

The Paleo Solution - Episode 60

Last Episode of 2010!

1. Question from Stanley:

Robb,

I've read your book and it really opened my eyes. As a result, for the last few months I'm eating 100% to your recommendations. I'm getting 2.5 grams of epa/dha per day from fish oils (which, admittedly, may not be to your recommendations). I'm exercising smart for once in my life and not wearing myself the hell out with long, slow runs and/or grinding weightroom strain sessions. I've always slept like a champ, but now I sleep like a champ in a totally blacked out room.

Last August (4 months ago), my numbers that I got at my yearly physical were a total cholesterol of 178, with an LDL of 113 and HDL of 38. Triglycerides was in the 130s, and I think it was 135. That was my last fasting lipid panel.

Last week, I donated blood. I fasted as usual, so that the total cholesterol might potentially be indicative of, I don't know, something. My total cholesterol came back at 233. They didn't break it down in any way, so I only received total cholesterol numbers.

Here is my question: Should I blow this off and not worry about it? 95% of me says to blow it off and blow off worrying about any such numbers, whether it be LDL, HDL, any subsections of any of these, or anything else related. What is your opinion?

For what it's worth, I'm 44 years old, 173 lbs., 5'10", am in good shape and spent a good deal of my adult years as a professional boxer (which is to say that I've always worked out and been fit and in good shape). I grew up boxing in the amateurs. I've never in my life not worked out in some form or fashion.

Thanks in advance, and thanks to Andy for reading my question. And thanks to everyone in the Paleo community. And thanks to anyone else I left out.

- Stanley "Striker" Meade

Follow-up Notes:

Sorry to add more here, but I should have pointed out that every other tested or doctor-inspected thing about me is really good. My glucose, blood pressure, etc., are all good. It's only this total cholesterol of 233 that seems potentially out of whack.

- Stanley "Striker" Meade

2. Question from Darius:

I've recently been introduced to the Paleo diet by my physician. As I've been reading through the book. You recommend eating nuts and eggs which are two of the many things that I am allergic to. Any suggestions as to what I can substitute them for. I was thinking tofu for eggs.

Thank you

3. Question from True Nuts:

Hi Robb & Andy!

First of all, keep up the excellent work with your podcasts.. I'm up to episode 43 after discovering them earlier in the fall - and can't get through my 45-minute commute without listening.

Robb - I enjoyed your book (and posted a "helpful" review on Amazon) - but noticed that you spent significant time devoted to the problems with eating grains (from evolutionary plant biology, biochemistry and anthropological perspectives). There's only so much information that a reader can digest (pun intended), and I suspect that's why there wasn't a similar level of analysis for dairy, nuts and legumes.

Which brings me to my question, which is based on the following assumption (let me know if I have oversimplified or am incorrect in making it):

One of the fundamental reasons for the adverse nutritional content of grains is that they are basically reproductive embryos (seeds) that require protection (anti-nutrients) from ingestion and digestion by animals. As such, I can understand why legumes also contain anti-nutrients, as they are the seeds & fruit of a particular plant family (that happens to fix nitrogen from the atmosphere, not soil).

However, I am confused about nuts. Google research says that "true nuts" are generally the seeds of specific trees. Since that is the case, shouldn't they also be significant sources of anti-nutrients designed to protect the nut? What are lectin levels in nuts compared to grains and legumes? I understand the emphasis on eating nuts b/c our ancestors likely did (and also the favorable O-3 fatty acid profiles in some), but this seems to go against the grain (again, pun intended).

Needless to say, I'm following gluten-free paleo with the occasional dairy indulgence post work-out - and a smart exercise protocol. As a 30-year old guy, I am in the best shape of my life - so this long question is more of a curiosity than anything that will change what I should be doing.

Thanks and keep up the great work!

4. Question from Tom:

Hi Robb and Andy. Faithful listener; love the book; think you guys are the greatest thing since grassfed beef. I've submitted this question in a couple of different forms previously, but considering my blood tests continue to show that I am iron deficient and anemic and my doctors cannot seem to figure out why, I submit the question again for your input. There may be nothing diet related to this, but considering one's iron levels are driven partially by what goes in, maybe diet is playing a role.

34/m/170. CrossFit and strength train 4 to 5 times a week. In July 2009, a blood test at an annual physical indicated I was iron deficient and anemic. I've had various scans and procedures over the last year and a half with no real success at discovering a "why." In July 2010, my hemoglobin level was 9.8; in October, it was 10.5; and today (December 13), it was 12.0. I finally gave in and had two iron injections after the October blood test, which seems to have helped raise the number somewhat. My workouts are good. I feel great. I do deal with some digestion problems that have calmed considerably as I lock into a Paleo diet.

Many thanks.

5. Question from Bruce:

I know that you recommend Natural Calm but I was wondering about the Magnesium Citrate that is sold as a laxative. Is this the same stuff? Could you just take what ever amount is needed to get the proper dose? And what dose do you recommend?

6. Question from Mary:

Robb and Andy,

Now that I have discovered the paleo way of eating (thanks to the podcast and book) I have leaned out and dramatically increased my energy levels. I am interested in starting Crossfit, but I have some concerns.

I am a 45 year old woman and I am not extremely fit (although not a couch potato by any means). I am interested in Crossfit because I find the conventional gym I belong to SO BORING and unappealing (including the classes), yet I find group atmospheres very motivating (and I am just GEEKED at the prospect of climbing up ropes, lifting/hauling radically heavy objects, smashing balls around and other fun stuff like that! ;-)

My goals are: 1) to be able to play hard (especially soccer) with my two young boys as they grow up, 2) to eventually be able to kick my boyfriend's butt in squash and 3) to live to the age of 90 AT LEAST and to be extremely active and healthy the entire time.

Based on the website promo for the Crossfit gym in my area (Montreal), Crossfit is completely scalable to any age and fitness level. Is this REALLY true??? The fact that the site also states that a Crossfit WOD should totally CRUSH you in order to be effective sort of begs the question.

I listen to the podcast regularly and although you are both Crossfit guys, you do seem to harbour some reservations about the health and longevity benefits of such intensive workouts. I'm interested in both a dramatic bump in fitness now AND in a very long, healthy life span. I'm also interested in being able to do my life (I'm a single mom with two YOUNG kids, so being "crushed" by workouts sounds somewhat daunting to me...).

I'm trying to workout at home but it is just so uninspiring (and so far, not particularly effective), and I'm not finding any organized group sport opportunities for people my age in my area. Now that your book is becoming popular, I bet there are lots of people like me considering Crossfit as an option, and they may have similar concerns.

So, do you have any advice or comments about the benefits/risks of Crossfit group training for someone like me? Do you think that Crossfit should offer different levels of intensity to better accommodate older participants, or is the concept of scalability sufficient in your opinion?

Keep up the good work! (and btw, you both really need to kick the Java for good. I was like Andy for years with his chronic cycle of caffeine addiction/withdrawal, but finally kicking that habit gave me a MAJOR boost. I challenge you both!)

7. Question from Aaron:

Hey Robb,

Recently there have been a number of questions about training for longevity/general

health/Min investment Max results. In early podcasts when talking more about elite fitness you often referenced back off weeks, but I haven't really noticed you reference them when answering questions about training with Min investment for Max results. So I guess the questions are:

- 1) Do you still need to take back off weeks when following saying a MEBB style of training, if off days are just filled with leisure activities like Yoga, trail walks, sometimes just laying on the couch reading a book?
- 2) If they are still important does one need to cycle them in as often?
- 3) If less often then how often would be prudent?

For full disclosure I follow a strict paleo diet but with a more then occasional 85% cacao dark chocolate cheat, get 8-9 hours of sleep a night, supplement with Fish Oil/Vitamin D-3/Magnesium-Citrate and have relatively low stress. Thanks for the great work you are doing! I look forward to the podcast every week.

8. Question from John:

Re: T.S. Wiley - Since this lady has NO academic credentials, and is slippery in explaining her frequent misrepresentations on the subject, does it affect your view of Lights Out, where she is displayed as the primary author?

9. Question from Diane:

Great seminar yesterday in Woodinville, Washington. I am beginning to implement my newfound learning into my diet and lifestyle. One question I didn't ask was regarding the oils. Asian cooks will often use a "tea oil" for stir fry. It is made from "compressed tea seeds of the Camellia sinensis tea bush from China. It is used for high temps to 485 degrees without smoking. Says it is full of omega fatty acids (just not which ones!). I have used it and really like it. Does it fall within the Paleo Plan? Thanks, Diane

10. Question from Sarah:

Hi Robb,

I wish I could have attended your seminar this weekend, it sounds like it was incredibly informative. I am 28 years old and I was a vegetarian for 8 years and a vegan for 2. With the help of my trainer, Rueben Baca, Lierre Keith's book, the Vegetarian Myth, and your book, I have transitioned to a Paleo diet. My question for you is, How important is it to include poultry and red meat into my diet? Is it healthy to use only fish as my protein source? I have been using your food matrix and cycling through the varieties of fish that you recommend but I have not yet introduced other types of meat. How important is it to include free range poultry, and grass fed beef?

11. Question from Lauren:

Hey Robb and Andy,

I'll keep this as short as possible.

1. I hate the winter too. Do you think sunlamps will help with the winter blues? Are they a waster of money?

2. I love one or two glasses of red wine with dinner 5 days a night. Saturday night I skip the wine and go straight for the hard stuff. I've been rationalizing this due to some study that said women who drink moderately are thinner. I know the Saturday night partying isn't good for the body but how bad is the red wine? My abs could be better but other than that I'm lean enough and I haven't noticed a decrease in performance. I'm concerned, this bad for my gut? What are your thoughts?

3. I'm 25 and trying to date but every dude freaks out when I tell them about the paleo diet. I avoid bringing it up for as long as I possibly can, but eventually it comes up. Any ideas how to sugar coat this? Yes, I am asking you for dating advice.

12. Question from Ben

I'm a 29 year old 6 foot 2 inch male working to reclaim a wasted life. I have always been the fat kid who was terrible at sports, girls, and life in general. High school for me was the worst experience in my life. I was picked on daily and turned to food for comfort. As the years went by, I continued to gain weight until in November of 2009 when I realized I was a 510 pound waste of humanity. I gave myself two choices: suicide or change. I decided to change. Today I weight 349 pounds and feel much better, but want to take my lifestyle changes to the next level. In the past month thanks to the influence of your podcasts, I've switched to 100% grass fed beef, wild caught fish, and local organic produce. I supplement with Vitamin D in the mornings and ZMA before bed. I avoid all grains, dairy and legumes. Soon I will be adding probiotics to the mix. The next thing I want to accomplish is bringing intelligent training to my life. What would you recommend for someone like me? I would love to try martial arts but I'm afraid that my saggy skin would be an issue. I'm also afraid that my personality might not mix well in group environments. I'm usually very reserved and it takes a lot to get me to open up around others. I am extremely insecure and lacking in confidence. At work people think I'm a loner freak, which really bothers me. I would not want to join a group workout setting where the same stigma is attached. The only thing I really have going for me is an overwhelming desire for change. How would your average Crossfit gym handle someone like me? I've thought about making an appointment but I haven't pulled the trigger yet. Would I be better off doing this on my own at a local gym until I have more confidence?