

The Paleolithic Solution - Episode 45

1. Question from Julie:

Hi Robb. I'm your biggest fan in Calgary. I'm 5'8, 135lbs, fairly lean, 27 year old female, work out 5 days/week on average, low stress, 8-9 hrs of sleep/night, and my main concern is with sore stomach and bloating. I've been eating paleo since your seminar in Edmonton last year, and it's been up and down. I believed in it and stuck with it, tinkering with this and that, despite getting worse acne and still getting bloated. I've always had digestive problems and moderate acne and I'm one of those unfortunate souls who can't handle nightshades, nuts, seeds, eggs, or dairy, and fish oil makes my acne worse (could have been the quality), so yeah, I eat a lot of meat (not grass fed but working on it), fat and vegetables and get my omega 3s with sardines and salmon. I keep fruit low because I feel better that way, I do drink coffee in the morning (though I think that actually causes me some minor stomach problems too but I like it too much) and I eat a TON of coconut products. My question is actually about coconut. I have EVERYTHING coconut including coconut water, coconut oil, coconut milk, creamed coconut, coconut flakes, coconut chips and coconut flour (although I can't really use this anymore since I'm off eggs). For some reason, coconut products seem to cause bloating sometimes (not the coconut water or the coconut oil). The only additive in all these products is guar gum in the coconut milk although I've tried other brands with just citric acid and it's even worse. Coconut is supposed to be so healthy and healing so I know I sound crazy but I do have two thoughts on this. One idea I had is that I could be taking in too much fat at a time when I eat this stuff (sometimes I do eat too much because it's an easy go-to for calories), but I can feel bloated after just a little or feel fine after a lot sometimes so I'm not so sure. The other idea has to do with the insoluble fibre content of coconut. In Mat Lalonde's seminar he says that insoluble fibre essentially is hurting your intestine and that is why it makes you "go" more. When I heard this I was curious about coconut because I knew it was so high in fibre which is why it is so low-carb and sure enough when I looked it up, it's almost all insoluble fibre. That might explain the pain I get sometimes from flakes, chips, flour and creamed coconut but it still wouldn't explain the occasional pain after coconut milk which has the fibre removed. Do you have any idea what's going on here and would the insoluble fibre in coconut be a problem? I know I could just stop eating coconut but I really, really like it!! Thanks and I can't wait for my pre-ordered book!

2. Question from James:

Hey Robb,

My wife was recently diagnosed with gestational diabetes. I've been paleo for a while and she's been playing with it, but when she got the diagnosis she went 100% strict. Not surprisingly, her blood sugar has been perfect and she feels great less than a month from her due date. She's so amazed by the effects that she's now the driving force in the household in keeping the whole family (2 kids and counting) eating strict paleo.

One snag though; She's been measuring the ketone levels in her urine and they were negative until last week. We're keeping track of what we eat and she seems to be getting enough carbs through fruit and veggies. It seems like every time we have fish, she's showing positive for ketones the morning after, and feels like crap. Any thoughts?

Looking forward to the book; copy is pre-ordered!!

3. Question from Marc:

DISCLAIMER: not seeking medical advice.

I'll keep this as short as I can. My 12 year old daughter is a type 1 diabetic. Recently we put her on an insulin pump during our training on how to use the pump we were instructed by her endocrinologist to give extra insulin if a meal was high fat or high protein. We were told that after the initial release of insulin to counter the carbs in her meal her blood sugar returns normal, however the protein in the meal causes her blood sugar to go up again 4-6 hours later and that the fat causes a spike 8-10 hours later. I find this runs contrary to everything I read about fat and protein raising blood sugar.

I was told this applies in non diabetics too. Can this correct? Any guidance would be appreciated.

4. Question from Silkey:

Hey Robb,

My wife and I have been Paleo ever since I was "certified" in Portland last year:)

My wife is 8 months pregnant and has been dx with gestational diabetes (I truly believe its total bs and that the OGTT is inaccurate in so many ways that it is ridiculous, but I digress)

We are using a birthing center with a midwife so it was a sad requirement that we consult with an "expert" in nutrition, which had to be the most frustrating 2 hour visit of my life (the RN who we visited with was diabetic herself and came in drinking a large diet coke...I threw an apple core in her waste basket and found multiple fast food containers...Im not judging...she then began to tell us how we were eating to "low carb" and how bad it was).

ANYWAY, my wife left with a glucometer (awesome) and she was told to check her sugars 4x a day for 2 weeks 1 hour after every meal and then send the results back in (BTW my wife does CFmoms and is 5'10 170...138 with out the baby, very lean and athletic).

So for 2 weeks we BOTH checked sugars, to compete, and all of our sugars were great, below 88 after 1 hour and fasting in the am high 60's low 70's, she faxed her sugars in and was immediately called by above referenced nutritionist and told that her sugars were "to low" and asked to eat MORE carbs (complex of course) and check for another week, so we made up sugars that were slightly higher and faxed them in and have not received a call since. We eat fairly strict, always unlimited quantity and to satiety, we have never felt better. Im a Fire/Medic and will occasionally check my sugars at work for random reasons and several times have found my sugars in the low 60's (no symptoms, feeling great)....and Im aware this flies in the face of western medicine (we practice under our protocols that we cant leave a diabetic at home with bgc less then 80).

SO, my question is, based on your genius....what is to low (not according to current medical standards which seem to be on the high side)?

Thanks,
Silky

PS I have listened to all 40 podcasts (freaking amazing) and cant remember hearing anything about this before.

5. Question from Peter:

I have a question for you I have asked MDs in the past who cannot explain the symptoms in this mail. Perhaps you can shed some light on the subject or point me in the right direction.

Ever since adolescence I have often had a very negative reaction to sugar in drinks.

Moderate to large quantities of soda or sugary mixed alcohol drinks will leave me with

painful abdominal cramps as well as stiffness and pain in the neck and upper back. I will also start to sweat profusely and tend to curl up on the ground for about 15-20 minutes waiting for it to pass. All symptoms will suddenly pass over roughly 1 minute period and I will be back to normal like nothing ever happened. Usually I can contribute this "reaction" to drinking soda, juice, or sugary drinks on an empty or near empty stomach. The worst cases I have ever experienced involved sugary alcoholic drinks, even just after one drink.

This doesn't happen every time I drink sugar, but I think the most important variables are: The presence of alcohol, emptiness of stomach, and quantity of drink.

Like I said the symptoms pass within about 20 min. and go away quickly.

I have talked to a few doctors about this and they claim that if drinking sugar on an empty stomach hurts you, then don't do it. I agree and tend to avoid doing it.

Currently I am eating primarily Paleo/Primal and feel great so it currently isn't a problem for me as long I stick to the lifestyle.

Any thoughts?

6. Question from Dave:

Hi Robb,

I drink a lot of green tea. When I prepare it, I take one bag (Stash Darjeeling Green- rated very high in ECGC by Men's Health) to make an entire pot (about 50oz) using boiling water. I tend to let it steep for a while (like 3 hours), partially out of laziness and partially because I believe the longer it steeps the more good stuff will infuse into the water.

I've read that using boiling water (as opposed to water around 170 degrees) and steeping for longer than 3-5 minutes can increase the tannin content of the tea, although I've don't think the tea tastes bitter, like some of the oversteeped black teas I've had. Are these tannins bad for me from an overall wellness point of view? The fact that they are related to the same chemicals that tan leather makes me wary.

I'm 37, 205, 6'1", 12% bf crossfit around 5 days/week. I eat mostly paleo with a cheat meal once or twice a week. I keep the carbs pretty low except for the cheat meal which tends to involved baked fruit goodness.

7. Question from Bill:

Robb,

First, thanks for everything, for the second or third time now.

By accident, I came across a way that I've used to identify foods that have a negative impact on my performance. First, a little background: I noticed that on some CrossFit WODs I would feel great and sustain performance throughout. On the same workout on a different day I would feel great for the first minute or two at most, then crater big time.

I started tracking it closely and ranked my performance with a subjective 1-5 for how I felt I was maintaining work output. Eventually a trend emerged and it had nothing to do with overtraining, it was related to excess nut consumption. Who would think a few metric tons of almonds would really have an effect? ;) I cut out the nuts altogether and that particular

feeling of cratering between minute 1 and 2 went away.

Now to measuring it less subjectively. About twice a week I go out for a fairly leisurely 5k walk. I usually listen to your podcast and treat it as a contemplative/meditative time. I follow the same route each time and finish in 55 minutes +/- 1 minute.

For some reason I got curious about holding my breath at the end, so started a pattern of breathing at about the last 3/4 mile in which I would inhale for 2 steps, then hold my breath for 6 steps, then exhale for 2 steps and repeat. That felt comfortable after about 1/4 mile, so I extended the hold to 8 steps. Then 10 steps for the last 1/4 mile which was about my limit.

I repeated that on every walk thereafter, and a 10 step breath-hold was close to the limit of what I could maintain. Then one day 10 steps felt like it was easy so I extended it to 12 steps. At first I wondered if I was just adapting, and then recalled I had decided to eliminate dairy altogether two days prior. Hmmm.

So I started playing with trying different foods the day before my walk and seeing how many steps I could hold my breath during the last 1/4 mile. I still work up to it by starting with 6 steps, then 8, then 10 and see what I can get up to. It's my cheap, at-home oxygen uptake measurement. :)

I very quickly discovered that a very strict diet of quality protein, sweet potato, coconut oil, and veggies would result in my ability to take 14 steps during the breath-hold. On the other hand, I tried combining the foods I knew made a negative impact, and had a whey protein shake, cheese, and about 3/4 cup of almonds the night before my walk. I couldn't maintain 10 steps holding my breath on that walk!

So I've been using this to assess different foods. I don't eat any grains, but nuts and dairy were not on my banned list until this experiment. I've also isolated whey protein shakes (makes sense, as a dairy product) as having a negative impact. I know, there's no surprise that a real food diet made up of meat and veggies with good fats (sat fat from meat and coconut oil) would be the best fuel for me, but it's still interesting to have a means to measure it that gives pretty immediate feedback.

I've also used the same measurement to see how I do in ketosis versus not in ketosis. I'm usually right on the line with my diet as far as carbs being low enough to turn a keto-stix.

If I get too low I can tell during my walk, as 10 steps is the limit. A few more carbs so I'm not in ketosis, a few days later, and I'm back up to 14.

I thought you might find it interesting.

8. Question from Jason:

Hi Robb,

I've been keeping a pretty rigid paleo program and only going off the reservation 2-3x a week (leaning more towards a dairy cheat like froyo rather than something with gluten since listening to your podcasts) and getting the shit beaten out of me at crossfit virtuosity here in brooklyn. At my last checkup my doctor was thrilled with the changes I'd made to my lifestyle as I was down from ~195 to ~168 with all my vitals and bloodwork looking great, with the exception of my cholesterol which had actually gone up a bit since my last visit when i was in horrid shape from sitting on my ass and eating terrible food. We're kind of butting heads a bit now as he wants to jack me up on 40mg of lipitor when I'm already

pretty uncomfortable on my existing dose of 20mg of crestor. I'll type out the other vitals at the end of this form, but everything else looks pretty good.

I'm just really unsure what to do at this point, make some changes to my diet, stop the lipids altogether? I was eating a crapton of eggs at one point (as many as 6 a day), but for the most part my average day goes eggs for breakfast, salad with chicken and O&V for lunch, some almonds/pistachios mid day along with maybe some fruit and finishing with a dinner of usually steak, chicken, or occasionally pork. I supplement with a couple caps of fish oil (4.1g of epa/dha per day) and that's about it. Crossfit schedule is 3 on 1 off unless my body says otherwise with my trainer keith leaning more towards a strength based program.

Went through most of your archives and caught the part about the particle test, but even that was a bit of a argument with my doc who insisted regardless of the results he'd have to jack up my dosage a bit. I know you'll be busy with your book tour and getting everything ready, if you have time to cover this on the podcast or with a quick reply I'd really appreciate it, I'll see if I can catch your south brooklyn seminar or at least the book release party in nyc. Thanks.

here's the synopsis of my blood work, can attach the full pdf if needed:

lipid panel

cholesterol total: 350mg/dl

hdl: 63 mg/dl

cholesterol/hdl ratio: 5.6

ldl, calculated: 277 mg/dl

triglycerides: 50 mg/dl

hepatic

protein, total: 7.5 g/dl

albumin: 4.4 g/dl

globulin, calculated: 3.1 g/dl

a/g ratio: 1.4

bilirubin, total: 0.6 mg/dl

bilirubin, direct: 0.1 mg/dl

alkaline phosphatase: 138 u/l

ast: 19 u/l

alt: 17 u/l

bilirubin, indirect 0.5 mg/dl

9. Question from Adam:

Hi Robb and Andy,

First of all I wanted to mention just how epic the journey has been over the last year of listening to the podcast. It has become a beast, and I don't think I will ever get tired of listning to Robb's manner of sounding like a well learned hooligan or of the great wookiee laugh of Andy Deas (who I am convinced is a decendant of William Wallace). I want to sincerely thank you two for helping us listeners in so many ways. I know a lot of us would pay for a podcast subscription (but I probably shouldn't be telling you that)

I have a question for you guys that might not be asked too often. I wanted to know about will power. I know a lot about nutrition, and am constantly learning more and more each week but it has been so hard for me to "suck it up" and clean my nutrition up, despite the

accumulation of "knowledge". It almost seems like there is a serious addiction to certain foods (namely grains, sugar) and like a heroin addict who keeps relapsing, I can't seem to just get this shit together. I know 3 weeks to adapt to a paleo/low-ish carb diet is not that much time, and if I could just get that far in I know I'd be fine. I feel weak and tired though by the end of day one, and end up mini-binging. I used to be very disciplined with diet but since becoming a dad it seems that I just can't stay on track. I want nutrition to be an easy thing for me, and I want to want to eat good foods. The word "diet" is the wrong approach to eating long term. What I want is the healthy "lifestyle" that you seem to advocate. This is probably outside of your comfort zone for answering, so my question is aimed at Robb Wolf the philosopher, rather than Robb Wolf the expert nutritionist (meaning that there is no pressure for you to give "the right answer"). What do you think is taking me down at the knees here? Psychological factors most probably, but it just seems to me like I am physically addicted to the wrong kinds of food. There will come a day when I "just need to jump in and do it", and I'm confident that it's fast approaching. I suppose I'm asking this question for the large mass of people that also struggle with these things. I keep hearing "cheat meal/day" even in the questions you get for the podcast, and your approach is more or less "if it happens it happens", which strikes me as being "they way it's supposed to be"....Very sorry to throw this burdensome question your way, and I know there are a lot of people struggling with the psychological factors behind food. Mine started with the "cheat day" in body for life and I have never fully recovered from that concept. I want simply to thank you for the weekly podcast! both you and Andy are superbly righteous cats.

PS - Andy Deas has a great roaring laugh akin to the laugh of some Norse god. Robb needs to make him laugh more.

10.Question from Tom:

Hi Robb Wolf,

I wrote to you a few months ago asking if food loses any of its' nutritional value when it is microwaved. I did not see this question answered in the podcast, but I understand it may not be the most important thing that people are asking.

My question today is about the Kirkland's brand Fish Oil. When asked what fish oil I use, I always respond with "Kirklands Brand at Costco, the stuff in the clear bottle, Robb Wolf suggests it"...The other day I was reading the back of the bottle and noticed that this brand contains Soy. Do you know the source of this Soy and is it enough to be concerned about?

I am taking 5/day, based on the "robb wolf fish oil calculator". At this level, the amount of soy may not be an issue, but for other who may be taking upwards of 20 pills a day, it could add up.

Hope to hear back from you and thanks for everything that you do.