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OF

PALEO



Created by
DR. SARAH BALLANTYNE, PHD
WWW.THEPALEOMOM.COM





WHAT IS PALEO?

THE PALEO DIET IS A NUTRIENT-DENSE WHOLE FOODS DIET BASED ON EATING:

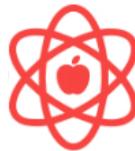
EAT:

- ✓ A variety of quality meat, seafood and eggs
- ✓ Tons of vegetables and fruits
- ✓ Nuts and seeds
- ✓ Healthy fats
- ✓ Herbs and spices

AVOID:

- ✗ Grains and pseudograins (like quinoa)
- ✗ Legumes (legumes with edible pods like green beans are fine)
- ✗ Dairy (especially pasteurized, industrially-produced)
- ✗ Refined and processed foods (including refined seed oils like canola oil and safflower oil, refined)
- ✗ Sugars, and chemical additives and preservatives)

Learn more in my post, [What is the Paleo Diet.](#)



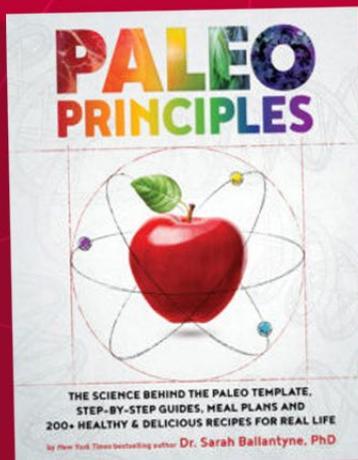
SCIENCE SPEAK

Why eat this way? Essentially, the Paleo diet is an anti-inflammatory diet. It improves health by focusing on the most nutrient-dense foods in the world—foods that help our bodies function optimally—while avoiding most processed and refined foods and empty calories.



EASY TIP

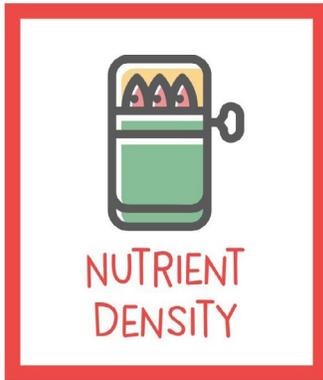
You're probably already eating more Paleo foods than you think you are! Scrambled eggs, bacon and homefries? That's Paleo! A baked potato, broccoli and a steak? Yep, that's Paleo too! If you're new to Paleo, you may be able to make simple swaps for your normal meals. Focus on making your plate look like meat + veggies + fruit, and you'll be on the road to success!



THE MOST COMPREHENSIVE PALEO GUIDEBOOK EVER CREATED!

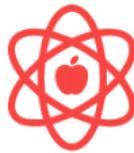
The Science Behind the Paleo Template, Step by step
Guides, Meal Plans and 200+ Health & Delicious
Recipes for Real Life

GET THE BOOK!



THE IMPORTANCE OF NUTRIENT DENSITY

The Paleo diet isn't just about what you cut out of your diet: it's about what you include! Paleo foods are some of the most nutrient dense on the planet, but it takes a little effort to make sure you're eating the variety of seafood, organ meats (yep, I said it!) and vegetables we need to optimize our intake of micronutrients. Read more in my post, [The Importance of Nutrient Density](#).



SCIENCE SPEAK

The term nutrient density refers to the concentration of micronutrients (mainly vitamins and minerals, but also phytochemicals, essential fatty acids and essential amino acids) per calorie of food. High nutrient-density foods supply a wide range of vitamins and minerals (or alternatively, high levels of a specific, important vitamin or mineral) relative to the calories they contain, whereas low nutrient-density foods supply lots of energy without much in the way of additional nutrition.



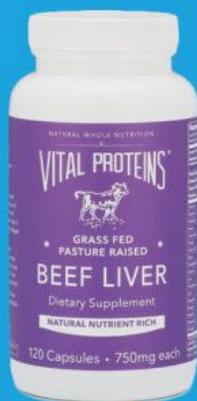
EASY TIP

Ever heard the phrase “eat the rainbow?” When it comes to eating veggies, eating a variety of colors is one of our best methods of making sure we’re getting a variety of micronutrients. Since phytochemicals contribute to a vegetable’s coloring, different colors indicate different types of phytonutrients. Yeah!

Organ meats can be tougher to find. I prefer the [Liver Pills](#) from [Vital Proteins](#). They’re as easy to take as normal pills, and can provide a full serving of liver. But they’re completely tasteless and a great option for those who don’t like to eat, or just don’t like to prepare, liver. I don’t mind either, but I keep these around just because they’re so convenient!



VITAL PROTEINS™



SOURCED FROM
PASTURE-RAISED,
GRASS-FED
NEW ZEALAND BEEF



NUTS & SEEDS

WHY GRAINS ARE JUNK FOOD

The Paleo diet isn't just about what you cut out of your diet: it's about what you include! Paleo foods are some of the most nutrient dense on the planet, but it takes a little effort to make sure you're eating the variety of seafood, organ meats (yep, I said it!) and vegetables we need to optimize our intake of micronutrients.



SCIENCE SPEAK

Grains have a particularly high concentration of two types of lectin. Lectins are a class of proteins that are present in all plant life to some degree. Two sub-classes of lectins, prolamins and agglutinins are of particular concern for human health. These “toxic” lectins are part of a plant’s natural defense system against predators and pests, and are usually concentrated in the seeds of the plant. To defend itself, the seed from these plants either deter predators (like us) from eating them by making us sick or resist digestion completely or both. Yikes! These same compounds are known to stimulate inflammation and negatively impact the health of the gut barrier and microbiome. Vegetables are much more nutrient-dense sources of everything from minerals to fiber than grains—so when you swap out veggies for grain-based foods, you win every time!



EASY TIP

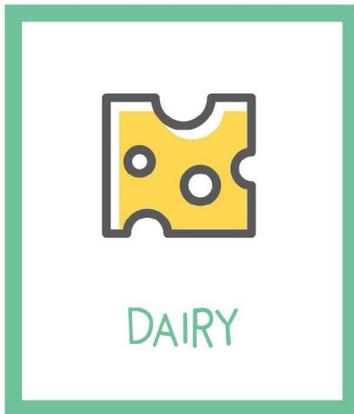
Having trouble filling out your plate—and meeting your carbohydrate needs—without grains? There’s a whole world of starchy veggies out there that will provide more vitamins, minerals and phytonutrients than you’d ever find in grains! Try [“ricing” parsnips](#) in your food processor, mashing potatoes, [roasting squash](#) or creating “noodles” out of zucchini or spaghetti squash! One of my favorite high-carb options is cassava, and cassava flour is a great way to experiment with grain-free pasta, bread and even desserts! I buy my cassava flour from [Otto’s Cassava Flour](#). By focusing on starchy vegetables, you’ll avoid the gut-harming effects of grains while keeping your fiber and carbohydrate consumption in a reasonable range. It’s a win-win!

GRAIN-FREE NUT-FREE FLOUR SUBSTITUTE

CASSAVA FLOUR



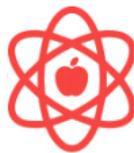
CAN BE USED AS A 1:1 SUBSTITUTE IN RECIPES



THE PROS AND CONS OF DAIRY

Can you imagine your life without cheese? The value (or lack thereof) of dairy products is the second most fiercely debated topic within the Paleo community. Opinions vary dramatically from consumption of no dairy whatsoever, to only consuming dairy fat (such as ghee, butter and heavy cream), to only consuming raw grass-fed dairy, to only consuming fermented dairy or aged cheeses, to including any dairy on a regular basis.

So, what do I recommend? Caution. I believe that dairy is probably okay for many healthy adults, especially full-fat, grass-fed dairy. In fact, for healthy individuals, the benefits likely outweigh the risks. However, for those battling autoimmune disease or other conditions where a leaky gut is a potential contributing factor, it makes the most sense to omit dairy from your diet for now.



SCIENCE SPEAK

The reason for this diversity of opinions on milk is that the science is not clear-cut. There are strong arguments to be made both for and against. The argument I find most compelling for avoiding dairy is that it is highly allergenic. Beyond lactose-intolerance, which can be treated with the aid of digestive enzymes or consumption of raw milk, allergy to milk proteins is very common.

However, grass-fed dairy, especially the fat from grass-fed dairy, is an excellent source of fat-soluble vitamins and Conjugated Linoleic Acid, an anti-inflammatory and healing fat. Fermented dairy is an excellent source of probiotics. There are also some valuable proteins in dairy, such as glutathione (very important for reducing inflammation and protecting against oxidative stress) and whey (which may help prevent cancer).



EASY TIP

As is my standard recommendation for all of the gray-area foods, I suggest leaving it out of your diet for at least 1 month, then try reintroducing it and see if you notice any obvious symptoms (this is the best way to determine if you are allergic or sensitive). Look for digestive symptoms, skin symptoms, mood changes, fatigue, headache, joint pain, or any symptom of diagnosed chronic diseases.

If you want to try ghee as an early dairy reintroduction, I recommend [Pure Indian Foods ghee!](#)

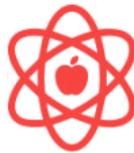




LEGUMES AREN'T WHAT THEY'RE CRACKED UP TO BE

If you've been on the diet train for a while, you probably know all about the "great" benefits of legumes like beans, peas and lentils. Plant-based protein is fabulous, right? Wrong!

Legumes are not considered a part of the Paleo diet due to the presence of anti-nutrients in legumes which damage the gut and aggravate a number of health conditions, including autoimmune diseases. Legumes just aren't what they're cracked up to be!



SCIENCE SPEAK

legumes contain saponins, protease inhibitors, and lectins (particularly agglutinins), all of which can promote leaky gut and tend to offset any beneficial nutrients you might absorb from legumes. Additionally, the protein in legumes is not easily digestible nor complete, meaning it doesn't contain all the essential amino acids we need to synthesize muscle.



EASY TIP

Legumes with edible pods, like snowpeas and green beans, are the exception to this rule! In terms of phytate levels, lectins, and overall nutrition, edible-podded legumes don't have that much in common with the hard, mature beans that typically come to mind when we hear the word "legume." And while the small amounts of agglutinins may be a concern for those with autoimmune disease following the autoimmune protocol, the arguments for excluding these foods from a more standard Paleo diet fall short. If we see green beans at the farmers market, are lucky enough to have sugar snap peas growing in the garden, or just want a tasty addition to our veggie menu, edible-podded legumes are an awesome choice!

If you're looking for an alternative to plant-based protein, I highly recommend [EPIC Bars!](#) These delicious, ethically-raised meat and fruit bars are a perfect option for protein-packed Paleo snacking.

HIGH QUALITY PRODUCTS FROM ETHICALLY RAISED ANIMALS

Organ Meat Jerky
&
Options for AIP-friendly Snacks



EPIC[®]

100% GRASS FED PROVISIONS

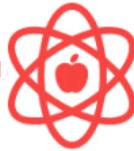




PROCESSED FOODS

PROCESSED FOODS SUCK

Vegan, vegetarian, Paleo, WAPF, plant-based—all these diets have one (excellent!) thing in common: they focus on removing processed foods from your diet. The Paleo diet in particular emphasises eating a variety of quality meat, seafood, vegetables, nuts and seeds in their whole, unprocessed forms. These are great goals not only because they add nutrient density to our plates, but because they allow us to avoid all the damaging additives, fillers and sugars that are often squeezed into processed foods.



SCIENCE SPEAK

Healing our guts can be one of the most important steps in reducing inflammation and regaining health. But additives like emulsifiers (carrageenan, guar gum, xanthan gum, gellan gum and more) and lecithins (soy lecithin, sunflower lecithin) can damage the integrity of our gut linings and create inflammation.

Additionally, most packaged foods (even when they aren't filled with obvious no-no's like gluten, grains and soy) contain either high-fructose or artificial sweeteners. Studies show that fructose is a major contributor to obesity and chronic health problems. Artificial sweeteners like xylitol, manitol, sorbitol and erythritol preferentially feed bad bacteria in our guts and contribute to imbalanced gut flora.

Finally, industrial vegetable oils are used in many pre-packaged fried and baked goods. These oils also contribute to inflammation because of their imbalanced Omega-3 to Omega-6 fat ratio and often highly oxidized states, and some people notice a huge difference in their inflammation levels when consuming these foods.

That said, individual tolerance to these additives varies. So, I recommend you eliminate them in the beginning and experiment to see how you react.



EASY TIP

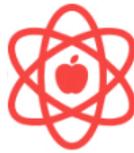
Broth is an important, nutrient-dense staple in my home. But most store-bought broth is full of yuck and NOT Paleo approved thanks to additives like MSG. My favorite exception is from [Kettle & Fire Bone Broth!](#) This shelf-stable broth is full of the same goodness as made-at-home broth, but includes none of the nasty chemicals. It's a perfect addition to your NEW Paleo pantry! Right now you can get \$10 off your order [here!](#)





PLANT-BASED PALEO

If you believe the news media, Paleo is all about meat meat meat. But this is totally wrong! I think Paleo actually has quite a lot in common with plant-based diets, and I try to construct my plate to include 3/4 veggies, meaning plants make up the bulk of my diet. That's because while animal protein is undoubtedly necessary for health, veggies provide the backbone of vitamins, minerals and phytonutrients we need to create a healthy diet.



SCIENCE SPEAK

There are a huge spectrum of micronutrients and other beneficial compounds found mostly or exclusively in either plant foods or animal foods, which is why we need both. Nutrients we need from plants include:

- ✓ Vitamin C
- ✓ Carotenoids (lycopene, beta-carotene, lutein, zeaxanthin)
- ✓ Diallyl sulfide (from the allium class of vegetables)
- ✓ Polyphenols
- ✓ Flavonoids (anthocyanins, flavan-3-ols, flavonols, proanthocyanidins, procyanidins, kaempferol, myricetin, quercetin, flavonones)
- ✓ Dithiolethiones
- ✓ Lignans
- ✓ Plant sterols and stanols
- ✓ Isothiocyanates and indoles
- ✓ Prebiotic fibers (soluble and insoluble)



EASY TIP

Working to get more veggies into your diet? Try sneaking them into unexpected places! I like to make my Green Eggs for my daughters (they include a healthy serving of spinach!) or even work them into treats like my Carrot Cake Bites or Spinach Brownies. Getting veggies in at breakfast and with treats is a great way to focus on meeting your 8-14 recommended servings of veggies a day!

A great solution for getting your veggie servings in every day is [Collagen Veggie Blend](#) from Vital Proteins, an easy AIP protein powder that I helped Vital Proteins develop. One serving has 10g of protein from collagen peptides, 2 servings of veggies (from spinach, kale, broccoli, carrots and squash) and 1/2 serving of high-antioxidant fruit. And because the veggies are dried and powdered, they tend to be easy on even sensitive digestive tracts.”

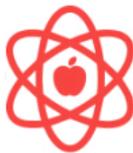


**New & Improved*
COLLAGEN VEGGIE BLEND
Now with 20 Servings & an Improved Taste
plus a new smaller size!



PALEO TREATS AND CHEATS

Ever heard of the “80/20” rule? It’s a pretty popular one in the diet community, and basically means that you can get 100% of the benefits of a diet by following it 80% of the time. In most cases, I think this rule is great! But what might your 20% look like? That depends on your own tolerances! My 20% looks like a little bit of dark chocolate, white rice, the occasional popcorn at the movies or a Paleo treat like a cookie, brownie or coconut milk ice cream. The key is that I tolerate all these foods well, so even though they aren’t the healthiest choices, I know they won’t throw me off track.



SCIENCE SPEAK

It’s often difficult for us to distinguish between “cravings” and regular treats and cheats. Did you know that cravings are often our body’s way of telling us we’re missing out on something essential? That’s why eating a nutrient-dense diet full of organ meats and seafood, vegetables, and bone broth is so important—when our nutrient stores are topped off, we’re prepared to make the best possible choices, even when it comes to our treats! Getting enough sleep and managing stress are also key for regulating hunger and making cravings a thing of the past.



EASY TIP

For me, finding a good treat is all about selecting something satisfying that won't wreck my diet. This is especially important for those following a special diet, like the Autoimmune Protocol. Some of my favorite AIP-Approved treats are [Paleo Angel's Power Balls!](#) These lightly-sweetened treats hit all my favorite flavor notes, just like baked goods, but with much more nutrient-dense ingredients like honey, coconut and even collagen peptides for protein! Right now get 10% off your order with code 'wellness' [here](#).



POWER BALLS™



*Each Ball Packs 4g
of
Pure Collagen Protein*

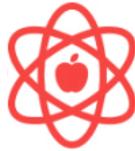
A PALEO & AUTOIMMUNE PROTOCOL SUPER FOOD



GLUTEN-FREE OR BUST

If you only pick up one thing from this intro series, I want it to be this: going gluten-free might be the single best thing you can do to improve your health. The Paleo diet focuses on reducing inflammation by removing several food groups, including grains, legumes, processed vegetable oils, conventional dairy and refined sweeteners. But the truth is that many people reintroduce one or many of those foods without trouble.

Gluten is the exception. Though some people tolerate this food, I don't think it should ever be a regular piece of anyone's diet. At best, it's nutritionally void, and at worst it's highly inflammatory!



SCIENCE SPEAK

Perhaps you've heard reports that "unless you have Celiac Disease, gluten sensitivity isn't real." Actually, I don't agree with that interpretation of research at all. In fact, some estimates have as many as 40% of people suffering from gluten sensitivity, and the newest research validates the existence non-Celiac gluten sensitivity. Plus, gluten-free diets are perfectly healthy, yes, even for kids! Read more in my post, [Gluten-Free Diets Can Be Healthy for Kids](#).

Gluten is an immune stimulant, meaning it's great at prompting an immune response in our bodies that causes bodywide inflammation and can even trigger an autoimmune disease. One way that gluten does this is by stimulating the release of a protein called zonulin into our guts. Research has shown that zonulin can "unlock" the tight junctions between the cells that form our gut barriers, making our guts leaky and allowing large molecules (like partly digested proteins and bacterial proteins) to cross over into our bodies where our immune systems respond by getting ramped up to defend our bodies against a perceived threat. Without a specific target like a viral infection to fight though, that immune response can become damaging to our bodies.



EASY TIP

If you're still looking for gluten-free convenience foods, don't fret! Some of my favorite pantry items can be found at OneStopPaleoShop.com. These are wonderful Paleo alternatives to your pre-packaged staples, often made with real fruits, veggies and meat. In fact, ordering online is a great way to get high quality ingredients when you don't have easy access to local farmers for organic, in-season produce and grass-fed meat. ButcherBox offers 100% grass-fed and grass-finished beef, free range organic chicken, and heritage breed pork delivered straight to your door on a subscription basis! I love this service!

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10^{oz.} NY STRIP STEAKS**



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PALEO FOR FAMILIES

Getting your family on-board might seem like the most daunting aspect of your Paleo journey, and I totally understand! So, how did I get my family on-board? First, let me assure you — it took time, patience and persistence!!!

It helped my family to change gradually. If you don't have obvious health issues that are compelling you to make a dramatic change, why not transition gradually? Some people need to just jump in with both feet, but others need to warm up to Paleo more slowly.



SCIENCE SPEAK

Depending on your level of food intolerance, disease or health in general, your family's Paleo template might look a little different even from yours. My husband actually needs to consume foods like rice and heavy cream to keep up his weight. I recommend at least some period of elimination for everyone in your family, in order to help identify individual intolerances. But you might do this slowly, rather than taking everything out at once.



EASY TIP

One of the most helpful things I did in transitioning my family was to find or create recipes for Paleo versions of their staples: things like [muffins](#), [yeast-based Paleo bread](#), [granola bars](#), and even [yogurt](#). I didn't just take away their favorite foods and expect them to quickly adapt — I created healthier versions of their favorites, and relied on their improved health to prove to them that they could have the best of both worlds. Now, my children happily enjoy my [50/50/50 burgers](#) (which include ground liver!), fried plantains, coconut yogurt mixed with probiotics, grassfed hotdogs, seaweed snacks, [sweet potato chips](#) and other Paleo staples.

Stocking your pantry with Paleo friendly products is another easy way to help with your families transition. Read my post, [15 Must-Haves For Your Paleo Pantry](#), where I share my favorites from Thrive Market. [Thrive](#) works kind of like an online Costco, but with the quality health-conscious products you'd expect to find at Whole Foods or Sprouts. Simply order your merchandise, save a bundle of money, and everything is shipped to your door. It's seriously so simple! Plus, they have whole sections dedicated to Paleo and gluten-free diets, and carry plenty of home, kids and personal care products too. Right now get a FREE 30-day membership and a FREE bottle of coconut oil right [here!](#)



A FREE Jar of Coconut Oil!

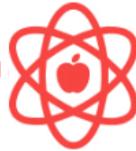


Get a free 30-day trial membership + a FREE jar of coconut oil with your first order!



THE IMPORTANCE OF LIFESTYLE FACTORS

The Paleo Diet isn't just about food—it's also about making healthier lifestyle choices! That includes managing stress, prioritizing sleep, making movement part of your regular life and spending time outside! It also means shoring up your support network. That's right, hanging out with friends is totally Paleo! Finding a healthy balance and knowing what lifestyle factors to focus on can be a challenge. Learn more in my posts, [Balancing Physical Activity with Rest: How Do We Get It Right?](#) and [Healthy Weight Loss with Paleo, Part 2: Lifestyle Choices That Make a Difference](#).



SCIENCE SPEAK

All the above lifestyle factors help balance our stress hormones naturally. Adequate sleep can help regulate the hunger hormones leptin and ghrelin, improves insulin regulation, lowers levels of the stress hormone cortisol and contributes to improved body composition. Sunlight improves our levels of Vitamin D, an important immune regulator. Movement helps reduce stress hormones, regulates insulin, and regulates hunger hormones. And, connection helps promote the production of the hormone oxytocin—which makes us happy!



EASY TIP

Sleep is number one on my list of important lifestyle factors. But it's one of the last things people prioritize! If you're struggling with your sleep, I've created a 14-Day sleep rehab program called [Go To Bed](#) to help you! This program includes a 350+ page book with the detailed science behind sleep, and a program with my best tips for improving your own.



14 EASY STEPS TO HEALTHIER SLEEP

Recharge your life with better sleep!





PALEO FOR WEIGHT LOSS

Many people find great success in weight loss following a standard Paleo diet. But if you're struggling to lose weight, don't lose heart! You can still do it on a Paleo diet!

The secret is to practice one little trick: portion control!

Portion control is the driving force behind every successful weight-loss diet. No matter what a diet's official rationale is, it induces weight loss chiefly by reducing the number of calories consumed. Different diets go about doing this in different ways, but energy intake (and portion size) is what ultimately ends up changing the numbers on the scale! To learn more read my series, [Healthy Weight Loss with Paleo](#) and my post, [Portion Control: The Weight Loss Magic Bullet](#).



SCIENCE SPEAK

A large body of scientific literature confirms this concept. When calorie intake is held constant, different macronutrient ratios (such as low carb/high fat or high carb/low fat) don't have a significantly different effect on the amount of body fat we lose (or on our overall energy needs). There's no substantial evidence that specific macronutrient ratios have a "metabolic advantage" when it comes to burning more fat or changing our energy needs; the only thing that ends up influencing body mass is the calorie content of our diet. Ultimately, the research consistently shows that the most important component of weight loss is being in a negative energy balance.



EASY TIP

If you struggle with portion control, taking the options away with pre-portioned meals may be an excellent solution! I love the pre-packaged meals from [Paleo On the Go](#). They're delicious, filled with real ingredients and incredibly nourishing. Just reheat from frozen and enjoy! Plus, they come with built-in portion control! Paleo On The Go also offers great add on's for your order like, Paleo tortillas, Paleo cookie dough, and Paleo bagels.





INTRODUCING AIP

Are you or someone you know suffering from an autoimmune disease? Autoimmune disease is caused by the immune system losing the ability to differentiate proteins belonging to your own body with proteins belonging to a foreign invader (like a bacteria, virus or parasite). What

causes symptoms is the build up of damage to cells, tissues and/or organs in the body—damage caused by your own immune system attacking those cells

If you're sick, the Paleo diet alone may not be enough to help you put your disease into remission—it wasn't enough for me. Instead, I began following the Autoimmune Protocol, a modified version of the Paleo diet that additionally eliminates

- ✗ [Eggs](#)
- ✗ [Nuts](#)
- ✗ [Seeds](#) (including cocoa, [coffee](#), and [seed-based spices](#))
- ✗ [Nightshades](#) (potatoes, tomatoes, eggplants, sweet and hot peppers, cayenne, red pepper, tomatillos, goji berries etc. and [spices derived from peppers, including paprika](#))
- ✗ [Potential Gluten Cross-Reactive Foods](#)
- ✗ Fructose consumption in excess of 25g per day
- ✗ [Alcohol](#)
- ✗ NSAIDS (like aspirin or ibuprofen)
- ✗ Non-nutritive sweeteners (yes, all of them, even [stevia](#))
- ✗ Emulsifiers, thickeners and other food additives

Additionally, the Autoimmune Protocol encourages the regular consumption of the most nutrient-dense foods available to us, including organ meat, seafood and tons of veggies. And, wrapped right in is a focus on getting enough sleep, managing stress, incorporating movement into our day, and connection.



SCIENCE SPEAK

By removing the foods that contribute to a leaky gut, gut dysbiosis (the wrong numbers, relative quantities, or types of microorganisms typically growing in the wrong locations in your gut), hormone imbalance, and that stimulate inflammation and the immune system, you can create the opportunity for your body to heal. Additionally, flooding the body with nutrients provides the nutritional resources for the immune system to regulate itself and for the body to heal damaged tissues. When combined with lifestyle factors, this diet can reduce inflammation and help you achieve remission.



EASY TIP

My books [The Paleo Approach](#), [The Paleo Approach Cookbook](#) and [The Healing Kitchen](#) are handbooks for beginning the AIP and cooking your way through this healing diet. If you're considering the protocol, I encourage you to pick one of them up and read through the detailed science included in their pages. For more info, check out [this page](#) on my site.

Autoimmune Protocol
LECTURE
Series

**Learn about the autoimmune protocol
in this 6 week intensive course**

WITH DR. SARAH BALLANTYNE



TRANSITIONING TO PALEO

The transition to Paleo might seem like a daunting one, but I like to take it in one of two approaches: either dive right in and go cold-turkey, or take a phased approach. Both of these methods are totally valid, and I've seen both yield great results. You just need to

figure out which works best for you! Read more in my post, [Making Healthy Choices: What's Your Currency?](#)



SCIENCE SPEAK

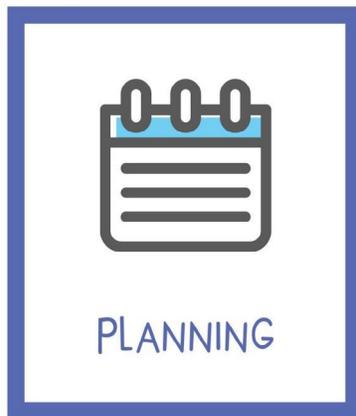
I think it's important we view dietary changes through the lens of habit formation. The science of habit formation is absolutely fascinating, and a favorite topic of mine. Unfortunately, it's a myth that it takes 21 days to make or break a habit. For the vast majority of us, it takes dedication and commitment to repetitively perform a task for a much greater length of time before that task becomes automatic. And that's the goal, right? Research shows that the average length of time it takes to form a new habit is more like 66 days, but the length of time required for habit formation varies from 18 days to 254 days (about 8 months)!!!! And, it very likely varies from person to person, but also by type of habit and the individual challenges each of us face to making a specific change.



EASY TIP

Transitioning to Paleo becomes much easier when you have a few easy staples on hand. I recommend you try one of my specially curated boxes from [One Stop Paleo Shop](https://onestoppaleoshop.com)! They're a great way to try specific items and learn about some new favorites, and they're all completely Paleo-approved!

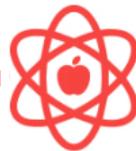




THE IMPORTANCE OF PREPARATION AND PLANNING

Like any lifestyle change, adopting a Paleo diet becomes much simpler when you have a good plan in place. Whether it's which foods you'll eliminate first, what snacks you'll keep on hand or just what you'll eat for dinner, preparation is key!

Why is this planning ahead so critical for staying on track with our chosen dietary priorities? Using this strategy means that you're never stuck not knowing what to cook, you've got Go To foods for when you're time-crunched, you're never stuck an ingredient short in the middle of cooking a meal, and you can feel comforted and reassured that you're next meal, snack or treat will be delicious! Being prepared is the solution to all of the most common situations where we derail (whether derailing means we simply end up making a suboptimal choice out of convenience or completely fall off the proverbial wagon).



SCIENCE SPEAK

Planning ahead is a good idea for a whole host of practical and psychological reasons, but perhaps one of the most important is that it can greatly reduce stress. Controlling our environments—even if it's just the corner related to what we'll eat for dinner—affords us a measure of comfort that can make a huge difference in our day-to-day routine. Chronic stress is known to affect health in a variety of ways, including causing the development of metabolic syndrome (the nasty combination of obesity, insulin resistance, and high blood pressure), dysregulation of the hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenal axis along with sympathetic nervous system activation, sleep disturbances, systemic inflammation, impaired immunity functions, blood coagulation and fibrinolysis, and poor health behaviors (chronic stress causes increased appetite, cravings for energy-dense foods, and uninhibited eating behaviors). Whether you have adopted the Paleo diet to lose a few pounds, increase performance at the gym, or manage a chronic health problem, stress management is critical for success.



EASY TIP

My favorite tool for planning ahead is [Real Plans](#). This dynamic meal planner takes into account your family's specific dietary preferences (everything from your dairy-free diet to your son's hatred of tomatoes) and provides a weekly meal plan and shopping list that is completely customizable. It's simply the best way to take Paleo meal planning off your to-do list. Check out just a few of the features of [Real Plans](#).

- ✓ An easy-to-navigate app
- ✓ Shopping lists, prep timelines and detailed instructions
- ✓ The ability to include your own recipes in meal plans
- ✓ Recipes from Autoimmune Wellness, PaleOMG, Nom Nom Paleo, Wellness Mama and Me!
- ✓ 24-hour support
- ✓ 30-day money back guarantee



Over 800 AIP recipes
+ 50 new recipes
from The Paleo Mom
(350 recipes total from Dr. Sarah)

www.realplans.com