

The Paleo Solution - Episode 54

1. Question from Matt at Centerville Crossfit:

Robb,

Would love to hear a take from you and your squad on Prof Haubs Twinkie stunt... I'm getting a ton of questions from some of my "think they're too smart, don't wanna change and like to throw stones" clients. I had what I thought was a great explanation until I was sent his Facebook "Log": <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Prof-Haubs-Diet-Experiments/152304481454281?v=wall>

From what I saw in the CNN article I expected his small-dense LDL would have up-ticked (which he never got a NMR Lipid test), his TAG/HDL ratio to go a bit south (which it seemed to improve), his body-fat to drop a bit but for him to loose mostly H2O weight (which his bodyfat supposedly made up 20+lbs of his drop according to a sophisticated BF-measurement) and him to have ravenous hunger (which he subjectively said he didn't have).

2. Question from Jay:

Hey Robb,

Just wondering what you believe the best program for "being prepared for the unknown and unknowable" as they say, would be? Obviously there's CrossFit in it's current incarnation, and I know you're a fan of CrossFit Football over that. I've also wondered about Christopher Sommer's Gymnastic WODs. Is there anything else that would be better than those listed I don't know of? My fitness goals have changed a little and I'm just trying to figure out the best program to get me as prepared as one can be for anything and everything. Thanks Robb.

3. Question from Ben:

so i had been going super low carb for about 5 weeks where my cheat day would consist of a couple pieces of fruit maybe 2x/week. was working out 3-4x/week. pretty much meat veggies and eggs was my diet (and coffee w/ cream:). So I was at a location where they had halloween candy and i, thought to myself, F-it, Im going for it. So i had probably ten pieces of your standard garbage of the world halloween size (small) candy bars and roughly 1/3 of a coca-cola. then i almost died i think. i went pale, i couldnt even handle sitting down, i had to go outside, where it was raining, and lay down for about ten minutes. vision was going away, breathing was hard. calling 911 entered my thoughts. then was able to get up and throw up, went and ate some meat and felt better. could you talk a bit about what was going on metabolically and perhaps the dangers of going super low carb and then eating a deadly amount of sugar. thanks. i have listened to all 52 of your episodes.

Follow-Up Comment from Morgan -

Ben,

We must be twins or someting. I've lived this experience too many times now. Super strict, low-fruit, low carb, Whole30 style Paleo, for 3-4 weeks, and then a little refined sugar throws me off the rails and I experience all of the mental/physical trauma you mention, it feels like an anxiety attack.

Worse, it gets worse, I recover for a few hours, or overnight, and then binge on an even higher volume of the sugary stuff. Sometimes it takes 2-3 days of bender-like behavior before it finally breaks, like a fever.

Funny, I'm pretty much a non-drinker, and a few drinks never prompts the overwhelming need to have more, But with sugar, I'm like Nick Cage in "Leaving Las Vegas."
Robb, would love to hear your thoughts...

4. Question from Cat Alberts

Congrats on your anniversary, boys 😊! Finished reading the book and listened to almost half of the podcasts (in about 2 weeks). Am very happy with all the info and have changed diet completely from almost vegan to full paleo. Still going strong on my quest to save my gallbladder and dissolve the gallstone. Aside from that; I read some stuff online about the research by prof. Cynthia Kenyon: her roundworms doubled their life span if they never ate carbohydrates (well, 20 days to 40 days, but still impressive). And lots more reasearch with genes, cancer and IGF, all in the worms. As far as I can see her research (on worms) parallels yours (in scientific literature). Very interested to hear what you make of her work. Kind regards and I look forward to the next podcast!

5. Comment from Charlotte:

met you in South Brooklyn last year—thanks so much for these podcasts, they are so informative. I think you ran the question about the removed thyroid in episode 48 already, but the repeat prompted me to write with my question. I was diagnosed with Hashimoto's 15 years ago as a senior in college. I've been on Synthroid (generic version) since then, with my levels being adjusted every six-12 months as my TSH levels have changed.

Here's the thing: I've never had a symptom of low thyroid. Ever. No weight gain, no sluggishness, no dry skin, no hair falling out, nada. So this spring in conjunction with a 30-day paleo challenge I stopped the synthroid. Nothing changed—still no symptoms. Sometime this summer I got my TSH levels checked: They were through the roof (like, in the 20s). So I'm back on the drugs, but again—ZERO symptoms. What's UP??
I'm 37, female, breastfeeding 1x/day, and eat paleo plus some dairy (almost always grass-fed). I don't avoid nightshades (though don't eat a ton of them) but I do put down a dozen eggs a week at least, and I'm not shy with the nuts. I'm pretty good about sleep, always have been (it was tough there for a while with the little one, but he's pretty good now), and train crossfit 3-4x/week, capoeira 2-3x/week.

Sorry for such a long question! I realize I probably just need to suck it up and get myself to an endocrinologist, but I wondered if you had some kind of brilliant insight I could bring to the table.

6. Question from John:

Robb, I have a friend whose 8 YO son has been diagnosed with an ulcer. As he was telling me my first thought was "Paleo Diet" (almost like a Pavlovian response!) They said "in his stomach", so I'm assuming it's a peptic ulcer. No other remarkable history other than he was 6-7 weeks premature. My google-foo came up empty of meaningful results searching for things like "ulcer + gluten" and "ulcer + celiac" but I thought I may have missed something. Any insights would be appreciated.

Continued great job on the show guys. FYI, it's 11/3 and I don't see the show in iTunes – not sure if there's an issue but it usually shows up right away.

7. Question from Victoria:

Hey Robb

Just a thought on the first question... How useful is a sugar free electrolyte solution? My understanding is that the major mechanism of Sodium uptake from the gut is via the sodium/glucose co-transporter. Don't get me wrong, I don't think that a sugar laden electrolyte concoction is the way to go, but if you need to uptake some sodium, you need to eat some carbs... at least from my understanding. (Alternatively, I believe there's also an Amino Acid/Na+ Co-transporter, but looks like the sugar-free electrolyte solution your listener mentioned is AA free too...).

Rob -

It really depends on the NEED. Do you need that glucose? If not you will absorb an isotonic solution just fine.

Follow-up from Victoria:

I thought it was more the other way around... how badly do you need the sodium? My understanding was that you need glucose to utilize the major sodium uptake mechanism in your gut... It was one of those 'fun facts' they taught us in Physiology that actually stuck with me!

Rob - Victoria - I'll check into that

8. Question from Kevin:

I've got a lot of autoimmune stuff going on, so I adhere to a very strict Robb Wolf paleo diet, including ridiculous quantities of fish oil per the RW calculator. I just got a side of grass fed beef, so this winter I plan on eating just wild caught fish & beef, roughly 50%-50%. But come spring I'd like to add in some other pastured meat sources for variety, with a mix over the course of a year of roughly 1/3 fish, 1/3 beef, 1/3 other [mostly pork & poultry, but also lamb, venison, buffalo].

Ordering grass-fed beef is pretty straightforward, but I'm less confident re: the optimal diet & environment for pastured pork & poultry. I've been researching, but unlike beef, there seems to be less consensus on what our pigs & chickens should be eating. Apparently even pigs & chickens that are pasture-raised, free-ranging foragers are still always supplemented with a fair amt of grain in their diet. For instance, Joel Salatin of Omnivores Dilemma fame says his foraging broilers get only 20% from grass, bugs, worms, grubs - the rest from corn, toasted soybean, & kelp which is scooped into long troughs. And pastured pigs seem to be fed just about anything.

Two questions:

1. Obviously any pastured pork & poultry is going to be better than the industrial version, but how much better? The nutritional difference between grassfed and industrial beef is significant [n-3/n-6 profile, CLA, vitamins, toxins, etc], but does this nutritional advantage hold with these other pastured animals, especially given how much grain and other PUFAs they consume?

2. How does pork & poultry compare to beef, lamb & bison? Should we, as a general rule, be limiting pork & poultry [even pastured] and favoring grassfed beef and wild caught fish? [I think this is what Dr Kurt Harris suggests] Is eating 1/3 of my meat from pork & poultry too much? Would someone with a history of autoimmune issues be better off avoiding or limiting the pork & poultry? Would all that pork & poultry tend to offset some of the beneficial effects of the beef & fish?

9. Question from Dan:

Hey Robb,

My sister went to an endocrinologist who seemed to be okay with Paleo, but had "some issues" with it after getting back from some conference:

"Saturated fat is no more than 7%, and should not be eaten late at night because it can cause fatty acid syndrome which will destroy fundamental nutrients in the body."

Also: "Folate deficiency sounds like a potential issue."

Could you briefly explain why this woman is wrong?

10. Question from Ian:

Hey Robb, have you heard anything about a low carb diet triggering cortisol production? I have read this but I am assuming it is the low cal and not low carbs that is triggering the stress response.

I have also read that cortisol gets raised along w/glucagon.

What are your thoughts?

Comment from Rob:

Many people yammer about this but the science is just not there. Where are the extremely high cortisol levels in ketogenic diet controlled epileptics? If someone is trying to eat low-carb AND train at a very high intensity I could see a problem, but that is where CLC and other protocols solve this potentiality.

Comment from DG:

I actually have eaten a ketogenic/paleo diet for 5+years (all grass fed, organic, no fruit, no grain, legume, etc.), train 2-20minute high intensity workouts a week, get good dark sleep, sleep like a baby and yet my cortisol levels are off the ASI chart all day long, my A1c levels are 5.4, and I have stubborn fat around the middle. I've been at my wit's end trying to figure this out! I got a glucometer to see what was going on and it confounds me even more - sometimes after a grass-fed beef and broccoli/greens/peppers mix of veggies my blood sugar goes up to 118-125 (1 hour post prandial). The only way I can keep it below 100 in between meals is to eat something like only eggs. My fasting blood sugar is typically 95 - 106. All this happens when I keep my carb intake well under 50g and usually under 30! If you have any thoughts on a direction to go, I'd appreciate it very much. Oh, in case it matters, I'm a 56 year old female, very strong and healthy, 5'7" weighing about 135 (though waist measurement almost puts me in the unhealthy category).

11. Question from Matt:

Dear Robb and Andy,

Totally love the podcast, even though my girlfriend hates me for listening to it in the car with her. Although helping me with this question might help her to love you as much as I love you. (that's a lot of love).

One of our good friends has cystic fibrosis which is compounded by type 1 Diabetes. She's a great student and a brilliant artist, but when it comes to taking care of herself, I'm concerned she could do more. She doesn't exercise often (due to frequent stints in the hospital) and she is a carbaholic. Muffins, pastries, cereal and frappuccinos make up the bulk of her diet.

That said, she has an army of doctors around her and I'm less than confident going at her with a full-frontal paleo attack. I have read a few studies that suggest that carb-limited diets are helpful with cf and i'm sure it would help with the type-1 diabetes, but I hope you can help me to point her in the right direction, with some scientific/empirical data to back it up... it is her life I would be messing with.

12. Question from Saturated Phat:

I'm an endurance athlete looking to paleo to help break some plateaus and improve performance. I've gone mostly gluten and legume free and dairy's next. But I feel like there's always something more to cut out and I'm not sure I understand it aside from the theoretical, which I don't fully buy: cavemen never ate this so you shouldn't. Vinegar, for instance, is not "paleo" but has a lot of health benefits (unless you disagree--that's question 1 about vinegar).

So you cut grains/legumes/dairy, and then no white potatoes which are nightshades--and, you probably should cut bell peppers, tomatoes, and eggplant too (although I don't understand why those are better than potatoes--question 2?). Then eggs aren't really great either. And fruit isn't good because of the fructose load. And now it's getting pretty restrictive. But here's my main question:

Why are nuts still in the mix after we're talking about cutting out eggs? They're obscenely high in omega 6s, full of antinutrients, and (for those who want to lose weight), are calorically dense and taste way too good. A lot of people, myself included, can put away a jar of almond butter or cashews and not think twice until they feel awful afterwards. My question is, what makes nuts better than legumes or nightshades? What's worse about white potatoes, or hummus? It might be basic but I really still don't get it.

Thanks a lot. Got the book on the way in the mail, looking forward to checking it out!