

The Paleo Solution

Episode 22

Andy Deas: Robb Wolf, Andy Deas, the episode is horrible in Chico today meaning that I'm in a bad mood. How are you?

Robb Wolf: And I'm in a wretched mood too. I'll warn everybody. It's likely I may curse later even though we're trying to clean this up so we can pull the explicit badge off of the iTunes gig. But I'm cranky from writing all day, the weather is horrible, and Andy purposely picked out a bunch of questions that are known to piss me off. So we'll see how it goes.

Andy Deas: Yes, so I think -- a few things we need to throw out there for the general listener is Robb is doing an experiment where he is recording from his downtown office today. So you'll notice different reverb, I think is the correct word. So we're going to experiment and see how good or bad it sounds.

Robb Wolf: Yeah. This is where I get the bulk of my writing done because when I'm home I just get distracted and get nothing done. So usually I would be at home, and we do the podcast, but it's just horrible coming and going with trying to get everything done so we're giving it a shot down here. If it's totally wretched, then we'll change plans, do something different next time but we're giving it a roll.

Andy Deas: Also, this is Episode 22, so I don't know what that gets us nothing because we already can drink as a podcast so....

Robb Wolf: It just reminds me of the awesome book, Catch 22.

Andy Deas: Uh-hmm. That's an excellent book. And I still haven't watched the Boondock Saints II: All Saints Day, but I'm committed to do it this weekend, and I want to thank everyone who provided the commentary on the blog. I got a tremendous kick out of reading people's thoughts on....

Robb Wolf: Andy and I will get hammered this weekend and watch both 1 and 2 back to back, and then we'll go out and start a fight in an Irish pub. I'll just stand behind Andy because he is much larger than I am so....

Andy Deas: Great and then I'll get killed.

Robb Wolf: Awesome.

Andy Deas: Well, you could figure -- we'll find someone else to record the podcast, Robb.

Robb Wolf: I don't know if anybody would want to do that.

Andy and Robb: That's -- I don't know. There's a sucker born every minute. That's --

Robb Wolf: That's true. That's true. I roped you into doing it so that's obviously true.

Andy Deas: That's exactly right. Exactly right. All right. Cool. Well, episode 22. We got some questions. We're going to roll through. I was making fun of Robb before this because sometimes there some themes to some of these. It's almost like Battlestar Galactica. This has all happened before. This will all happen again or something like that because we get some themes. But I figured it's Friday. Robb is in a bad mood. The weather is bad. I have a huge Americano I'm drinking today because the weather is bad. So, you know, see if we can spin them out.

Robb Wolf: Andy is not in the same room with me, so he can taunt me from afar and suffer no ill-effects so....

Andy Deas: Yeah, I think someone on the blog requested that we do this in the same room for better audio which we may someday. But see, then the problem is I can't ask inflammatory questions because Robb will like roll his eyes and throw things at me and maybe try to beat me up.

Robb Wolf: There's a distinct possibility of that.

Andy Deas: So you know, it's a little risky. But we'll see, we'll see. So anyway, question 1, a question from Mike. He is 51, a retired ex-banker ex-d-lineman from Princeton. Currently at 10.3% body fat using a body scan measure. "Thanks to you, Crossfit, as well as my friend Dr. Ken Leistner." See, right there, I had to put it in because I love Dr. Ken so....

Robb Wolf: Crazy, crazy Ken, man.

Andy Deas: That's right. He has "high fasting blood sugar readings, high cortisol in spite of the Paleo diet with the zone block focus). Is the high aminos in Muscle Armour and other products a potential issue for post-workout nutrition?"

Robb Wolf: I'm not super clear on what the question is here which is probably like, well, Andy threw this one in here. If we're seeing -- just to back up and this is definitely a theme that we've been pulling as some of the previous podcasts. If we're seeing high blood glucose levels, high cortisol-- which I'm assuming maybe he did an ASI and adrenal stress index test, and the Paleo diet will help that, but it's not going to fix either unsound training, lack of periodization, bad sleep, a host of other issues. It will help, but it's not going to fix it all. So there's obviously some problems here.

If the fundamental problem here is high fasting blood glucose levels despite an otherwise good diet, there are some real problems going on. We're seeing more and more and more of this as the functional fitness braids in which -- in so many ways it's so good because so many people need stuff like CrossFit. It is amazingly therapeutic for returning people to metabolic health when the dosage is appropriate. Folks don't know what that appropriate dose is because they don't know anything about smart programming, and they tend to overtrain.

So some big evaluation -- reevaluation needs to happen on the training, sleep, basal stress. Make sure that he's eating enough. The amino acids might be helpful, but there's some other stuff that needs to be addressed here.

Andy Deas: Yeah. Although Muscle Armour looks cool. EAS, man. God! Bill Phillips.

Robb Wolf: Bill Phillips, genius, genius, Body for Life.

Andy Deas: Yes. So I guess the short answer is based on what we're seeing it would seem that you would want to address the high fasting blood sugar work on the high cortisol stuff, and then maybe once that is cleaned up, consider some of these other products. But I don't see them helping with those issues really.

Robb Wolf: They're not going to fix that issue. There's something else going on here, yeah.

Andy Deas: Yeah. Man. All right. Good.

Robb Wolf: It's kind of a flop answer but -- I mean there's more going on under the hood and a simple supplement isn't going to fix it. Something like phosphatidylserine 200 to 300 milligrams might help with the high cortisol levels, but it still -- it's -- that stuff the more and more even that I think about it, it's like that needs to be used in conjunction with revamping your training. That will help you get back to normal faster, but

simply using that in conjunction with training or a lifestyle that's at odds with your genetics is not going to win you anything.

It's going to suppress cortisol for the short run, and then you're going to get a rebound effect in cortisol. It's just going to creep right back up. But then it's crept up amidst the stimulus, the signal of phosphatidylserine suppressing cortisol production. And then you pull the phosphatidylserine out of the mix and you get a massive rebound out of the cortisol. So you can't just keep burning things at both ends and expect good things to happen.

Andy Deas: Yup. All right. Good. Next question from Kate, "Hello, from Minnesota! Robb, your podcasts are stellar even if I'm your only fan in the Midwest." Oh, come on. We got more than one. Jesus!

Robb Wolf: It's cold there. People have nothing to do. That's only five of the six listeners including her so....

Andy Deas: "I constantly get questions from my clients regarding sweeteners. I've been telling them (per your recommendation) to use pastured whipping cream with cinnamon as their first choice, raw honey as the second choice. I've since come across coconut sugar, which I'd never heard of before. Apparently, this is a low GI sweetener that has a slight caramel taste. Here is a link to more in depth information about it." Have you heard or used this? What do you think?"

Robb Wolf: I have not heard of it, have not used it when you navigate to the Nature's Blessings coconut sugar website. They sing the praises of coconut sugar which boils down to essentially be sucrose. It's just basically sugar. And it's funny. This is the point that Andy was making that we have these recurring themes. It's like every six months, a year, something like that, there's the new sweetener of the day which is -- like a couple of years ago was brown rice syrup, and then it was sucanut sugar, and then it's agave nectar, and now we've moved onto coconut sugar. And then they claim that it's low glycemic index which I -- I don't really understand how it is when it's sucrose. So that's really, really odd and pretty suspect to me.

But the other thing to remember is that if it's low glycemic index, then that means that it's probably got a high fructose content, which the fructose ends up deranging liver function are faster and much, much worse than glucose or high glucose or high starch containing items do. Matt Lalonde has been talking a lot about that in his nutrition talks that he's done in Canada. And he and I have been talking about that in

understanding how fructose ends up deranging liver function which then deranges leptin sensitivity and the whole metabolic derangement is kind of launched by that.

So this is just yet another in a long line of supposedly healthful sweeteners which none of them are healthful. You can't slice or dice it any other way. Does that mean you have absolutely no of them? No, we're not necessarily saying that, but if you have metabolic derangement, you're trying to lean out; you have problems managing blood glucose levels, this is not going to help you. It's not going to do you any favors, and it pretty much falls under the guise of like every other sweetener under the sun, and then the -- I think later in the podcast we have some questions about artificial sweeteners, and we'll beat that one up too. But I wish there was some magic thing to this. It's that deal again where like I wish hookers and cocaine were okay, but generally they -- there's downsides to all that stuff. Very old Huey Lewis "I Want a New Drug." It's the same deal, I want a new sweetener, but it's all the same effect at the end of the day.

Andy Deas: I can't believe we just had a Huey Lewis reference. I'm so excited right now.

Robb Wolf: Nicki is a huge Huey Lewis fan, but I -- listening to him just causes my testosterone levels plummet so...it crushes me. My wife and I have a lot of agreement, but music is not one of them so....

Andy Deas: No. So stay away from sweeteners. That's the theme.

Robb Wolf: Stay away from sweeteners, yeah, yeah.

Andy Deas: Oh, okay. Good. I'm glad we got that out of the way. We'll revisit a couple of questions and get you spun back up.

Robb Wolf: Perfect.

Andy Deas: Next, we got a question from Adam. He says, "Robb, I know you're busy and figure you'll probably file this one till you get enough email on the subject. Thought I'd send this link to you," and it's a link from BurnTheFat.com which is our -- which is Tom Venuto's website. And he's "always always looking for other viewpoints as you must if you're willing to be open to debate. His point is valid. Everybody's body is different, but it falls apart after that especially as he doesn't address the insulin spiking caused by high glucose meals plus we are doing this for our health and not our appearance, right?"

So basically real quick, Tom Venuto who is theoretically has Burn the Fat e-book as the highest selling e-book ever on the internet which means he's got more money than Robb and I combined.

Robb Wolf: Which isn't hard to do.

Andy Deas: Which is not hard to do. That is absolutely true and sort of in the Lyle McDonald camp of the not a huge fan of the Paleo diet. So he sort of had this blog post last week because Robb and I talked about it at the gym kind of posting his viewpoint on the Paleo diet. So Adam is kind of asking, Robb, what do you think about this.

Robb Wolf: The whole thing almost gave me an aneurysm when I was reading this, and I knew I was like, "Damn you, Andy!" Like you're seriously trying to piss me off today. So I don't know if this has changed. I tried navigating to this thing. It's like BurnTheFat.com/paleo diet. And when you click on that then it just dumps you in his 50 pages of HTML sales pitch. And then in about three seconds, a pop up box appears which will not go away. And I put some seriously off color email addresses in there trying to make it go away, and it wouldn't, and so I still haven't even read what he is saying, and I'm sure that it -- by what -- have you read it, Andy?

Andy Deas: Yeah, I have. Let me see if I can pull it up real quick actually.

Robb Wolf: So I couldn't even navigate to the thing. I'm sure that it's some sort of a deal where it's like, "Oh, the Paleo is a one size fits all," blah, blah, blah, blah. The fact that it's this 50 pages of HTML and the testimonials -- I've got testimonials on my site, and the new site will probably have more stuff like that. But God help me if it ever turns into that. And it turns into the pop up boxes of just annoyance and everything. And it's like, yeah, Tom Venuto is shredded, and he's jacked. And maybe just despite him I'll go get a cycle of Dianabol, go on 15 or 20 pounds a muscle. It's like right now I'm probably around like 9% or 10% body fat so it looks like I actually train.

I've got some reasonable lifts in the gym, but we'll just step my game up, and I'll go do a cycle steroids. I'll shave. I'll get a tan, and we'll do a photo shoot and a little bit of retouching. And then I'll strike a pose, and I'll be super cool too. And we'll be even more popular than what we are right now. The whole thing is so silly to me, but people are so driven by that just purely aesthetic deal. And I get it. It's compelling. But it's just so slimy on a sales pitch side. It just kills me. But Andy, fill me in with the --

Andy Deas:

So now I'm reminded this whole thing. So basically there's a little introduction about the Paleo diet, and it's basically talking about the removal of unprocessed foods and all this stuff; which he, Tom is totally on board with. But then he says his major criticism is that "some of these Paleo programs not only recommend removal of all kinds of grains and starches (and even dairy), they condemn them in an absolute fashion." So then he goes on to say that, "There are some starchy carbs and grains which are very minimally processed or unprocessed. Some people can metabolically handle these fine."

He goes on to say, "No one knows exactly how our ancestors ate and obviously dependent on climate, geography, and culture. So obviously, the diet would vary a little bit." So he goes on to basically argue that, "For some folks starches and grains should not be completely avoided and we should consider metabolic type, body comp, genetic predisposition, state of health, goals, fat loss, muscle growth, athletic performance."

And then continues that, "Endurance athletes with a high level of energy expenditure eating these starchy grains or carbs is not only beneficial but maybe crucial and even body builders and strength athletes can benefit from a fairly generous starchy carb intake when increasing mass is the goal." And then he goes on to say that, "The other thing is that these Paleo programs tend to be too strict with their no grains/starches dictum." He does think the intentions behind them are good but believes that this flaw, as far as condemning grains and starches and dairy, is kind of a big deal for him.

Robb Wolf:

So both he and Lyle -- it's hilarious. So yeah, there are people that can metabolize this stuff better than others. Nobody ever argues that. Nobody makes that statement contrary to that. But the thing that always rolls back to it is can you throw one general concept out that is going to get everybody? And when I mean everybody, I mean people from cancer, diabetes, heart disease, autoimmunity, all the way to up to elite level athletes. And this whole Paleo diet concept is the only thing that you can throw a whole blanket over. And it's obvious Tom nor Lyle spend any time working with anybody who actually has health problems particularly anything related to autoimmunity.

And so it's just how full of shit he is on this topic is stunning, and it's -- all of these guys, Lyle in particular -- it's interesting because he had his nose right in all of these ketogenic stuff, all the low carb stuff, this whole Paleo concept. I think a lot of these guys are frustrated or angry because the whole concept is exploding. There have been key papers in Science, Nature, New England Journal of Medicine -- like this whole evolutionary

biology thing is just exploding. There were a bunch of these dudes who were right in there, and they were kind of close to what this whole concept was, and then they missed it.

And now I think in some ways there's this feeling that like -- and God help me because I'm going to say this. There's a sense that they're losing market share and -- yeah. It's a dark day that I start justifying stuff by market share because I'm in really dodgy company at that point. But I said it, and so we'll go down that direction. These guys feel like they're losing market share. It's like Paleo is popular, so like you make yourself more popular by taking potshots at it. And all this stuff that he's relaying it's like, "Oh, we don't know what our ancestors really ate." No, Tom, we do. It's pretty well understood. We don't have the exact numbers on that stuff, but just from a radio isotopic analysis of bones, we know what an organism ate.

From some of the thermodynamic analysis that Cordain and Eaton have done, we know that it had to have been more animal products than plant products just based off of energy expenditure and optimum forging strategy. And then we also know because of this whole silly thing, the agricultural revolution and the transition from Paleolithic to Neolithic times and the changes that were wrought with that, that people did not consume grains in any great amount until the advent of agriculture, and there was a whole slew of problems that grew up out of that. And so he's just sticking his head into the sand with regards to all this stuff.

And now, are there certain grains like corn and rice that are less problematic than others? Yeah, there are. But this is always the thing too at least from my standpoint, is like we try to get people to do a clean Paleo-oriented diet, gluten free, dairy free, legume free; establish of baseline of health and then tinker and see how you react from there. And I don't see it as being orthorexic. I don't see it as being dogmatic. I certainly have grains when I want them mainly in the rice and corn variety. I'll do some sushi. I'll do some corn tortillas. I don't touch gluten with a stick because of what it does to me. Dairy has some utility for growth potentiation, particularly kind of a mass gain sort of deal, but it's also got some legitimate downsides. And to stick your head in the sand on that I think is just ridiculously shortsighted. But it's all tools, and it's all there for the using.

And so they're trying to paint this whole thing as some sort of like black and white scenario. Maybe other people do that, but I definitely do not. I think he's misrepresenting the whole concepts for essentially like personal gain, and obviously I've got stakes and some personal gain in

this. I'm writing a book, and I am trying to sell a book and all the rest of that. So maybe my intentions are somehow skewed by that as well, but I've had a pretty consistent message for like the whole 10, 12, 15 years that I've been tinkering with this stuff. So I don't know. I'm just all spun up, Andy. Save me. Save me from myself.

Andy Deas: I was going to say other than your dabble in veganism.

Robb Wolf: But you know what? True enough but I've done a pit stop at every port of call on this whole nutrition thing so I -- obviously, folks are different, and different people respond to different things. But whether it's macrobiotic, whether it's vegan, blood type like I tried -- I tinkered with it. And I have talked to and worked with enough people at this point, including people like Mike and Mary Eades, Drs. Eades, who tinkered with high carb, low fat; they tinkered with blood type, metabolic typing, and all that stuff just ends up being means -- like all the metabolic typing stuff what that ends up being is a slick way to sell somebody a bunch of blood work and a bunch of quasi-voodoo-esque analysis that doesn't have much basis in science at all versus just saying, "Hey eat unprocessed lean meats, foods and vegetables, supplement with some fish oil, monitor your omega-6 fat intake so that you're not messing up your pro-inflammatory prostaglandin kind of scenario, and call it good and sleep and train reasonably." But there's just nothing really sexy about that until you get sculpted abs and some good photography done I guess so....

Andy Deas: That's been awesome new front page for RobbWolf.com. I can see it now.

Robb Wolf: I'm doing it, man. **[0:22:14] [Inaudible]** growth hormone. I'll weigh in about 230 pounds, and I'll be like 2% body fat doing it.

Andy Deas: Robb, where did you go? Did you step away from the mike?

Robb Wolf: No, I'm here.

Andy Deas: Okay. You got quiet for a second. You're spinning out.

Robb Wolf: I was flailing. I probably interrupted the internet. Sorry. I'll calm down. I'm good. I'm fine.

Andy Deas: All right. Now you're back. Robb's back. We're okay. I thought we had to throw that in, Tom Venuto. Anyway....

Robb Wolf: Thanks, dude.

Andy Deas: But I think it's fascinating just because the one thing he picks on is the grain and starches thing which for us like we just see I think so much of a difference in people's daily lives and their health when you remove that stuff. It's just stunning that that's the dimension that he picks on and basically slams the whole paradigm around that one little issue.

Robb Wolf: And if you really want starch, eat yams and sweet potatoes and all that sort of stuff, and then you reduce the lectin load from the grains. Here again like I want to see Tom work with some people who have rheumatoid arthritis and multiple sclerosis, and I want to see Tom do -- create better results than what we have been able to do with the Paleo diet.

Andy Deas: Challenge. I like it.

Robb Wolf: Challenge. Do it. Do it. Prove us wrong. It's all out there for the proving so prove us wrong.

Andy Deas: All right. Moving on, a question from Joe, "Robb, I love your podcast. I know you have at least 10 listeners in Georgia, so you are up to 18." Ha! See, he used pseudoscience, and he got us to 18 so that's our new number. We're sticking with it.

Robb Wolf: We're just making stuff up, yeah.

Andy Deas: "I have a coworker that recently had her gall bladder removed and now suffers from anemia, not sure which type. I remember you talking about gluten-intolerance and these topics in the past. I was wondering if there some data I can show her suggesting that she is gluten-intolerant. Thank you again for everything. Paleo has changed my life."

Robb Wolf: Super good question and love the questions but always a helpful reminder on this stuff is just a simple Google search. Gallbladder celiac, gallbladder gluten and you're going to find a ton of scientific references relating to gallbladder disorder which usually results in what I would consider unnecessary removal of the gallbladder because of gluten intolerance, and the signaling that's gets damaged between the pancreas, the intestines, and the gallbladder which ends up resulting in gallstones.

So yeah, the data is there to well establish that people going gluten free would typically be able to keep their gallbladder. And now this woman not only has her gallbladder removed which then completely buggers her mineral absorption, her fat absorption, but she is still gluten intolerant

likely still taking in gluten which, dammit, is continuing to damage the intestinal lining. So it's not a wonder that she's anemic. I would argue she's probably super low in vitamin D, all the other fat-soluble vitamins. She's probably got a horrible omega-3/omega-6 ratio. There are problems brewing there which going back to the Tom Venuto thing, it's like let's fix this chick with grains. Let's see if you fix this scenario with grains.

Andy Deas: Anything else you want to say on this, Robb?

Robb Wolf: No.

Andy Deas: Good because I'm excited for the next one.

Robb Wolf: Oh, man. Awesome. From unknown no less.

Andy Deas: Well, there was a name honestly in the process that is the craziness of combining blog comments, email questions, somehow it fell out. So I apologize to this reader although he or she may not want her name read after hear Robb's answer to it so. "Robb, I've been reading a lot about this...." Remind me how to say this stupid berry's name.

Robb Wolf: Acai.

Andy Deas: "...Acai," thank you, "plus colon cleanse diet. Could you address the science behind it and the potential, if any, ramifications of using it?"

Robb Wolf: I would address the science if there was any for it. There's just -- God! All of this like this colon cleanse, Acai berry -- the Acai is kind of cool. It's a nutrient-dense berry, and so then they juice it and you drink 20 ounces of it, and you take in 200 grams of sugar which is not doing you any good. I really wish that I'd jump on board at sometimes with all this colon cleanse and supplements and all that because the margins on that stuff is scary. It's just amazing how much money you can make off of all that stuff, but I didn't and I'm an idiot. But there's just nothing to this stuff.

Eat some fruits and vegetables. Eat some protein. The protein actually enhances elements of your liver detoxification pathway. It helps you produce alpha lipoic acid. Taking grass fed grass-fed meat is even better because it contains alpha lipoic acid. It enhances all the cytochrome P450 pathways. Do a little bit of coffee. Do a little bit of dark espresso. Do some fruits and vegetables. Skip a meal here and there. Do a little bit of intermittent fasting, maybe skip a day of eating once a month. Nothing

crazy. It doesn't have to be anything really insane, and you are getting all of the supposed benefits of this stuff without colon cleansing stuff.

Usually, the folks that I see doing these things, they get into this recidivist pattern. They do the colon cleanse, and they really, really clean. They do a bunch a smoothies and all this, and then they go off the freaking reservation. They go bananas, eat everything under the sun, and then they go back into this other thing. And so it's just like this oscillating pendulum of like ridiculously eating on both sides of the spectrum. On the one hand they're colon cleansing and getting colonics and stuff. On the other hand they're eating pizza, wings, beer, ice cream, the whole thing. I mean they're completely off the rails. Instead of just finding some sort of a happy medium of generally eating some unprocessed food, kick your heels up once in a while when you want to kick your heels up, get some sleep, do some sound exercise, and call it good. But it's hard to make that into a program you can make money off of I guess. So I don't know. Yeah, I'm not a fan of all that stuff at all.

Andy Deas: Sounds cool though, if only it worked.

Robb Wolf: If only it worked.

Andy Deas: Moving on. Well, probably we'll not get any love letters from that.

Robb Wolf: I just said for all like this stuff to so many people like I'm going to have Tom Venuto show up at the gym and like try to beat me out there and so... Hopefully, he's like 5 foot 2 though, I hope he's not tall.

Andy Deas: I don't know, I think he is. That's funny. It reminds me of Andy. How tall is Eric Cressey?

Robb Wolf: That was somebody with much bigger hair than me though.

Andy Deas: All right. Moving on. I'm getting spun up here. Question from Clif. He "wanted to try out some intermittent fasting with a couple of twists thrown in due to concerns that I have on fasting because of my stupid embedded notions of grazing. I drink a lot of tea and like to start days with fresh lemon and ginger in my tea. Can you think of any reason to stop this practice during an intermittent fast?

Additionally, I did a severe caloric restriction last year of about five days where I actually gained weight (maybe I was really dehydrated when I first measured) where during the restricted phase I really only consumed super green style drink powder, coconut water, a ton of amino acids,

leaves and eggs each morning. I'm going to try doing a 16-hour fast two or three days a week, and I was intending to drink the vile amino acid/super green mix and tea during my fast. Can you see any obvious reasons not to do that?"

Robb Wolf: Oh, man!

Andy Deas: That's a good question.

Robb Wolf: Okay. I don't want to pick on Clif. Clif is kind of the person that I was just talking about in the last deal here. I honestly -- we did not set this all up ahead of time. Andy picked these questions kind of sort of random although I do think he put all these together to get a freaking rise out of me. Okay, going back like the whole deal of the intermittent fast. Some tea with lemon and ginger I think is fine. And then everything else, it's like, why are you doing this? I just -- I don't get it. Like coconut water has a tone of sugar in it. It is amazing as a post-workout recovery aid. It has great electrolytes.

I just don't get it though, the greens and all the stuff. I don't get it, and then all this stuff of like I think I gained weight. It's like why are even looking at your weight. The fact that there's just so many whacky pathological things going on here that I -- just eat. Just eat real food. Make this shit simple, please. Simplify all this stuff. Figure out how to eat some protein, some vegetables, some fat, choose minimal supplementation. Maybe compressed feeding window, but keep it simple. All the rest of this stuff is just craziness. I mean go bananas if you want to do all this stuff. Do the supplements, but it's way easier.

Again, also with Clif --and it begs the question, what the heck are the goals here? Why are you doing this stuff? Are you trying to lean out? Just the mentioning of weight makes me think that this person is wanting to lean out or is like a scale watcher and wanting to push the scale down for unknown reasons. But all of this stuff can be accomplished with a much less neurotic approach to eating. And again, Clif, if I'm mischaracterizing this, I'm sorry. I'm not trying to be jerk, but this stuff is a little bit crazy, in my opinion.

Andy Deas: Yeah. I mean I think the reason I threw this in honestly is -- and I think we see this in our little experiment of a gym as well is that every one is always looking I think for a better, shorter, faster way to do some of this stuff. And in general the athletes that we have who get the best results are consistent in their diet. They're consistent in their training. They have some periods of maybe some smart supplementation based on whatever

they're trying to do, but you don't see a lot of crazy stuff getting anyone better results.

Robb Wolf:

No, no, you just don't. Everybody needs to read some Jim Wendler stuff on this. We should pull out some Wendler quotes to throw in here. I just seriously dig that guy's perspective. It's like be consistent. Pick a goal. Train for a purpose. Periodize your training for the love of God. Keep your eating simple. Eat some nachos once in a while. It doesn't have to be as complex as all this stuff. And it's really interesting, and this is that thing again that -- I'm going to keep beating up on Tom Venuto here just because I'm seriously spun up.

This is that thing too where it's like when people give this stuff a shot, it's like -- it's easier than anything else that they've ever done, and it works better than anything else that they've ever done. And that's what I keep coming back to again and again. It's like just give it a shot for 30 days and maybe you are wired up such that you run better on higher carb. Fine. Get that from fruits and yams and sweet potatoes and stuff. But you're typically -- we still just see so many people do so much better on this just basic stuff.

Lots of protein, good fats, good carbohydrate up to the level of your needs and/or tolerance but don't be a nutcase about it. Kick your heels up once in awhile. Live life. Do a NorCal Margarita, the whole thing again. Drink enough such that it optimizes your sex life. It's like have some fun and don't make this stuff work or drudgery. I obviously love this stuff. I love geeking out on it. There are some people who are really, really sick that need to take this stuff deadly seriously, if they're going to see some changes in health, I'm not necessarily talking about that. But for most people that don't need to make this stuff so complex, but there's no shortcuts to just a little bit of diligence and consistency. I wish there was, but there's not.

Andy Deas:

Now, I think my advice for Clif, if he wants to try a fast, just start with maybe one day a week, once every two weeks, whatever and play with and see how he responds. But once again, I don't know where Clif is in the continuum, but I'm like all that stuff is like down the road. Is everything dialed? Have we been through the 30 days of really strict Paleo eating? And then start to introduce some stuff back in and kind of it out to see where we are before you jump like both feet first into this whole intermittent fasting stuff.

Robb Wolf:

Yeah, totally. Completely.

Andy Deas: And I think I'm going to do a blog plug for our buddy, Keith, from Theory to Practice, who I think -- I really dig his blog. If you look at the way he posts his trainings, stuff about his diet, I mean he is a beast of an athlete who every once in a while does some intermittent fasting. He doesn't get crazy about it. He skips meals here and there, consistently trains hard and gets really good results. And if you look in some of his posts, he has some posts about the results he got from fasting, and they were very positive. But once again, I don't think he went overboard. He didn't jump in and do anything crazy. It was kind of like I think he started with one day every two weeks or something and saw positive results and kept it in. So something to consider.

Robb Wolf: Seriously, seriously.

Andy Deas: Yes. So...anyway, hopefully we didn't beat up on Clif too bad.

Robb Wolf: Clif is like, "You guys are jerks. I'm not going back anymore." Five listeners.

Andy Deas: Well, this is -- some of the Robb Wolf theory of tough love. Robb once told me that the clients that are the biggest Cookie Monsters, they need to be called out on their being a Cookie Monster. No, don't be nice to them, Andy. You need to call them out.

Robb Wolf: Exactly, yeah.

Andy Deas: Anyway... All right, moving on, a question from Chuck. He's "recently tried as you suggest cutting carbs in half and adding three times the fat for your version of skinning the zone. My prescription was 16 protein, 8 carb, and 40 fat blocks. I weigh 178lbs and I'm 5'6, 30 yrs old. My question is, do you feel this approach to eating is enough protein? I've always felt much better ingesting higher amounts of protein. I've been considering the more ketogenic approach to eating following your 50 grams of carb recommendation.

I'll be honest and tell you I'm doing this from a vanity-stricken standpoint. I have body fat in the upper teens and I'm hell bent on being able to see my abs and keep them for the rest of my years on the planet. Any suggestions or guidance would be amazing and I'd be grateful. P.S. I work a 40-hour work week on a swing shift schedule, up to 8 or 9 days in a row. Yes, I'm a law enforcement officer, just in case you were thinking that."

Robb Wolf: That will complicate the leaning out a little bit because of the sleep stuff, but --

Andy Deas: We haven't had a Zone question in a while, Robb. I thought it was time. Return to the Zone.

Robb Wolf: Yeah, return to the Zone let Barry Sears had his day. The thing here -- there's a couple of questions, like is this enough protein? He feels better on more protein. This thing varies. I think I mentioned a couple of podcasts back that talking to OPT, James Fitzgerald, based on how good your digestion is, you may need up getting by on really low protein and be fine. Your performance is good. Recovery is good. I remember the old, old but very good analysis that John Berardi did of how much protein you need -- one needs particularly while training. It's interesting theoretically while you're training you actually need less protein than if you're sedentary because your body actually becomes more sparing of protein.

But then John ends up recommending super high protein because of G-flux and all kinds of other stuff which is kind of intriguing. But I don't know for sure if that's adequate levels of protein for what he wants, for what Chuck wants. It's a little bit tough to know. It's probably adequate. Whether it's optimum? I honestly don't know. One thing to clarify here though, people seem to confuse this a lot. People always associate more protein as being more along the ketogenic side, and it's not. It's higher fat that's more ketogenic.

In fact, if you eat protein on that much higher order of magnitude like some of the Loren Cordain papers where he's actually recommending two to three grams of protein a day depending on small female, large male kind of gig. You're taking in enough protein alone to get enough gluconeogenesis to take you out of ketosis. So it's not -- when we're talking ketogenic, it's actually more what Chuck is doing here which is low carb, moderate protein, moderate to low protein, and then higher fat, and then calorie restricted to boot. This is actually a very, very effective way to lean out.

If you want to take the time to weigh and measure and do all that stuff, it's definitely a great way to lean out. You're keeping an eye on your calorie intake so you make sure that you're not overeating anything. The protein is limited, so you're not going to get any gluconeogenesis. It's probably adequate for maintaining muscle mass, and then just a little bit of carbs for acid-base balance and probably enough so that you're not breaking down too much protein to make carbohydrate or -- yeah, to make carbohydrate out of a protein. So it's not a bad place to go taking

that base Zone, cut the carbs in half, and up the fat blocks, and you're in a pretty sweet spot for fat loss. Calorie restricted, low carb, putting enough fat in the mix to kind of prime the pump.

Andy Deas: All right. Any thoughts on the sleep schedule? What are there challenges associated with a schedule like that?

Robb Wolf: Sleep as well as you can whenever you can. I mean there's just no -- there's no easy fix to that. It is what it is.

Andy Deas: Yeah. All right. Good. Moving on, we got a question from Shilpa.

Robb Wolf: Shilpa.

Andy Deas: Close enough. Okay.

Robb Wolf: This is a goodie.

Andy Deas: "Hi, Robb. I've heard another Paleo expert (I won't say who) say that consuming low-calorie sweeteners (Splenda, stevia, aspartame) causes insulin spikes and therefore we shouldn't consume artificial sweeteners because it screws with insulin sensitivity. I don't know, something about that logic seems a little too neat and clean. I couldn't find scientific articles supporting this. Do you know of any? It seems to me that if artificial sweeteners were actually similar enough to sugar, then we'd love the stuff and wouldn't be able to get enough of it. But most people don't love the stuff. Our brains aren't fooled and can tell, 'Hey, that's not sugar. I'm not buying that.'

And if that's the case, wouldn't our brains eventually stop releasing insulin when presented with artificial sweeteners, especially given that such sweeteners usually have a fairly distinctive taste? Or maybe some people do release insulin and some people don't? Either way, I've stopped consuming the stuff. I just don't like people spouting off things that sound like they could be true and not backing it up. I hope this makes it to your podcast. Feel free to edit for length and clarity."

Robb Wolf: I'm going to be a little bit mean to Shilpa here. Obviously, he or she did not take the time to simply type in the Google artificial sweetener insulin, artificial sweetener insulin resistance. I mean there's so much data on this. I honestly -- it's a little bit stupefying that you couldn't track anything down. This is well-understood -- even now that there are more recent stuff just talking about the anticipatory nature of eating and how that influences insulin release. That's my whole food porn analogy. Instead of

showing somebody a picture of porn, showing some people a photograph of food, and they actually get an insulin response off of things.

So this stuff is way more complex than -- historically the understanding of insulin, insulin release and all that was 100% tied to blood glucose levels go up, insulin is released, and that was just a dogma. And then it was assumed that because artificial sweeteners do not increase blood glucose levels, that there could be no insulin release to that and no effects on metabolism. But we now understand that, yeah, it can release insulin. It can in fact chuck and jive the hypothalamus which is the part of our brain that regulates energy metabolism. It can make the hypothalamus think that we consume nutrients when in fact we didn't, and that can actually cause a break between our normal increased on -- increase in metabolic rate in response to food. And this is where people can end up on this comparatively low calorie intake scenarios but are just a wash of artificial sweeteners and these people **[0:44;43] [Audio Gap]** that scenario because they are not getting their normal thermic effect out of food.

So I'm not sure where Shilpa is looking for this stuff, but it is well-established and well-understood. Does it affect everybody the same way? No, but that's true of everything. Not everybody gets sunburned the same way. So why we would expect all this other stuff to work the same way? I don't know. But it definitely does not, but it is most assuredly a problem.

Andy Deas: Robb Wolf.

Robb Wolf: Oh, dude.

Andy Deas: I'm back. Who knows what the heck happened. Wow! I'm going to have to listen to the show. All right. Well, we're back. We'll finish our recording. I'll edit whenever that five minutes was out.

Robb Wolf: So that I drop out or did you -- did we both drop out?

Andy Deas: I guess we both dropped, but it's weird because I couldn't hear you and maybe you just didn't hear me respond. I could hear you like you say hello, and then I hear nothing and then a bunch of typing. I do like, "Robb, Robb, can you hear me?" And then all I can hear is you typing.

Robb Wolf: Okay. But I ended up as jabbering through the Shilpa thing.

Andy Deas: No, we got all that.

Robb Wolf: Oh, good.

Andy Deas: And then you ended and then I was babbling something about how in practice we see folks that are addicted to the artificial stuff like our clients that have like seven Diet Cokes a day. So certain people definitely respond differently to some of those artificial sweeteners.

Robb Wolf: Yeah. And it is a good thing to point out that it's like if you actually get in a position of working with people, then you will notice that folks have a hell of a time with the artificial sweeteners so....

Andy Deas: Yeah, we had one client who gave up Diet Coke, and she said to me, she's like, "I literally feel like a crack addict." Eight weeks after her last Diet Coke she's like, "I will sit around and think about it all day."

Robb Wolf: Yeah.

Andy Deas: That is an impressive addiction. I mean think about that. I mean that's better than amphetamines, meth maybe for some people. I don't know.

Robb Wolf: And it's so handy.

Andy Deas: And it's totally inexpensive. You can get it anywhere.

Robb Wolf: Yeah.

Andy Deas: All right. Moving on. We will edit that out and fix that. So next question is from Jared, "Hey, Robb. Lately I have been making a coconut milk smoothie in the morning (usually pre-workout) using the 'SO Delicious Unsweetened' brand mixing it with some almond butter, blueberries, protein powder, glutamine and cinnamon. With that said, I was looking up coconut milk on nutritiondata.com and it said it was strongly inflammatory. This concerned me because I normally drink one of these before a workout and if it is in fact inflammatory, I assume it would be a poor meal to consume. Therefore, is Coconut milk inflammatory and is it a bad alternative to regular whole milk? Any advice you can offer would be greatly appreciated. Thank you."

Robb Wolf: It's a really good question, and it's a great kind of teaching tool for illustrating the bias and the crappy science that is thrown into a lot of websites. And you only have to poke around the nutrition data website a little bit, and you get that they are very much like high carb, low fat, grains, grains, grains all day. So they provide some interesting read out. Like it's a cool handy site in some ways because you can throw a huge

variety of foods into their matrix, and then it will spit out like protein, carbohydrate, fat, break down on these foods, theoretical trace nutrient content. Although nowhere in there do they really point out that there is massive variability in samples. Like this stuff is a statistical average.

And so like from location to location, season to season, the types of foods that you're popping in there are going to have their **[0:48:24] [Audio Gap]** that's also kind of annoying in a way. But when you throw coconut milk in there, then it rates it as a highly, highly inflammatory food. They are recommending that you only have 50 inflammatory points a day or something like that. The coconut milk is -450 so it's horrible -- horribly pro-inflammatory theoretically. And then you have to get insight, but what's in coconut milk? It has a trace amount of carbohydrate, but it's mainly short-chain or medium-chain saturated fats.

And when you actually look at the biochemistry -- and really more accurately the organic chemistry of saturated fats, they are not reactive at all. That stuff actually quenches kind of free radical reactions in cell membranes. It almost acts as a type of antioxidant with regards to the way it can quench free radical reactions. So where the heck are they coming from that this stuff is inflammatory? They just lump. Saturated fat as being a pro-inflammatory food which is completely false. It's not accurate at all.

Palmitic acid can be a little bit problematic the way that it modulates the metabolism of arachidonic acid and some of the pro-inflammatory prostaglandins, but that effect is really pretty minor all things considered. And then when we look at coconut milk, we don't we even like have palmitic acid in there. So that whole thing is superstitious. So it's interesting I took canola oil and plugged into the nutrition data deal. And because canola oil is full of wonderful short-chain omega-3 and omega-6 fats, it listed canola oil as being massively anti-inflammatory which is just bollocks. It's like some of the worse stuff you can take.

The short-chain omega-3 and omega-6 fats particularly in that form of being a liquid sitting in a jar basically, most of that stuff -- it has a very, very high potential to be oxidized while it's in the container. Then if you cook with it, the likelihood of it oxidizing is just amazingly high, and then once you ingest it, that stuff is likely to start bugging prostaglandin production and shifting it towards a pro-inflammatory side because of the omega-6, the linoleic acid. The short-chain omega-6 ends up disrupting the production of anti-inflammatory prostaglandins on that omega-3 side. And then just the very fats themselves are pro-inflammatory.

So this is just -- I mean it's a really nice question and again like a nice teaching instrument here. If we were to feed -- and this is easy stuff that we could pull out. If we were to feed critters or humans a dose of pure saturated fat, and then we check their oxidative status of their plasma or of, say, like the red blood cells, saturated fat is not going to negatively impact their oxidative status at all, like the amount of free radical damage that's going on there. Inflammatory state is not really going to change.

If we feed them a bunch of vegetable oil, which according to nutrition data is anti-inflammatory, we're going to see a massive spike in the reactive oxygen and the oxidative stress that is being dealt the individual from taking that stuff in. So you need to really take that information with a grain of salt, and it really pays to have a little -- just a tiny bit of steeping in some nutritional biochemistry and understand a little bit of what goes on behind the scenes with organic molecules. It matters.

Andy Deas: So what are your thoughts to Jared's question? How do you feel about his smoothie?

Robb Wolf: The liquid food thing I'm just not a fan of it at all. It begs that question again. It's like why are you doing a smoothie? I would like to see solid food in there, and -- but if he has body composition like what he wants, and performance like what he wants and it doesn't have any health problems or whatever then go for it. But I'm just not a fan of liquid food. I'm just not. I don't see it do good by most people. Do they have good application in certain situations? Absolutely. But by and large, I'm not a fan of them. Andy had to throw that one back in there.

Andy Deas: Robb, it's a theme. Liquid food, brother. All right, moving on, a question from Michael, "Hi, Robb. In *Lights Out*, Wiley prescribes sleeping in perfect darkness. I recently set up my bedroom window to block out the streetlights, so I've been sleeping in complete darkness." I'm just going to say that Michael, in spite of your question, it's just so much better sleeping in complete darkness. It's not even close. Every time I travel I cry when I realize how much light is sneaking into the room I'm in. Anyway....

Robb Wolf: Tell me about it.

Andy Deas: "But I've noticed it's now much harder to wake up in the mornings. Since there's no morning light to indicate that it's time to wake up, I feel groggy and disoriented. Should I allow some light to make waking up easier? The

evolutionary logic would seem to prescribe waking up with the sunrise. Or is this something that just requires time to adapt to?"

Robb Wolf: No, the logic is sound. You should wake with the sunrise, but the problem that's going on is that Michael is not going to bed when the sun sets. And so we're trying to make the best situation of the whole thing. I guarantee you, you're going to be better off even if you're groggy waking up. What's happening there is there's probably a little bit of overproduction of melatonin being that dark for that long. But I still think you're finishing off way better getting the full amount of sleep, sleeping in the dark like all that sort of stuff. It just -- it's definitely superior, and you just need to try one versus the other to be able to experience that. I think if Michael went to bed earlier -- I suspect if we ended up doing some digging, he probably goes to be a little bit on the late side, and so if he wants to get up a little earlier, I think he'd probably find little better results.

Andy Deas: Yeah. Great book. Read it.

Robb Wolf: Good stuff.

Andy Deas: Robb, and with that, buddy, we almost had an hour. We are ending episode 22. How do you feel about that?

Robb Wolf: I'm terribly excited.

Andy Deas: I did want to add a comment that -- we received several emails and blog questions about why you can't grab the first 11 podcast episodes on iTunes, and honestly I don't have a clue, but I'm going to research it this weekend.

Robb Wolf: Cool. Awesome.

Andy Deas: And they will get that figured out. And with that, that ends episode 22. Thanks again, Robb. I'll talk to you next week.

Robb Wolf: Thanks, Andy. See you soon.

Andy Deas: All right. See you, Robb.