking lots of extra supplements. Any thoughts you've got would be greatly appreciated!

Shawna (your loyal 7th podcast fan)

8. Question from Matt:

Robb and Andy,

I think that I've done due diligence on researching this issue but not being a man of science I'm having trouble figuring out the answer without some help and I was hoping that you might address this question in an upcoming episode of P.S. I'm an avid fan, blah, blah, and I think you're the man. Ok, here are my two questions:

First, what is the deal with legumes? Cordain says that they help throw off the net acid balance and thus they are bad. Well, so does meat and I would figure as long as they are consumed in proper ratios with vegetables, I would think they would be fine. In your blog, you mention that they have a similar effect as gluten, contributing to some auto-immune diseases, although I can't find the science to back it (doesn't mean its not there, I am just dumb and can't find it). I understand peanuts throw off the Omega-6 to Omega-3 balance,

so where does that leave beans? This is all to an end to making my sister and her family more healthy, and I'm trying to turn them Paleo. This is the last hurdle.

Second question: what is the deal with this guy? How is this possible based on what we know about diets: <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/05/13/sports/13runner.html>?

Thanks Robb, you are great.:

9. Question from George:

Robb and Andy,

Just recently discovered your great podcast. I started out as an Atkin's lowcarber but have now gone Paleo with nice results. I had two bad experiences with kidney stones (unbelievable, excruciating pain, but I digress). One of the reasons I went paleo was Cordain's work insinuating that a highly acidic diet (potentially atkins) leads to the formation of kidney stones. What is your take on this? Have greatly increased my intake of green leafy vegetables, mostly spinach with salmon, so am hoping that my acid/alkaline balance works out. Second question, have started working in some Intermittent fasting 2 x a week. Thanks to your blog and podcast I have greatly increased my intake of EPA/DHA per the almighty Robb Wolf fish oil calculator and take about 8000 units of Vitamin D3. Question: On my IF days (I simply go without eating from Dinner on day 1 to dinner on day 2, skipping breakfast and lunch), should I take my fish oil and vitamin D on my IF days or simply take those supplements when I get around to eating at dinner? Thanks again for the great blog and podcast.:

10. Question from Jason:

Hiya Solutioners!

I was just wondering if you guys might be able to give us a run down on measuring your bodyfat on your own. What are the best ways, what are the drawbacks of different methods, etc.

For instance, I recently had a health check that included some odd scanning device, where I stood in front of a big machine... while the results are in line with what I expected, I know there are other methods, and was specifically interested in getting the most accuracy out of measuring at home.

Thanks again,

Listener 10 (Jason in Chiba)

11. Question from Peter:

Question regarding - Training the CrossFit Games Athlete a "new way"

Rob- love your blog and podcast, here's my question...

I recently found myself reading a book by Arthur Lydiard about running and best performance.

"Run to the top"

(He's a legendary running coach in New Zealand - coached athletes with Gold medals from 800m through to Marathon)

I think there are some really interesting parallels with what he describes in being able to reach your running best and possibly reaching your 'CrossFit best' performances.

Specifically he describes a periodized approach to training and with regards to 800m running he emphasises the need to build a base of high volume work aerobic, as a means to maximise race potential and also longevity over the years.

(To clarify he's NOT talking about LSD, he states running volume at maximum aerobic capacity and not straying into the noticeably lactic efforts)

He describes the negative effects of constant and ill timed interval training, resultant high PH levels, a suffering CNS and reduced ability to absorb nutrients into the body as a result.

My questions are... since most CrossFit events are of 800m and beyond time duration would it not make sense to train in an AEROBIC fashion the majority of the time once you have a suitable strength base?

Lydiard adds in elements of strength work, hill training, intervals and speed work to sharpen his athletes but over a sensible time frame. He emphasises that a good AEROBIC base protects the athlete from the effects of harder running and that you should "train NOT strain".

Do you think this means a CrossFit Athlete should find their "Aerobic sweet spot" i.e. a level of intensity that is still predominantly aerobic and NOT bathed in lactic acid for the majority of their WOD's?

I know this goes against the CrossFit principle of "spank it hard every time" but surely we're dealing with mostly known, almost knowable games events?

Many thanks for your thoughts