



Newsletter

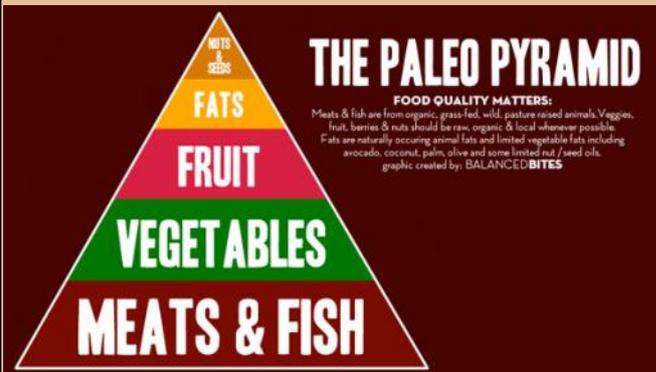
March 2014

By Dr Michael Elstein

ANTI-AGEING/WELLNESS EXPERT

The downside of the Paleo movement

If you thought that being part of the Paleo, Crossfit movement was totally cool and absolutely healthy, research has just surfaced which might deflate your biceps and spoil your chicken schnitzel. While high protein diets might help to curb appetite, mice fed a high-protein, low-carbohydrate diet lived shorter lives and suffered from a greater incidence of heart disease and diabetes related health issues compared with animals fed less protein and a more plant concentrated diet. These findings are supported by research on humans showing that those who eat less protein and have diets that are vegetarian based have better long-term health. Eating animal protein might promote satiety and help us to remain leaner but a high intake of branched-chain amino acids, foods glorified by gym junkies for their muscle building capacities, accelerates ageing. Research has suggested that the ideal anti-ageing diet limits both protein and carbohydrates.



The many benefits of cacao

Okay, so this is about the dark chocolate no sugar variety. Aside from being salubrious for our hearts by raising HDL, the good cholesterol and lowering LDL, the Darth Vader cholesterol, cacao reduces blood pressure, a benefit recognised long ago by the Kuna Indians, native to islands off the coast of Panama who drink several servings of unprocessed cocoa a day and appear to be the only known society free from high blood pressure.

In the test tube and research on animals, cacao inhibits a whole bunch of cancers, including, breast, pancreatic, prostate and bowel cancer. Cacao improves learning and memory, reduces anxiety and even stimulates the growth of new brain cells.



In diabetic rats, a cocoa extract has been found to lower blood sugar confirming that consumption of dark chocolate and cocoa makes insulin, the hormone responsible for blood glucose or sugar control, operate more effectively.

Cacao even has skin rejuvenating properties by improving skin texture, mainly its density, thickness and hydration and by reducing roughness and scaling.

Update on the health-giving properties of coffee

Aside from reducing the risk of diabetes and high blood pressure and benefiting heart and brain ageing, the many benefits of coffee and the one major downside are described in the about to be launched 'Wellness and Anti-ageing' App. Lesser known benefits of coffee include its capacity to reduce the risk of stroke, alleviate depression, suppress appetite and help with fat burning.

Fats and carbohydrates, which are worse for your brain?

Scientists seem to agree that elevated blood sugar and impaired insulin function, often associated with weight gain and obesity is bad for the brain, what remains in doubt is the diet that results in significant weight loss. A question mark remains around the benefits of the high protein low carbohydrate fat to achieve long-term weight loss.

Recent research has revealed that in people with type 2 diabetes, a low-fat, plant-based diet causes significant weight loss and dramatic improvements in blood sugar control, as well as reductions in cholesterol and blood pressure without limiting carbohydrates, calories, or portion sizes. Both saturated and trans fats have been associated with increased Alzheimer's risk and now it appears that avoiding these helps with weight loss and has a range of metabolic benefits.

The authors of this study advise that 'a plant-based diet reopens narrowed arteries, trims waistlines, lowers blood pressure, and is more powerful against diabetes than any other regimen.'

Q&A With Dr Elstein

QUESTION

What can be done to treat arthrosis in hip joints or knees?

ANSWER

The combination of fish oil, glucosamine and chondroitin sulphate and rose hip might work. You need at least 1500mg of glucosamine sulphate daily. There is some evidence that taking a specific cat's claw freeze-dried extract 100 mg/day can reduce knee pain in those suffering from osteoarthritis. Curcumin, which is a yellow pigment in turmeric, also has the capacity to reduce inflammation and pain. Recent clinical research shows that it might be helpful for symptoms of osteoarthritis. There is evidence showing that taking a specific turmeric extract, Indena 500 mg twice daily, significantly reduces pain and improves functionality. This formulation contains 20% curcuminoids combined with a type of non weight gaining fat called phosphatidylcholine to enhance absorption.

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