

The Importance of Personalization

Before we talk in detail about how to personalize an ancestral, nutrient-dense diet for different circumstances and needs, I want to talk a little bit about why that's so important in the first place.

Earlier in this unit I advocated for the idea of a "Paleo template"—a flexible approach that is specifically tailored to each person's needs. But even with that Paleo template, there's a lot of room for customization and individual differences.

For example, consider a 50-year-old male that is obese, mostly sedentary, and has type 2 diabetes. For this patient, I might recommend a lower-carb version of a Paleo diet, at least initially, with a high protein intake, with no snacking in between meals.

However, for a 25-year-old female athlete with amenorrhea and HPA axis dysregulation and low blood sugar, I would suggest a higher carb Paleo diet, with plenty of calories and not going more than three hours with eating.

The purpose of this section is to help you understand the various factors—such as macronutrient ratios and meal frequency and timing—to consider when customizing a diet for your patients or clients, and how to tailor each of them for particular circumstances and needs.

It's important to note that even small changes here can make a big difference. I can't tell you how many patients, particularly women, have come to me complaining of insomnia, hair loss, fatigue, and hormone imbalances. As I went through the new patient intake process with them, I discovered that they were on a very-low-carb diet.

But here's the thing—in most cases, they weren't doing that intentionally. It just happened when they switched to Paleo, because they weren't eating enough starchy plants or fruit. If you eat Paleo without those foods, you will by definition be on a very-low-carb diet.

With many of these patients, just having them increase their carbohydrate intake to 20 to 25 percent of calories made a HUGE difference: their sleep, energy levels, skin, hair, and hormones improved, and they felt so much better overall.

That doesn't mean we didn't still have work to do, but I use this as an example of how even small customizations can have a profound effect. This is why this next section is so important.

Okay, that's it for now. I'll see you soon.