



Nutrition Treats People, Not Diseases

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April 2015

One of the most confusing aspects of “physicianing”, if you will, relates to conveying factual information regarding diet. I recently read a horribly misguided book from a cardiac surgeon in regards to nutrition and cardiovascular disease. Although published in 2007, it really felt like a book misplaced from 1982 at the start of the low-fat diet epidemic that has obesified our country.

What I find most fascinating about such books is how little an understanding of nutrition the author has, yet the apparent appeal of an agency authority that comes from being an MD surgeon, with almost no training in nutrition. As this book arrived in my office from a patient, it also rang that bell of how difficult discerning fact from fallacy must challenge the average person.

When I discuss the Paleo/Primal/Caveman diets with my patients, I repeatedly emphasize the immutable truth of their inherent principles without making yet another belief system out of them.

The truths:

1. **Eat Real, Unprocessed, Human Food** – Let’s define each of these terms. By “real” I mean eat foods found in nature, organically grown or wild-caught/killed. By “unprocessed” I am reminded of the simple joke, “Hey doc, help me read this food label”... with my response, “if it has a label, it ain’t a food!” The higher up the food chain you make selections, the truer this becomes. By sticking with the hunter gatherer tradition whereby we never ate grains, legumes and of course highly processed foods and refined sugars, we stick to eating foods that co-evolved with humans as part of our food supply.
2. **Eat Slowly, Consciously and also Intermittently Fast** – Overeating even good foods remains an epidemic. Sit down to eat, take a moment of silence or prayer. These recommendations demonstrate evolving necessities. Modern stress and the fear and hate pumped into our homes through our smart phones and televisions shifts our bodies into the *sympathetic*-fight or flight mode, redirecting blood flow from the digestive tract to our brains and muscles, thusly turning our

aging digestive capacities down, if not off. We digest in the relaxed or *parasympathetic state*, allowing *Yourself* to tune in to your food and listen. It is important to align with our bodies' genetically evolved abilities to survive famines and long cold winters by consciously participating in intermittent fasts and detoxification programs, which also allows our bodies to hone our intuitions on the foods best for us.

- 3. Eat a True Primal Diet for Three Weeks, and Evaluate** – This only applies if you have any health or weight concerns of any kind. Otherwise keep eating whatever has you in perfect health. No grains of any kind, even pseudo-grains like quinoa, no legumes of any kind and no processed foods (apples: real, applesauce you personally didn't make: unreal), while eating anything in moderation on our "[Well, What Can I Eat](#)" page. The innumerable patients that I witness fixing digestive issues, arthritis, autoimmunity, almost anything by following these principles staggers me. No, it doesn't work on everyone. After three weeks introduce a "non-Paleo" food that you miss approximately every two days. Listen to your body; it talks to you every meal. If that food reacts with you, you will know. Each person has a tell, from a digestive issue, to sinus congestion, headaches, brain fog, insomnia, weight gain—almost anything. Most grains and legumes have glutenoids and lectins, best described as poisons, which does make them difficult to generally recommend. Depending on your genetic heritage you may function better with them, though. Your body will tell you if you thrive more as a vegetarian or as a carnivore. Most humans do best omnivorously, and most of us choose seasonal fresh foods that vary from day to day.

Back to our title. If I can find any orienting generalization to all the books and articles I read regarding nutrition, it all comes back to the one thing they miss, *Yourself*. These books for the public claim to cure cancer, heart disease, thyroids, adrenals, and miss one other immutable truth, only you can prescribe your diet. Only Western medicine makes the fatally flawed assumption that nutrition treats diseases by anything other than the transitive property. Nutrition has always been prescribed to treat the individual, not for a disease, given the right nutrients for *Yourself*, your body heals the disease (transitive property).

This means everyone with any condition will need nutrition for them, not for their condition. If you see a book claiming to use nutrition to treat diseases and not people, you will primarily find misinformation, like the book I am returning. If I could only get people to not listen to self-proclaimed authorities, and reclaim their own authority by utilizing knowledge, but more importantly wisdom as only *Yourself* can know what to eat!

Your Journey to Health and Healing,

Gary E Foresman MD