

Paleo Solution - PaleoLogix

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Robb Wolf: Hey, folks. Robb Wolf here with a special edition of the Paleo Solution podcast. With me today is the infamous, Chris Kresser.

Chris, how you doing?

Chris Kresser: [Laughter] I'm pretty good. I'm hoping I'm not infamous.

Robb Wolf: Dude you're infamous in my world so that's all that matters.

Chris Kresser: So what's new, man? Zoey's going to be what—nine months now?

Robb Wolf: Seven and a half.

Chris Kresser: Seven and a half. How do they get that far off? So, she's starting to get mobile.

Robb Wolf: She's highly mobile. We set up a Christmas tree, and of course, she was right up in the middle of it in no time. I put a barrier of pillows and blankets around it, and that stymied her for about eight hours and so now have foam rollers stacked around it, and it looks like some sort of trench warfare set up from the World War I.

Chris Kresser: And then you bolt that thing to the wall, and when you walk into the room you find Zoey laying underneath the Christmas tree.

Robb Wolf: Well, we're in Nevada, so we don't need to do all that silly earthquake retrofitting that they make you guys do in California

Chris Kresser: That's true yeah. I just live right on top of the fault, so if there's ever an earthquake, bye.

Robb Wolf: So Sophie is just like getting up on top of window sills and bailing out from what your wife said.

Chris Kresser: Oh, yeah. She's running around now. I mean, literally. It's pretty crazy. It's just this phase is so fast. Everything is just—everything happens so fast, and she's talking a lot more now too which is pretty fun.

Robb Wolf: Nice, nice.

Chris Kresser: Yeah.

Robb Wolf: So folks were here today because Chris and I—gosh, over a year ago—Chris you really had the idea for this. I was kicking around this idea, but you pinged me with the notion that you were seeing some really consistent almost like archetype set out of the folks that you were working with with some problems transitioning into Paleo eating.

And it seemed to focus on some digestive issues, some things that I would call methyl-detox, some liver pathology issues, being able to metabolize fats and some other nutrients and then also some really gnarly, coming off the crack type, when people are going from a highly-refined diet and they start eating Paleo and even if they're eating plenty of yams, and some sweet potatoes and plantains and stuff, they feel like they've been hit with a ninja blow dart and so...

Chris Kresser: Yeah, yeah.

Robb Wolf: You had an idea about how we can tackle this and maybe make the transition a little bit easier for folks in all these areas. Where did this idea come from? Basically, what we're doing, we have a supplement line called PaleoLogix that has these three different modules to help people transition into Paleo more effectively but how did you come up with this stuff that you're using?

Chris Kresser: Yeah, so I mean of course, there are a lot of people who made the transition to Paleo without a problem and you'd hear stories about people losing forty pounds and reversing chronic illness that they've had for twenty five years and just feeling better than they have ever in their life, not better than they have twenty years ago for twenty years but better than they have ever and that certainly happens.

And Robb I know you've seen that. I've seen it in my patient populations. We've seen it on our blogs, hearing people from our podcasts and the workshops we used to teach and so that absolutely happens, but on the other hand, there are also plenty of people who don't get the Paleo brochure experience as how we say it. The transition is not quite as smooth, and they have some trouble initially when they switch to a Paleo diet.

I think my experience is a little bit unique because I have a practice where I treat people who are going through those things so I tend to see a lot of the people who don't have that the stereotypical smooth transition to the Paleo diet. They end up in my practice or I hear about them, they send me an email through the blog or through the radio show or whatever. So I tend to get a lot of those folks and I began to notice some patterns like you said.

There were basically three categories of difficulty that I would see with most folks, and that would be digestive issues, so gas or bloating, changes in stool frequency or consistency like constipation or diarrhea, maybe some acid reflux and abdominal pains and stuff like that.

And there are a number of possible reasons for this, but I think one of the main ones is hypochloridia or low stomach acid. What happens is when you're on a diet where you're eating a lot of processed and refined carbohydrates, maybe you've been avoiding red meat and meat in general because we've been told for so many years that red meat cause cancer or raise our cholesterol or whatever nonsense.

[Cross-talk]

Robb Wolf: [Laughter] Yeah.

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Chris Kresser: Or people have been trying to like in the eighties and nineties, all low-fat crazed and then vegetarian and vegan diets became more popular. I think a lot of us have been there. I was on a vegan macrobiotic diet myself which almost killed me, but that's another story.

[Laughter]

So these diets are low in animal protein and the body, I think, starts to adapt to that by producing less stomach acid because it's not really necessary when you're not eating as much nutrient-dense food and so then all of a sudden you switch to a protein-dense diet with more red meat and maybe you're eating not only everyday but more than once a day.

And the body's just like, 'Woah! What's happening here?' and stomach acid production takes a while to kick back in and as a result, the protein in the meat will putrefy in the stomach, and that can cause gas and bloating. And digestion is a top-down process, so if it's not happening well in the stomach, it's not going to be happening well anywhere else from there on down.

Robb Wolf: The release of the stomach acid is critical for cholecystokinin signalling which then releases bile salts and so you get buggered not only that you're not digesting protein well, but then further south you have problems with fat absorption and then you end up with steatorrhea this really, really fun texture to your poo where the fat's not getting absorbed and you basically get a lubricating action as the stuff whooshes right out of you. Yeah, that was awesome.

Chris Kresser: The other thing—I'm glad you brought that up. Not only fats, there's carbohydrates as well.

A little-known fact is that the stimulation of pancreatic enzyme is dependent upon the pH of the chyme which is the contents of the stomach emptying into the small intestine being at a certain level. And if there's not enough acid in the

chyme because the stomach acid is low, the pH will be too high and then pancreatic enzyme production won't happen properly.

So this whole chain of events, it seems maybe a little relatively benign. Okay. I'm not breaking down protein that well, but it turns into not breaking down protein, not breaking down carbohydrates, not breaking down fats which are of course, the three macronutrients that you're eating, so this can really clog up the works and cause some signalling and digesting problems.

Another main issue is difficulty with energy dip like energy dips in the afternoon and then at really intense sugar cravings. Now this is problematic of course because it's one of the main reasons that people fall off the wagon. It requires a huge force of will to stick with it when you're having these kind of sugar cravings because it literally feels like you're going to die if you don't get it. It almost is drug-like in that effect.

And the reason it feels that way is because if you're accustomed to burning carbohydrates for energy and you're not accustomed to burning fats for energy, and maybe you even have some deficiencies in micronutrients that are required for fat burning, then you will feel like you're starving because your cells kind of are starving.

The body doesn't want you to starve. The body wants to survive and it's got a lot of mechanisms built in that help you survive, so it's going to do everything it can to try to get you to continue eating carbohydrates. It doesn't understand that there is a period of adoption or adaptation and so it's just doing what it can do to get nutrients in your body.

So that's the number two thing and that can really impede people's progress, and the solution there of course is, to provide the nutrients that the body needs to start metabolizing fats more efficiently, switching from being a primarily carbohydrate-burner to fat-burner and of course, protein as well.

And then the third issue is, we could loosely say accumulated toxins and subpar detox capability and that is primarily caused by micronutrient deficiency and exposure to toxins in food and just in a modern environment in general. So the liver is an amazing organ and it's responsible for so much and it requires a lot of nutrients to perform its functions, and those nutrients tend to be fairly scarce in the standard American diet and also in—even in a plant-based vegetarian type of diet.

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Robb Wolf: A lot of things like choline are almost impossible to find.

Chris Kresser: Right. And a lot of the B vitamins like B12 which are really crucial for methylation are impossible to get on a vegan diet. It's somewhat possible on a

vegetarian diet, but you really have to know what you're doing and even then there's a pretty high percentage of vegetarians that are deficient in B12.

Early studies suggest that there was only about eight to ten per cent but they were just measuring B12 with a serum which is not a really accurate way to measure B12 deficiency.

When you look at studies of urinary methylmalonic acid which is a way more sensitive indicator of active B12 deficiency, you see rates of forty to fifty per cent in vegetarians for B12 deficiency and more like eighty per cent in vegans.

So these nutrients, choline, B12, they're all really crucial for proper detox and methylation and methylation, there's nothing—there are very few things that methylation is not involved in in the body. It's everything from neurotransmitter production to ATP production, ATP being the fundamental energy unit in a cell, proper detox, it's really a crucial process and if you're not methylating properly, none of the systems of the body are going to be functioning optimally.

And so what then tends to look like is skin breakouts, that's a really common problem with people with impaired detox function, mood issues, brain fog, digestive problems, of course, hormone imbalance because one of the liver's jobs is to clear excess hormones from the circulation so you see women in particular who are dealing with a whole range of hormone issues like difficulty with their menstrual cycle or skin breakouts or digestive problems dating up to menstruation or mood imbalances, the typical PMS-type of symptoms.

So all three of these categories, I just started to see like you said, almost like an archetype for people who are having trouble adapting to the Paleo diet and when we first talked about it, I mentioned that you basically have the exact same experience.

Robb Wolf:

Yeah it's interesting like... So it's similar to your macrobiotic vegan diet.

Living in Seattle, vitamin D wasn't even really on my radar at that point. I was probably at a vitamin D level of six or something, so that was a piece that wasn't really on my radar, but just simply pulling the grains and legumes out of my diet, eating protein, veggies, good fats, immediately, I felt shockingly better. I even felt better than I had in years, but it took me a while to figure out that I still had some digestive issues and I started tinkering with some digestive support, basically helping to produce stomach acids using some digestive enzymes and that was a huge improvement for me.

Simply changing my diet to Paleo I would say was like a seventy or seventy-five per cent improvement even though it felt like a thousand per cent improvement at the time, but relative to getting my vitamin D levels up and then also getting some digestive enzymes in the mix, that brought me up to ninety-five per cent, and I have never really had the problems with blood sugar crashes and stuff like

that, so some of these other things weren't really as big an issue for me, but just the basic digestive support was huge.

And then as time has gone on, if I travel a lot, if I'm training really hard then I just noticed that I really benefit from some digestive support. Otherwise, things start sliding out. I don't know if I just seriously impacted my whole digestive tract or what.

Both parents had digestive problems. My mother had her gall bladder removed at age thirty-four, so some obvious gluten intolerance and some other issues in there, but I wouldn't say that I come from a lineage that can eat tin cans and process it and shoot it back out the other side.

Chris Kresser: Lucky for you.

Robb Wolf: Yeah. Seriously, and then my clinical experience being in the gym, I definitely saw a lot of people with digestive issues. I saw a lot of people with that kind of sugar craving transition piece, but being a strength coach, I'm not going to run lab work. That's not really my area of expertise and so I would make some really general recommendations like some alpha lipoic acids, some fish oil, some digestive support, but that was really as far down that rabbit hole as I could really go.

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Chris Kresser: Yeah. I mean, it's really interesting when we start to formulate these products, when you realize like in my work with people what I started to recognize is that all of these systems work together. I mean, the body is a seamless whole. This idea that all the systems are somehow separate and disconnected which was kind of an old paradigm in medicine, it's really false.

I mean, if your digestive system is off as I think most people understand now that's going to affect your brain, it's going to affect your skin and it's going to affect your hormone regulation. It's going to affect everything.

So, one of the reasons we're offering these supplements together in a pack is that I've just found that if one system is off, you're going to need some support in the other systems as well because it's like the weakest link in the chain idea. And if you're gut's off and you take the gut supplements, but your blood sugar and fat-burning mechanisms aren't optimal, and your detox mechanisms aren't optimal, then that's just going to continue to drag your gut back down despite your best efforts.

So we tried to design these in such a way that they complement each other and it has an upward spiral effect instead of the downward spiral effect that so many people get caught in.

I want to also mention who these are not for because this is a really specific line. This is not multivitamins. They're not meant for people who have adopted Paleo and are doing great. That's not what these are about. They're for a specific group of people, people who are either just getting ready to start Paleo and they want to optimize their chances for a successful transition or people who maybe already started the transition and they're not doing well or they may be people who have been on Paleo for a while, but they're still experiencing some digestive issues, still experiencing some sugar cravings and energy dips or are still experiencing some hormone imbalance or brain fog, cognitive issues or skin problems.

They are meant to be taken for a specific period of time. It's going to depend from person to person, but generally we recommend three months as a starting place, and the idea is to have a therapeutic effect to get these systems operating optimally so that you don't need to take them for the rest of your life 'cause I think you and I both agree, Robb, that it's best to get nutrients from food whenever possible, but in certain cases supplementation is necessary.

I mean, in an ideal world with healthy soils and no industrialized foods and no environmental or food toxins or no modern chronic stress, we wouldn't need to supplement. But unfortunately, most of us don't live in that world so these are—the best way to think of the PaleoLogix supplements is like a raft that helps you get from one side of the river to the other. And once you get to the other side of the river, you don't pick up the raft and carry it on your head.

Robb Wolf:

[Laughter] Well, if you really want to make a spectacle of yourself, I guess you could, but yeah. It's a really great point when Chris and I were talking about doing this, we definitely wanted to—we do believe in this whole foods approach that if you are fuelling your body and living in a way that should work with your genetics, if we're getting good sleep, if we're getting an appropriate level of exercise and everything that systems should kick over in such a way that you don't necessarily need fifteen bottles of supplements on your calendar just to function.

It reminds me of the pill pile that my parents had that were just pharmaceuticals so that wasn't really our goal, and this thing was just a very targeted intervention for specific issues for specific folks and that if the recommendations that we're making are such that you need to be on something for the rest of your life, then there might be something faulty with the overall nutrition and lifestyle approach.

I guess the one caveat in that that I would have is hard-training athletes. I think that they put enough stress on their body and I've seen enough people benefit from digestive support in general that I could maybe make an argument that if you really pushing the envelope with training, I could maybe make an argument for consistent digestive support ranging from probiotics to improving stomach

acid production and all that, but that's again a pretty targeted audience, not the total population.

Chris Kresser: And definitely, if you feel better taking these, they're designed in such a way that they're safe to take over the long term.

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Chris Kresser: And as Robb is saying, there are certain people where circumstances are just not ideal for any number of reasons. Maybe they're training hard and they need additional support for digestive support or methylation detox type of thing, or maybe someone is exposed in their workplace to a lot of chemicals. I think the detox product would be a really good idea to take over the long term in that case because they're just—it'll ultimately be great to have a different job where they're not exposed to those chemicals, but that's not always possible, right?

So we do the best we can with what we've got, and definitely not saying that you can't take these over the long term if you do better and if you feel better taking them, but we're just saying that they're really designed to optimize your transition to the Paleo diet or to get you out of a tough spot that you're in and just get you from that, let's say in Robb's case, from the seventy-five per cent to the ninety-five per cent.

And then if you are continuing to have problems, of course, these are supplements, they're not necessarily magic so you may need some additional help at some point, but what we've tried to do here is take all of our clinical experience and our knowledge about the biochemistry here and the nutrients involved.

I mean, this is what I do with people in my practice every day, and I realize that not everyone is going to be able to work with me personally especially since my practice is being closed for six months to new patients. So we wanted to make these things available to people on a broader scale so that they can get some of the same benefits that we've seen working with people individually.

Robb Wolf: Totally, yeah. And I—gosh, trying to think of any other things we should tell folks about these PaleoLogix.com is the website. I'll have a link to that in the show notes. Chris, can you think of anything else to tell folks about like we have an intro special that's going on when we're doing a prelaunch?

Chris Kresser: Yeah. So we spent—I guess, it's been a year now, hasn't it, Robb, right?

Robb Wolf: It's been almost to the day, yeah.

Chris Kresser: Yeah, yeah. And around this time last year, so we spent a lot of blood, sweat, tears making this line. They're finally ready to ship in January which we're super

excited about, but we've produced a limited supply for the first batch, and we're giving our readers and listeners first dibs, so to speak.

So we're running a prelaunch campaign here where we're giving you the chance to reserve a pack in advanced for a small deposit, a little less than twenty bucks. And that means that when they ship in January, you'll be sure to be on the list, you'll be sure to get your pack and start the New Year off right whether you're just planning to begin a Paleo diet or whether you're on line and you just need a little additional support.

It's also great idea for a friend or a family member that's planning to adopt to Paleo diet or is having trouble transitioning. We've made a really simple gift card, gift option where you can just send it as a gift for a friend. And then in January it will be rolling out on a bigger scale to a wider audience but we just wanted to give you folks a crack at this before anybody else and since you've been listeners and readers for a long time.

Robb Wolf:

Cool. So we'll get all that information in the show notes so that folks can check it out. We'd be very, very interested if you do end up checking this stuff out like Chris said, it's going to ship in January, but we'd be really interested knowing what your current situation is.

If you tinker with the PaleoLogix line, I'd be very, very interested to see what the results are for you, and Chris has seen a really remarkable improvements in his clinical practice, and I've been recommending somewhat similar items for a long time for like digestive issues and for some of the blood sugar issues, but it's been a very parts and pieces approach instead of an integrated attack like what we have here. So it'd be very interesting to hear what folks experiences with this.

Chris Kresser:

Yeah. I feel the same way. That last point you made, I should have mentioned that earlier. It's just been a nonstop frustration for me as a clinician to not have exactly the kind of exactly the products that I want. And I order products from other manufacturers and there are a lot of good products out there, but they're never quite right. One doesn't have an ingredient that I want it to have or another one has an ingredient that I don't want it to have, and it just was getting so frustrating.

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Chris Kresser:

[Laughter] So I'm just going to make my own so that it has exactly what I want and exactly what I—you know the scientific literature and my clinical experience suggest that has and we're finally able do that here, so that's what I'm really excited about is just being able to have my secret weapons here that—well, I guess they're not so secret anymore. [Laughter]

Robb Wolf: You know it's funny for folks that don't know Chris the way that I do. I'm completely a sloppy, shoot-from-the-hips like, 'Okay, that's good enough' gig, and Chris is quite the opposite. I would call you a perfectionist, and so if you could read the email chains that we've had on trying to figure out these things, 'cause it wasn't simply getting the things in it that we wanted.

That was a challenge, but then there was always the question of the things that we didn't want in it like the excipients that they need to use to make the stuff go into the capsule and all that. It's like, 'Why can't we use this versus that?' and it's been quite a circus. It's been very interesting. I think several times where I [Laughter] wanted to just put a land mine under the whole thing and blow it up because it was looking like we weren't going to be able to get exactly what we wanted, but it's been a very interesting process. That's for sure.

Chris Kresser: Well, I hope that you're not going run away next time, Robb.

Robb Wolf: [Laughter] I'm in it. I'm in it for the long haul, man. You know where I live now, so we're safe on that, so...

Chris Kresser: All right, everybody thanks for listening, and I hope these help you as much it helped all of our patients and ourselves and look forward on hearing your feedback.

Robb Wolf: Yeah, totally. Definitely keep us posted on how things are going with that. We would love to hear some feedback. We're going to have Chris back on the podcast here at the first of the year. I know that we had a lot of follow-up questions after the high-cholesterol action plan as well as the personal Paleo code, and so maybe we can dovetail some of these stuff into your return visit.

Chris Kresser: Yeah, and I'll get a little more geeky about the actual nutrients and supplements and the products, and go into more detail about them at that point, but we just wanted to give you the basic background on why we're doing this and who they're for and how they can help you. So that you could get in on the prelaunch if you want to.

Robb Wolf: Nice. Awesome, Chris. Thanks, man. We'll talk to you soon.

Chris Kresser: Robb, good to talk to you

Robb Wolf: Okay. Bye.

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