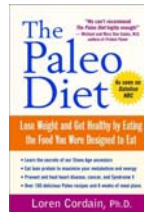


“The Paleo Diet”



Author: Loren Cordain, Ph.D.

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“You’re about to embark on a journey of enormous and bountiful diversity, fully backed by thousands of clinical nutrition trials and – most important – by 2.4 million years of evolutionary experience.”

Synopsis

Dr. Loren Cordain, one of the earliest anti-grain proponents^[1], promotes the diet of our ancestors into a program that will rid our society of diabetes, obesity, cancer, heart disease and arthritis.

Strengths

- Citing *all calories are not created equal*, Dr. Cordain extolls on the true importance of protein, from its’ fat-burning properties (“Dietary-Induced Thermogenesis” (p. 64)) to protein’s ability to increase insulin sensitivity.
- “The 7 Keys to the Paleo Diet” (p. 22) lay the groundwork for an eating lifestyle that is conducive to our genetic makeup, which has changed only .02% over the last 40,000 years.
- Dr. Cordain tells us that not only is fat necessary, it’s the reason our brains were able to triple in size and give us the present intelligence and ability for higher reasoning (p. 38).

Weaknesses

- Dr. Cordain claims that bone marrow fat is responsible for our brain size growth due to our early scavenger lifestyle. This contradicts *The Omega-3 Connection*, where Dr. Stohl talks of our increased consumption of fish as the reason our tripled brain size.^[2]
- Dr. Cordain fails to mention the health benefits of Coconut Oil, which has recently gained publicity for its anti-viral, anti-fungal, and immune-enhancing oil.^[3]
- Although championed by almost every other diet authority, Dr. Cordain cites almonds as a nut to be eaten only “sparingly” due to the high omega-6/omega-3 ratio (p.126).
- Dr. Cordain cites Flaxseed oil as the best oil for you due to its extremely low omega 6: omega-3 ratio (p. 127) yet there has been controversy regarding the body’s ability to convert flaxseed oil (Alpa Linoleic Acid) into the usable omega-3 oil, epeicosanoic acid (EPA).

Overall Impression

“The Paleo Diet” is by far my favorite nutrition book out there. It was the first I found that cited evolution as the reason WHY we need to follow this diet. As Dr. Cordain states:

“I didn’t design the diet – nature did.”

Reference:

1. Cordain, L., *Cereal grains: humanity's double-edged sword*. World Rev Nutr Diet, 1999; 84: 19-73.
2. Stohll A. *The Omega-3 Connection*. Free Press, 2002.
3. Maffetone PB. *Using Food To Keep The Swelling Down: A Review of anti-inflammatory actions of select foods*. The Maffetone Newsletter: www.mafbionutritionals.com