

WHY THE PALEO DIET WORKS

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I've come a full circle with The Paleo Diet or the Primal Blueprint lifestyle.

Like most people who embark on this journey I went all guns blazing for the first two years. Before I became Wholesome Mamma my blog was called [Allee G's Heath Blog](#) where I wrote about workouts and food. I took pride in my new body and reveled in my newfound knowledge. I turned up my nose at pizza, couldn't complete a day without a challenging workout and was a smug know-it-all.

As I grew and got comfortable in my evolutionary skin, paleo become second nature and touched every aspect of my life. I dissected all advice or hearsay and applied [evolutionary logic](#) to it. When I was [pregnant](#) I didn't worry too much about cautionary well-meaning folk and went on hikes and workouts and ate as much of primal fare as I could. **I figured that if our ancestors did tons of squatting, lifting, walking on uneven terrain, and eating real food when pregnant (we're here aren't we?), why couldn't I?**

After my son was born I [exclusively breastfed](#) (for 6 months), didn't use artificial nipples like a pacifier, and am still breastfeeding as my paleo sensibilities do not allow me to give him the processed junk that formula is. Some of those ingredients on the Nestle Nan One formula make my skin crawl. I've raised him paleo and he doesn't eat food his baby peers eat. I've raised him paleo by putting him in cloth nappies, wearing him, co sleeping, letting him eat dirt, allowing him to mouth everything, allowing him to build immunity, allowing him to fall, allowing him to play with sharp objects if they catch his fancy (and learn if he gets hurt), not buying battery operated toys, and letting him learn through experiment. (Unless of course his father is around in which case I differ the boy to his expertise whereby he will if given a choice build a wall around him so that he doesn't get a scratch on his sweet precious skin.)

I am mamma Grok raising my stone-age baby (because that's how they're programmed) and adapting him to thrive in the modern world.

In the past few months my health has somewhat deteriorated. I [wrote a post](#) on reasons I suspect. Hormones could be one aspect, but also it could be that I am not eating as well as I was nutritionally speaking. I could be slacking off in the food department as well as workouts. All of us do at some point and I need to up the tempo once more.

Here is a picture of me taken yesterday and I am clearly nowhere near my Primal best.



Here is a post baby picture of me where I was in much better shape than I am today.



The reason for this story is to establish that paleo is not a magic formula whereby you continue to maintain the best health and shape no matter what. Like anything else it requires some work.

However the purpose of this post is to establish why the paleo/primal way of life works in spite of modern lifestyle challenges.

Since I have been in the habit off late to question all the status quo, why should the primal lifestyle or the paleo diet be spared? Today most of the stalwarts in the paleosphere are questioning previously hard held notions. Have a look at this post where Chris Kresser talks about [legumes](#) not

being as bad as previously believed Or this one where he writes about [Indian food](#) and talks about the idli as being a 'health' food because it's a fermented grain and has probiotic yeast strains.

Like I mentioned earlier a baby is born with the same instincts that a baby had in the stone ages. Still he adapts to handle technology like a seasoned pro in no time. We're pretty adaptable and I am sure our bodies are slightly adaptable to eat some modern foods (like well prepared grains) too.

BUT I would still recommend highly going primal / paleo for anyone who wants to get healthy or lose weight or feel better or make a change. Here's why:

The first step is to drop all grains, sugars, and [processed foods](#). Once you do this for about 30 days you will see a sharp turnaround with your health no matter what your ailment. Migraines? Gone. PMS? Better. Not ovulating? You will soon. Bad skin? Better. Weight? Where's it gone. Blood sugars? Normal. It really does seem like magic. Once you've done it its very difficult to go back to your previous life.

I can't stress the point about **processed foods** needing to go enough. The factory process reduces foods to a bunch of chemicals that are highly toxic and cause inflammation. **Inflammation is what manifests into bad skin/ irregular periods, IBS, belly fat etc. The hydrogenated vegetables oils that we eat are an example.** Eating fats that are natural like [coconut oil](#) is the way to go. **But if we said just remove processed foods, there would be a lot of confusion to a novice therefore negating grains and sugars along with processed foods works so well.** Once you're a seasoned pro you can add back fermented well-prepared grains and legumes.

The primal lifestyle ensures you eat lots of fats. Today's [low fat diets](#) are wreaking havoc in our bodies. Energy sources are substituted to cheap quality carbs like bread, pasta, wheat etc. The real sources of energy should come from high quality fats like egg yolks, butter, coconut oil, ghee, red meat, fatty fish and other yum stuff. It's nutritious and [REAL food](#). FAT IS A FRIEND!

The primal lifestyle prompts you to take your health into your own hands. You tend to become your own doctor. You realize along the way that conventional wisdom just doesn't cut it and you educate yourself about your body by listening to cues and digging deeper and investigating signals that your body is giving. A knowledge and experience rich community is out there, each sharing their own experiences through trial and error. No longer will you just pop pills or eat stuff without knowing exactly what's in it. Even if you do slack off a little like I have, you will still go for quality first.

Helps you listen to your body. When health becomes a priority, you land up tuning in. If I feel slightly off, get a headache, or am generally down, I just won't take it lying down (pun intended). I won't pop pills but I'll investigate for underlying causes by changing something around, like I'm doing right now.

Increases your understanding of nutrition. Good nutrition is everything. Therefore eating empty calories and filling your tummy with factory made chemicals just doesn't cut it anymore, for me or

for my baby or for my family. I yearn for veggies, or red meat, or fish when I don't eat any of that for a bit.

Makes you start doing full body workouts and sprints. Exercise gets easier as you end up doing high intensity shorter stuff and don't feel guilty if you just walk instead of sweating it out for hours in a gym. Since everything we do is from an evolutionary perspective any sort of movement, which is natural goes. If humans always did this it works. If humans didn't do bicep curls it doesn't work.

Makes you see everything from the evolutionary perspective. This just makes life so simple. If you're taking care of yourself but watching tv till the wee hours with artificial light, it's bound to take a toll. We're not meant to do that. If you're slathering yourself with products: sunscreen, lotions, perfumes, etc. it's bound to react with your body in terrible ways. It's just not natural. What's natural is the sun, lots of it. Keeping your newborn in a crib away from your body? Get ready for some crying and other immeasurable consequences. Our babies are made to be held close. The examples are endless. Once you get into the habit of thinking this way, everything gets simple and beautiful.

Makes you strive for quality. Today I eat pizza. I discovered this wonderful place (Di-Napoli in Nariman Point) close to home that makes the dough fresh and makes it in a wood-fire oven and the ingredients feel like a perfect harmony of notes in an orchestra. Every ingredient in there makes my tongue tingle. I will eat pizza there once a month. I won't touch the junk that is Dominos even for a bite. It makes me cringe. Being Paleo/ primal makes you look for quality in everything be it ingredients, sleep, a snack, a drink, lifestyle everything.

In a nutshell, going paleo is awesome in the short term. You lose weight, feel healthy instantly, love life, have fun in the sun, feel energetic etc.

But it's also awesome in the long run as you strive for a better quality of life in every sphere. Life becomes worth living. It's a positively life changing experience.

Don't believe me? Try it. And that's why most of us say it's not a diet, it's a lifestyle.

Thanks for reading. Are you curious about the primal lifestyle? For those who are already paleo, do you feel this way too?

[Image Source](#)

