

How to Stop Your Aging Now

According to evolutionary biology authority, Dr. Michael R. Rose, before 5,000 to 10,000 years ago, mortality rates, or the rate of dying, increased steadily; in fact, exponentially, until around the age of fifty-five. Then they tended to plateau, and people's aging in some sense, stopped. The same thing happens to humans today, but we don't seem to plateau until around the age of ninety. This is where aging, or the progressive rate of mortality, levels out. But by then, our chance of dying in any given year is extremely high, even though some deterioration actually stops on its own.

We could thus keep people alive for a very long time after they plateau at around fifty-five. That means, their chances of dying at age eighty should be about the same as their chances were at fifty-five. The chances of us dying in any given year are low when we're in our 50's. Any serious health problems that might arise at that age should be infrequent, and we would be young and durable enough to survive medical interventions. Not so at age ninety and older. That's one reason hardly anyone ever lives to 110.

So if we could plateau in our fifties, sixties or seventies, we could be more active and live much healthier and much longer, in fact, *extremely* longer. The good news is we may be able to! In fact, in the new textbook, *Does Aging Stop?* by Laurence D. Mueller, Casandra L. Rauser and Michael R. Rose, these points are meticulously detailed with all the scientific rationale that aging can indeed stop, and our mortality rate can plateau! In fact, they hypothesize that not only can aging stop, but some aspects may decelerate as well. Although more research needs to be done, the evidence is convincing to me that if we can stop our accelerating mortality in our 50's, 60's or 70's, we may be able to live *indefinitely* with the help of modern medicine and its rapidly accelerating advancements.

Think about this implication:

**One lifestyle change might allow you to live without limit
within two years from the time you take action!**

What are you waiting for? Here's the rationale behind this bold statement.

What happened 10,000 years ago? We entered the Agricultural Age. From 5,000 to 10,000 years ago, depending on your ancestry, we started growing crops and domesticating animals. That's when we started eating grains and legumes regularly plus dairy products, and we were not adapted to them.

We're far from completely adapted to agricultural diets now either, because 5,000 to 10,000 years is a short time on the human evolutionary scale. We are still adapted to the hunter-gatherer diet and active lifestyle. We've been on them for millions of years. We're also adapted to eating cooked meat and some cooked vegetables, since we've been eating them for well over a million years.

When we subsisted on a hunter-gatherer diet, we ate what we could find and kill. Those diets were actually much more diverse than typical modern diets. In fact, they may have been about *ten times* as diverse. While we typically select among about fifty different species today, our ancestors chose any of about five hundred! Because their selection was so varied, they tended to eat different foods every day.

In this variety of foods, a typical Paleolithic villager apparently ate on the order of 300 different plant species. Most modern diets include at most 30. We have a limited number of types of plant foods. In toxicology, the dose makes the poison, so the more you eat—if you eat a small amount of any toxin, your body will be able to eliminate it without any health effects. But if you eat a large amount, then it can become quite dangerous. When you eat any of the same food two days in a row or more, your immune system starts to recognize it as an invader. That's how your genes have evolved. So vary your food as much as possible.

Average hunter-gatherer life spans may have been short, mostly due to high infant mortality and partially due to the harshness and dangers of everyday life. But contrary to popular belief, *maximum* life spans may have been longer than the best we can hope to reach today if they could have enjoyed some of the security and medicine of the modern world. And diseases associated with aging were largely unknown.

Dr. Rose has hypothesized that by eliminating all grains, dairy products and legumes from your diet and by being physically active, you can reach your mortality rate plateau within two years if you are about fifty years of age or older. Then you could slow aging dramatically... drastically reduce your odds of falling victim to metabolic syndrome and being stricken with an aging-related disease. You could add an incredible number of healthy active years to your life, and even extend it open-endedly.

Even if he's wrong about plateauing (in order to be more objective, he used other scientists' plateau work to establish his hypothesis), in the worst case, this strategy will avoid more sickness and suffering than anything else I can think of.

According to *Does Aging Stop?* adaption is a function of age. We adapt well at early ages, but as adults age, we proceed back in evolutionary time. Sort of an evolutionary time travel. That means, you can tolerate, and even thrive, on an agricultural diet when you're young. But as you age, you become less tolerant to grains, dairy and legumes. If you're young now, there is no need to eat this way until you are over forty. In fact, it could be counter-productive for those much under thirty. But the older you are, the more damage an agricultural diet will do to you, and it may be deadly after age fifty if you don't reverse it.

The Human Diet's Three Overruling Principles

Based on the enormous information available to us, we can conclude that our original hunter-gatherer diet is based on three overruling principles:

1. It's exclusively whole food oriented.
2. It's primarily low glycemic.

3. It's inherently more vegetarian than carnivorous.

Although animal foods provide the highest quality protein, animal foods are not essential to us. Plant foods are. Vegetables, fruits, nuts, seeds and roots are our primary sources of vitamins and antioxidants. They're also exclusive sources of metabolic supportive phytonutrients.

Sure, a hunter-gatherer diet is not as convenient when you dine out. And it does take some trial and error and more creative grocery shopping. So the question you might ask yourself is, "Is it worth it?"

The answer is a no-brainer for me. "*Yes!*" Why? Because this diet is built into our genes. It is natural, and popular diets are not. Foods that agreed with hunter-gatherer genetic blueprints agree with ours. Eating a typical modern-day diet is like fueling a jet plane with diesel fuel. It will crash and burn.

There's an additional benefit too if weight loss is your goal. It's next to impossible to be overweight if you adopt a hunter-gatherer lifestyle for a protracted period of time. I noticed a marked increase in muscularity within sixty days. Others commented on it as well. Although I am already thin and do not want to lose weight, I have gotten noticeably leaner. The same thing happened to a female friend of mine who started the same time I did. However, if you are underweight, you may want to be cautious with anything that could cause weight loss.

I have another friend who reversed some serious health issues within seven months from the time he started a strict hunter-gatherer diet.

It works.

Another's Perspective

Steven B. Harris, M.D. looks even deeper into hunter-gatherer eating habits. His investigation shows that after mid-life (say 40), the evolutionary pressure is so small that **EVERYBODY** must switch to the Paleolithic diet and eat a hunter-gather diet like a Bantu (a lot of roots, fruits, and lean game-type meat or fish). If they don't, they get the kind of obesity that causes chronic disease (diabetes, cancer, vascular disease, etc).

It isn't that nature cares about what happens to you in this period (evolution is done with you), but rather that you do better sticking to the type of diet that didn't make you ill or fat in the reproductive years (age 15-35 or so) when it *did* matter evolutionarily. That's the tricky idea.

However, at ages over 40 where evolutionary pressure is small, our short species-experience with non-hunter-gatherer diets makes it very unlikely that we get anything out of agricultural diet. Instead, nearly all of us are stuck with having to go back to our Paleolithic roots, simply because the diet that doesn't make you too fat when young is also the one that doesn't do so when middle aged and elderly.

Since 1975, we've been in a food era which isn't Paleolithic or Neolithic but some monstrous **THIRD** period. It's not "lithic" (rock using) at all, but techno-factory. It is starch broken down to

glucose than isomerized, so half of it is fructose, as though it was fruit sugar, then fed in massive quantities (more than you could get from fruit, and far cheaper). The rest of the starch and protein is used to feed feedlot cattle, which make so much cheap fat that when you eat *them*, you get diseases the Amish and Egyptians never saw.

This era has only been here to some extent since the 1960s and took off with a vengeance since the 1970s when feedlots and high fructose corn syrup began to dominate the Western diet. This is the era of "The Clown, the King and Colonel" as Anthony Bourdain terms them. And it's the "MacDonald's and Burger King and KFC diet."

In the 40 years it's been here, evolution has NOT had time to adapt to this even a bit, and it causes reproductive problems and gestational diabetes even for people whose ancestors were farmers. This is the other tricky point. And moreover, for Native Americans and some segments of Africans, it's even worse! It's not safe or helpful at *any* age, but for some segments of the world and the gene pool, it's especially bad.

Here's How to Make It Work for You

I believe the following information is the single most important thing you can do for your longevity, bar none. If you take nothing else from this book, incorporate this step into your life.

As I said, for millions of years, we subsisted on a hunter-gatherer diet. That means we ate what we could find and kill.

By eliminating grains, dairy products and legumes from your diet and by being physically active, you position yourself to be able to avoid most of the aging-related diseases. Even if Dr. Rose's hypothesis about aging stopping proves to be wrong, you could still add lots of active years to your life by following this advice. You have everything to gain and nothing to lose. Find out more by reading *Food and Western Disease* by Staffan Lindeberg. This may be the single most important book you will ever read if your goal is extreme longevity. It's slightly academic, so I have synopsized some of the more pertinent points for you.

By studying how the human species evolved, Lindeberg and others developed a rational pathway to organize the conflicting ideas on the human diet. Their overwhelming evidence concluded that the Western diet is implicated in virtually every single chronic disease that afflicts us, and it specifically outlines the ultimate basis for the link between nutrition and disease.

All living organisms' nutritional requirements are genetically determined. By carefully examining the ancient environment under which our genome arose, it's possible to gain insight into which foods benefit us and which foods harm us.

The beneficial Paleolithic diet is mainly based on root vegetables, vegetables, fruits, berries, nuts, eggs, lean meat, poultry and fish. Paleo food contains a lot of water, fiber and protein which makes it filling at low calorie intake. A Mediterranean diet is a step, but only a step in the right direction.

The Kitavan islanders from New Guinea (one of the few remaining hunter-gatherer peoples) are current models of humans' original lifestyle. They have NO evidence of heart disease, stroke, dementia, diabetes, obesity (in spite of abundant food supplies), high blood pressure or acne. And they rarely exhibit modern lifestyle conditions such as cancer, arthritis, hip fractures, myopia and tooth decay despite there being plenty of subjects in their 80s and older. One-hundred-year-olds look and act like they're in their 60's and 70's.

Harmful foods that cause these diseases include modern staples such as grains, legumes, dairy, refined fats, meat from non-grass-fed animals, sugar and salt. These were not, or were rarely available to hunter-gatherers, from whom we have inherited our genes, but they now provide the bulk of calories in most countries.

In fact, the USDA reports that the top nine foods eaten by Americans are:

- Whole cow's milk
- 2 percent milk
- Processed American cheese
- White bread
- White flour
- White rolls
- Refined sugar
- Colas
- Commercial ground beef

All of these foods are foreign to our genome that evolved on a Paleolithic diet. This diet creates altered patterns of gene expression that lead to disease, including food allergy or sensitivity.

Grains and legumes destroy us in a number of ways. Plants contain toxic carbohydrate binding proteins called plant lectins that are designed to protect the plants against plant-eating animals. They poison predators to discourage them from eating the plants. The highest concentrations are found in grains (except for cooked rice), beans, potatoes and peanuts. You'll find toxins in raw celery as well. Plant lectins are thought to be a major contributor to most modern diseases such as heart disease and cancer.

Since all plants contain lectins in varying concentrations, and since each contains its unique versions, you should eat a wide variety of fruits and vegetables in order to avoid concentrations of any one lectin high enough to harm you.

Our ancestors gravitated toward the plant foods that tasted best. Over time, we became more adapted to these foods and their defense mechanisms. This may be one reason we are not as adapted to raw celery as we are to blueberries. We're engineered to favor sweets. Companies like Coca-Cola, Kellogg's and Mars figured this out long ago.

Grains and beans also contain protease inhibitors which inhibit protein-degrading enzymes in the digestive tract.

Phytic acid is found in grains and beans as well. It binds to minerals and trace metals and passes them through the digestive tract and keeps them from being absorbed.

Dairy is about as destructive. Casein, the major protein in milk, and lactose, the largest constituent in milk by weight next to water, are proven to be major aggravators and producers of atherosclerosis. Milk contributes to diabetes in most ethnic groups and contributes heavily to arthritis and other inflammatory conditions.

Lactose intolerance is the natural genetic state for humans. Like all mammals we're genetically programmed to lose the ability to digest milk after childhood. It's part of the weaning process. Except for a few populations around the world who have independently developed genetic mutations that let them tolerate milk, most of us get undermined by dairy products.

Do you see some of the ways grains, legumes and dairy kill us? Yet they are staples of recommended diets in the Western world.

Today, it's natural to die of a heart attack, which was almost unheard of before the Age of Agriculture. "Normal" blood pressure means you are at "normal" risk for a heart attack or stroke. Blood pressure and body weight should *not* increase with age. They only "normally" increase in sick populations. The majority of Westerners over sixty have *fully developed* atherosclerosis. So this again is "normal" for those of us with "normal" levels of blood pressure and serum lipids. Do you rejoice when your doctor says you are normal? The good news is, atherosclerosis is reversible in many cases by adopting a Paleo lifestyle.

If you have a health condition, gradually ease into a Paleo diet under the supervision of a *qualified and informed* physician.

Getting Started

Don't forget, if you're young now, there may be no need to eat this way. In fact, it could be counter-productive for children. But since adaptation drops drastically as we age, an agricultural diet after age fifty could cause your undoing. So if you're over forty, and especially fifty, start now if you want to optimize your health and longevity.

Most of the habits I describe in this book can be fairly easy to implement once you grasp the incredible benefits. In fact, they can even be fun, especially once you experience the results. I thought this one would take lots of will power though, at least for me.

I used to enjoy a cup of chocolate ice cream every so often, and I do like cheese. But I have found good healthy alternatives. Even though they're not quite the same, I have discovered natural homemade non-dairy ice creams that almost make me forget traditional ones. Or if you want a commercial version that tastes like the real thing, try a coconut milk "ice cream." I was completely fooled by a product called So Delicious Dairy Free. And it only has one gram of sugar per serving.

Although I seldom touched bread, I thought it would be tough to figure out how to replace my oatmeal and whole grain cereals. Well, I was wrong. I even found grainless alternatives to both bread and cereals. For example, you can get ones made from sunflower seeds. See www.LydiasOrganics.com for some tasty and healthy substitutes. My favorites come from www.TwoMomsInTheRaw.com.

The web is full of recipes for grain-free breads, cereals, flours and pancakes made from almonds, coconuts and more as well as sources and recipes for non-dairy cheeses. And who needs dairy when you can enjoy delicious and nutritious almond milk, coconut milk or hemp milk? As far as breakfast goes, I've learned to love refreshing and healthy homemade protein shakes with hempseed or egg protein powder; almond, coconut or hemp milk, raw eggs; fruit; flax seeds and other goodies.

This is not a perfect science. We do know that eliminating grains, dairy and legumes will put you on the surest path we know of to an open-ended lifespan. The rest is fine-tuning and more study. Lots of Dr. Rose's information, including specific food advice, is posted on a free website. Please visit www.MissingHumanManual.com for a wealth of information.

A Paleolithic diet positions you and me better to take advantage of the emerging age-reversal and repair technologies described in Part I of this book by extending our average lifespans now. In my opinion, this is the greatest life-extender of them all. And yummys like cacao and avocado, or plants like them, and some honey have probably been in our diet for millions of years, so we are not talking total self-denial.

According to Dr. Loren Cordain in his best-selling user-friendly book, *The Paleo Diet*, there are seven keys to the diet.

1. Eat animal protein.
 - a. Author's note: What if you are a vegetarian? You can eliminate the meat if you can get adequate protein from eggs or plant sources. As many as 30% of us can do well on a vegetarian diet, but most can't.
 - b. Author's note: A common misconception of a Paleo diet is it leans heavily toward meats. The truth is, our ancestors found plant foods to be much more abundant and obtainable, so meats usually made up a relatively small portion of their diets. Popular neo-Paleo diets are not representative of true Paleo diets, since they contain much more meat than was available to our ancestors. I suggest you limit your portions of red meat, chicken fish, and eggs to three or four ounce servings. And try to avoid animal protein every other day on average.
2. Eat fewer carbohydrates than most modern diets, but eat good carbs from fruits and veggies.
3. Eat a large amount of fiber from non-starchy fruits and veggies.
4. Eat a moderate amount of fat with more monounsaturated and polyunsaturated fats than saturated fats, and nearly equal amounts of omega-3 and omega 6 fats.
5. Eat foods with a high potassium content and a low sodium content, and do not add salt to your food (Author's note: unless your sodium level is low).
6. Eat a diet with a net alkaline load.
7. Eat foods rich in plant phytochemicals, vitamins, minerals and antioxidants.

The Paleo diet can be roughly summarized as "any food that can be eaten without being processed." That means no grains, dairy and legumes. If total adherence takes too much fun out of your life, indulge once a week or more. Adhere as closely as you are comfortable with. Read this book for a fun and easy education, and enjoy life.