

The Paleo Diet

The Paleo DietTM, championed by Loren Cordain, PhD, encourages the eating patterns of our hunter-gatherer ancestors prior to the agricultural revolution. The key points of this diet include:

1. Protein consumption at 19-35 percent of daily caloric intake.
2. Reduced carbohydrate intake and glycemic index.
3. High fiber.
4. Fat intake dominated by monounsaturated and polyunsaturated fats with balanced Omega-3 and Omega-6 fats.
5. Higher potassium and lower sodium.
6. Net dietary alkaline load that balances dietary acid.
7. Higher intake of vitamins, minerals, antioxidants, and plant phytochemicals.

Dr. Cordain advocates for increased protein from animal sources at the expense of plant sources based upon the "antinutrient" activity of plant compounds such as lectins and phytic acid and some of the potentially negative effects of those compounds. (e.g. Raw or undercooked kidney beans are toxic. These issues have been addressed elsewhere in this toolkit.) Additionally he points out that plant sources are incomplete proteins.

The Paleo Diet has many good attributes. At the same time pulses have many excellent attributes, and currently the healthiest diets in the world often include pulses.

The Registered Dietitian plays the role of helping patients/clients negotiate the pros and cons of the available choices.