

A PALEO DIET FOR THE 21ST CENTURY



HISTORY

12,000 years ago, our Paleolithic ancestors lived very different lives than we do today.

- Instead of a diet based on processed grains & sugar, they thrived on a diet of fruits, vegetables, roots, seeds, nuts and wild game.
- Instead of driving to a job where they sat for hours basking in the glow of a computer screen, they spent their working day hunting game, gathering produce and being physically active.
- Instead of playing video games, they occupied their minds with plans of survival in a world untamed by technology.

In the past few years, researchers have been investigating the health benefits of a Paleo style diet on 21st century humans. And their results have been amazing.

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HISTORY

After just a few weeks on a Paleo-style diet,

- blood pressure drops,
- cholesterol drops,
- body-fat drops,
- blood sugars normalize,
- and energy levels increase

In short, eating like our Paleo ancestors is a veritable fountain of youth.

Because of this research, there has been an explosion in the number of people who have embraced their Paleolithic roots and have adopted a Paleo lifestyle.

Unfortunately, to most 21st century humans, most of these modern Paleos seem a little....crazy.

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HISTORY

- Some refuse to cook their food.
- Others abstain from food for days on end in order to simulate the occasional food shortages faced by our Paleo ancestors.
- Some even donate blood based on the belief that their Paleo cousins would have suffered from periodic blood loss due to their hunting & gathering activities.

And these are just some of the reasons why it's unlikely that the Paleo Diet/Lifestyle will ever become a mainstream phenomenon.

And that's too bad.

If only we could take the good parts of the Paleo lifestyle and ignore the *slightly less good* parts.

If only someone could take that information and organize it using 21st century technology. Computers are so much more efficient than smoke signals.

If only someone would come along and write a **Paleo Diet for 21st Century Humans**.

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WHAT IS THE PALEO DIET?

At it's most basic, the Paleo Diet tells us to:

1. Eat the foods our ancestors ate prior to agriculture and animal husbandry.
2. Avoid the foods that came after this stage in our evolution.

This means saying yes to:

- Animal protein – meat, fish, shellfish, eggs, poultry
- Fruit
- Vegetables
- Nuts & seeds
- Mushrooms

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WHAT IS THE PALEO DIET?

It also means saying no to:

- Grains
- Dairy
- Beans/Legumes
- Potatoes
- and obviously anything processed or dosed with antibiotics & steroids

That's your basic Paleo Diet.

But of course, things are never as simple as they seem.

Even a diet as basic as the Paleo Diet raises all sorts of questions.

- Why can't I eat potatoes?
- What about fats?

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WHAT IS THE PALEO DIET?

- Can I eat olive oil? Canola oil? Lard?
- What about salt?
- What about spices?
- Fruit Juice?
- Tea? Coffee?
- What about sweeteners?
- Is honey okay? Sugar? Agave nectar?
- What about alcohol? Our ancestors only “invented” alcohol after discovering fermented fruit

So many questions.

And as a result, what started out as a very simple, very healthy way of eating has splintered into a million and one different tribes – some with very restrictive rules and others much more relaxed.

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TYPES OF PALEO DIETS

Paleo Basic

Eat This

- Foods that are as close to nature as possible.
- Meat - beef, pork, chicken, fish, seafood, etc...
- Vegetables
- Fruit
- Nuts & Seeds
- Seed Oils (olive, palm, avocado, coconut, walnut, almond, hazelnut, pecan, macadamia)
- Water

Don't Eat This

- Grains
- Sugar
- Dairy
- Legumes
- or anything processed.

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TYPES OF PALEO DIETS

Less Restrictive Options

1. Say Yes to Dairy

The Paleolithic era ended about 10,000 years ago. There is evidence that humans domesticated cattle around 8500 years ago. Therefore, it is unlikely that our Paleo ancestors consumed dairy – milk, cream, yogurt, butter, cheese.

But, 8500 years is a long, long time.

Is it possible that during the past 400 generations some of our familial digestive systems have evolved in order to effectively digest dairy?

Maybe yes, maybe no.

For that reason, some Paleos eat and/or drink dairy

2. Say Yes to Legumes

Like dairy, humans have been eating legumes for about 8000 years.

Some of us do fine with beans and some of us....don't

For that reason, some Paleos eat legumes.

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TYPES OF PALEO DIETS

Less Restrictive Options

3. Say Yes to Fruit & Vegetable Juices

Our Paleo ancestors never had access to the Jack LaLanne Power Juicer. So, it's highly unlikely that they were able to enjoy a nice big glass of carrot-apple juice (yum).

But, for us modern Paleos, when time is short and our stomachs are grumbling, a bottle of V8 from the nearest convenience store can make the difference between going hungry and inhaling a bag of Doritos.

4. Say Yes to Lightly Processed Foods

Along the same lines as the convenience store V8, some modern Paleos don't want to make every meal from scratch. They take advantage of the growing organic food movement to buy lightly processed, Paleo-friendly meals. In fact, there are even a few fledgling Paleo-food manufacturers out there.

[Paleo Treats](#), [Caveman Cookies](#), [Paleo Brands](#), [PaleoKits](#)

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TYPES OF PALEO DIETS

Less Restrictive Options

5. Say Yes to Supplements

Multivitamins, green food powders, fish oils, protein powders, creatine, leucine, Zyflamend, Curcumin, etc...

None of these products were available to our Paleo ancestors. But, then again, our Paleo ancestors entire food supply was organic, free range and free of pollution.

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TYPES OF PALEO DIETS

More Restrictive Options

1. Say No to Cooked Food

Some Paleos eat their food raw...fruit, veg, even meat.

The theory is that cooking food decreases the quantity & quality of the nutrients.

And they may be right.

On the other hand, humans have been cooking with fire for about 1.8 million years.

This means that our Paleo ancestors probably enjoyed a good barbecue as much as you do.

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TYPES OF PALEO DIETS

More Restrictive Options

2. Intermittent Fasting

This is a unique offshoot of mainstream Paleo. The idea here is that back in the olden days, our ancestors couldn't count on a constant supply of food. If they wanted meat, they had to go out and kill the meat. If they were unsuccessful, they went to bed hungry.

The modern version of intermittent fasting differs from the original in that IFers *choose* to go 24 hrs+ without eating in the belief that it will cause a release of beneficial hormones and help them lose weight/get fit.

Personally, I don't see any harm in performing the **occasional** fast. However, I have also had a number of clients experiment with it, and haven't seen any noticeable improvement in fitness or body composition.

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TYPES OF PALEO DIETS

More Restrictive Options

3. Bloodletting

Some 21st C Paleos believe that our ancestors had an increased risk of injury and blood loss during their regular day to day activities (*see hunting Woolly mammoths*)

So, to recreate this occasional blood loss, this Paleo sub-tribe schedules regular blood donations.

And, as weird as that sounds, it's not going to hurt them and it's a pretty great thing to do for the rest of us.

Did you know that only 3 in 100 Americans gives blood?

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TYPES OF PALEO DIETS

More Restrictive Options

4. No Nightshades

This restriction on nightshades is due to the fact that some people experience sensitivity or allergy-like symptoms from consuming nightshades.

Potatoes, tomatoes, sweet and hot peppers, eggplant, tomatillos, tamaros, pepinos, pimentos, paprika, cayenne, and Tabasco sauce are classified as nightshade foods.

For this reason, some Paleos don't eat nightshades.

Then again, some paleos just don't like eggplant.

5. Reduced Salt

Our Paleo ancestors had limited access to salt. Ergo, most Paleos voluntarily restrict their salt intake.

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TYPES OF PALEO DIETS

More Restrictive Options

7. No Sweeteners

All sweeteners (except for honey) would have been unavailable to our Paleo forefathers. And the availability of honey would have been pretty rare considering the difficulties required in obtaining it.

So, while honey did exist for the original Paleos, its consumption would have been infrequent.

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TYPES OF PALEO DIETS

More Restrictive Options

8. No New World foods

New World foods are not native to Europe or Asia. Therefore the majority of our Paleo ancestors would never have been exposed to them.

New World foods include:

- **Roots** – potato, sweet potato, jicama.
- **Beans** – pinto, red, kidney, lima, runner, field peas, black-eyed peas, green beans
- **Stalks & Vegetable Fruits** – tomato, winter squash, avocado, capsicum peppers
- **Grains**– corn, quinoa, wild rice
- **Fruit** – banana, kiwi, mango, guava, starfruit, grapefruit, passion fruit, pineapple, prickly pear, hybrid strawberry, black raspberry, loganberry, cranberry, blueberry, breadfruit, cacao (chocolate), vanilla
- **Nuts** – pecans, peanuts, cashews, Brazil nuts, macadamia
- **Meat** – turkey
- **Herbs** – chocolate mint, french tarragon, chilli, bergamot, garlic chives

WHY SHOULD I EAT “PALEO”?

1. Live Longer, Feel Healthier & Look Fitter

Swedish scientists found that eating a diet rich in lean meat, vegetables, berries and nuts is effective in lowering YOUR chances of suffering a heart attack or stroke.

Keeping in mind that it was only a three week study, and additional long term research will be required, scientists at the Karolinska Institute in Sweden found that the volunteers reduced body-fat, lowered their blood pressure and slashed levels of a blood-thickening agent known to cause deadly clots.

During the three week long study, participants were then given a list of paleo-friendly foods they could eat, including fresh or frozen fruit, berries or vegetables, lean meat, unsalted fish, canned tomatoes, lemon or lime juice, spices and coffee or tea without milk or sugar.

Banned foods included beans, salt, peanuts, dairy products, pasta or rice, sausages, alcohol, sugar and fruit juice.

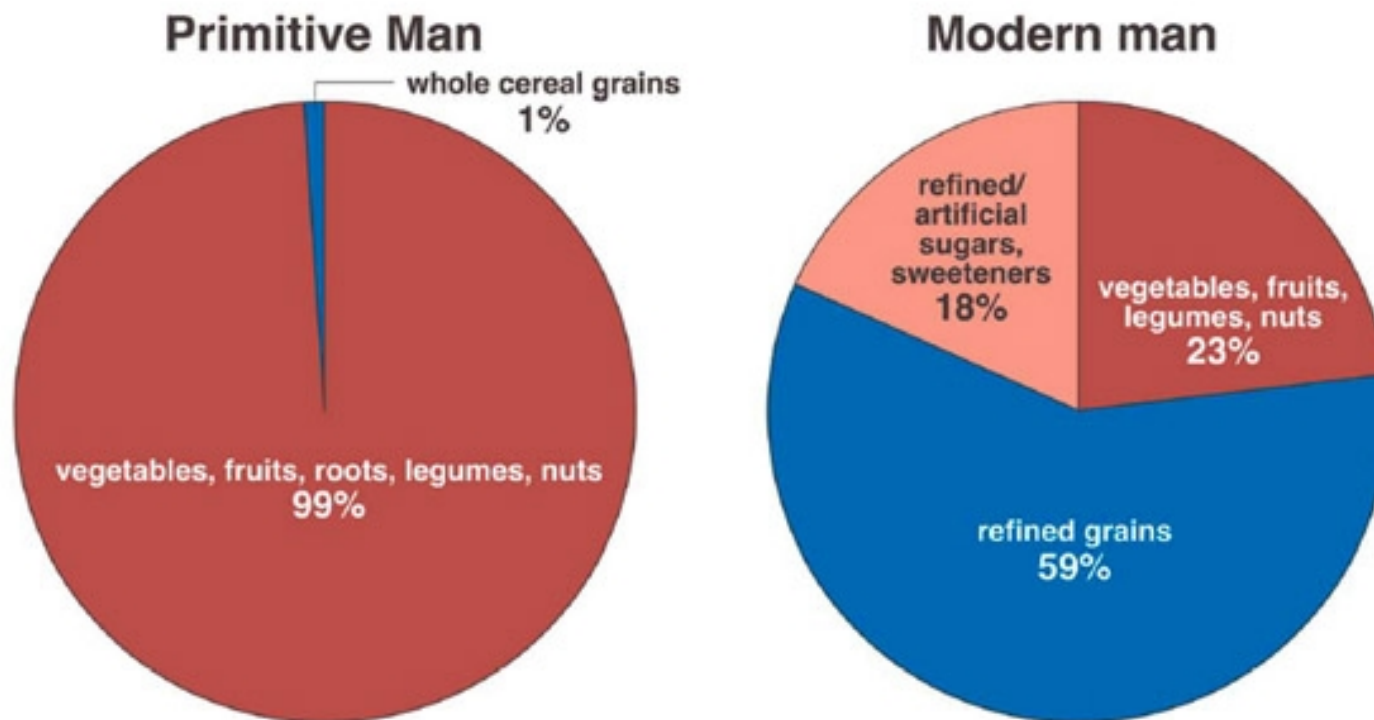
They were also allowed up to two potatoes a day and a weekly treat of dried fruit, cured meats and a portion of fatty meat.

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WHY SHOULD I EAT “PALEO”?

Figure A
Intake of Carbohydrates*



*Eaton SB, Eaton SB III, Konner MJ. Paleolithic Nutrition Revisited: A Twelve-Year Retrospective on its Nature and Implications. *EurJClinNutr*. 1997; 51(4):207-216.

WHY SHOULD I EAT “PALEO”?

After 3 weeks:

- the average weight loss was around five pounds.
- BMI dropped by 0.8.
- Systolic blood pressure fell by an average of three mmHg.
- And the levels of (*blood thickening agent*) plasminogen activator inhibitor-1 dropped by 72 per cent.
- Other favourable effects were the increase in antioxidants and a healthier potassium-sodium balance.

And it's not just science...it's real life.

I have seen dozens of personal training clients make unbelievable progress following a 21st Century Paleo Diet.

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A PALEO DIET FOR THE 21st CENTURY

And what is a 21st Century Paleo Diet?

It's a plan that...

- is based on the most important aspects of the basic Paleo Diet
- while ignoring the less important
- and eliminating the restrictions that would have your friends thinking that you've gone Paleo-Insane

It's also a plan designed to get you looking good, feeling good and hopefully living a long, long, long time.

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A PALEO DIET FOR THE 21st CENTURY

START WITH THE PALEO BASICS

- Animal protein at each meal
- Vegetables at each meal
- Paleo-friendly fats as required (tallow, lard, coconut oil, olive oil)
- Fruit in small quantities for dessert
- Drink lots of water & tea

WHILE RECOGNIZING YOUR 21st CENTURY NEEDS

Our lives are far busier & more hectic than our Paleo ancestors. If you're going to be successful at blending your new Paleo diet into your current 21st Century lifestyle, you need to recognize the obstacles and plan for ways to overcome them. Here are some of the common problems my clients have faced.

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A PALEO DIET FOR THE 21st CENTURY

If you're like me, and you **need** your morning coffee – get it – but cut back on the dairy & dump the sugar – It's not strictly Paleo, but it's not going to wreck the diet.

- Your life is fast paced – you need to plan ahead – prepare your work-lunch in advance and/or build a list of Paleo-friendly restaurants near your workplace. If you leave it to chance, your Paleo Diet will fail – guaranteed.
- Your social life is different than your Paleo ancestors – Restaurants, bars, sporting events, etc...all great places to have fun...none of them Paleo-friendly. Recognize that there is going to be a trade-off here. Having a social life vs. maintaining your Paleo diet. If you want an exciting social life, sometimes your Paleo Diet is going to pay the price. So be it. Minimize the damage at the bar and tighten things up for the next couple of days.
- Some of my clients need to follow a strict Paleo Diet. If I give them any flexibility, they will lose control and the diet will fail. Others can manage to combine their Paleo diet with an active social life. What kind of person are you? Your Paleo ancestors didn't have the dietary temptations you have. To them, the Paleo Diet wasn't a diet – it was all they had. Can you handle the temptations?

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PALEO RESOURCES

If you're like me, cooking meals from scratch isn't exactly second nature.

Fortunately for both of us, there are a growing army of Paleo food bloggers out there posting recipes and photos of their favorite Paleo meals.

In addition to my buddy ([The Healthy Irishman](#)), here are some of my favorites.

- [At Darwin's Table](#)
- [Girl Gone Primal](#)
- [Cosmopolitan Primal Girl](#)
- [Everyday Paleo](#)
- [Cavegirl In The Kitchen](#)
- [My Paleo Kitchen](#)
- [Eat. Move. Thrive!](#)
- [Caveman Food](#)
- [Paleo Mama](#)
- [The Label Says Paleo](#)
- [The Son of Grok](#)

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Douglas Robb is...

- a personal trainer
- a health & fitness blogger
- a big believer in the Paleo Diet
- annoyed that our healthcare systems spend billions of dollars treating diseases caused by government policies and poor lifestyle choices

If you enjoyed this book, email it to someone else.

And don't forget to visit his blog [Health Habits](#), or sign up for the [RSS or email feed](#)

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