

# Starting Patients on Paleo

Hi, everyone,

In this video, we're going to talk about how to get your patients started on a "Paleo template" diet and lifestyle.

There are two effective options, and which one you choose will depend upon the patients you work with.

The first is the 30-day Reset. I refer to this in my book, *The Paleo Cure*, and if you've been involved in the Paleo community for any length of time, I'm sure you're familiar with it. Robb Wolf calls it a 30-day Challenge, and Melissa and Dallas Hartwig over at Whole9 have called it a Whole 30.

The basic idea is that patients get started by following a strict Paleo diet for 30 days.

The reason that this can be so effective, and has been the "default" way of starting Paleo for so long, is that most people will see incredible changes during that 30-day period if they are able to stick with it. And once they've experienced those benefits, they are much more likely to continue with the diet.

Another advantage to this approach is that there are a lot of resources out there for people that want to do it, since it is so popular within the Paleo community. My book is one of them, and I will be providing you with handouts you can give your patients along with a number of other supportive tools they can use to make it easier.

The problem with the 30-day Reset is that it requires an enormous level of commitment and effort, especially for someone that is not accustomed to cooking or preparing their own food, and for a busy person that doesn't have a lot of support. For example, imagine a mom with three kids who also works outside of the home part time whose husband and kids are not on board with the switch to a Paleo diet.

The 30-day Reset has been very successful in my practice, but my patient population is unusual. My typical patient is someone that has followed me by blog or podcast for at least a couple of years; they are often already following a pretty healthy diet, if not something very close to a Paleo diet; and since they are usually quite ill, they are extremely motivated to follow through on my advice.

I recognize that not everyone will have patients like this, and a 30-day commitment is just too intimidating for many people. I also found that in many cases, getting people started on improving their physical activity, stress management, and sleep was as important—or in some cases, more important—than just changing their diet.

This leads us to the second option for getting your patients started with a Paleo lifestyle—14Four.

14Four is similar to a 30-day Reset, with three big differences.

First, as the name implies, it is a 14-day program rather than a 30-day program. Two weeks just feels a lot more doable to people than 30 days. It's an important psychological difference. I don't have statistics to back this up, but my guess is if 5 percent of the population might be willing to commit to a 30-day program, 15 to 20 percent might be willing to commit to a 14-day program. This is why you see so many diet books with "14 day" promises.

Why not shorter than 14 days? The problem with a shorter period is that it's not long enough to see substantial changes. Frankly, even 14 days is a little too short ... but it's almost always enough for people to see some difference, and that encourages them to stick with it—which is what we recommend to most people when they finish the 14 days.

Second, 14Four has a two-week on-ramp that allows people to gradually transition into the program. In a typical Paleo diet challenge, you might go from eating a standard American diet one day to a strict Paleo diet the next day. That's a pretty abrupt transition, and again, for many people it's intimidating.

In 14Four, we've added a two-week transition period where we ask people to make some initial changes prior to starting the strict Paleo 14-day challenge. This allows them to ease into it and start experiencing some benefits right away, before they even start the strict Paleo challenge. We ask them to cut out refined flour, sugar, and industrial seed oils, and to gradually cut back on coffee and alcohol until they are off of it completely.

We've found that this approach is very successful and is a better fit for how most people actually make these kinds of changes in their lives.

Third, 14Four is not just a diet change program—it's a lifestyle change program. The "Four" in 14Four refers to four key areas that we ask people to make changes in: diet, physical activity, stress management, and sleep.

Over the years in my work with patients, I found that many came to me that were already on a pretty good diet, but they were still quite sick. In those cases, it was often one of these three other factors that was missing—they weren't getting enough sleep, or they were sitting all day and hardly moving at all, or they were just a basket case of stress.

I also found that even for someone that was transitioning from a crappy diet to a Paleo-type of diet, their chances of success were much higher if they were also moving their body, sleeping, and managing their stress.

For example, studies have shown that just a single night of partial sleep deprivation leads to reduced willpower and poor judgment around food the next day. It also causes insulin resistance,

which can increase sugar cravings. This means that if someone isn't sleeping well, they're going to have a lot harder time sticking with a new healthy diet program.

Likewise, if someone is incredibly stressed out, they're a lot more likely to reach for comfort foods that help insulate them from those difficult feelings.

So that's why the 14Four addresses all of these areas, instead of just focusing on diet.

Okay, that's it for now. In the next section, we'll talk about what to do if your patients won't switch to a Paleo diet. See you soon.