

# Nutrition: Paleo Reset Diet

Hey, everyone.

Welcome to the Paleo Reset Diet Presentation, part of the ADAPT Framework Foundations for Success. In this video I'm going to talk about the paleo reset diet as a clinical tool for preventing and reversing disease.

Let's start with an analogy. When your computer starts running slowly, applications are crashing left and right, or you can't even move the cursor, what do you do? You press the reset button or you restart. Sometimes we need to do the same thing with our bodies, and the paleo reset diet is the best way that I've found to do that.

With the paleo reset diet, you eliminate the modern foods that contribute to disease as well as the foods that people are most often intolerant of or sensitive to, and you focus on the safe, nourishing foods that our ancestors thrived on for millennia. Then after you've reset the system, you can reintroduce gray-area foods that are healthy when they're well tolerated, like dairy products or legumes—which I'll be talking more about in the future—for a more flexible and sustainable long-term approach. Now, if you're thinking this sounds like an elimination diet, you're right. That's exactly what it is. That's, in fact, how I think of strict paleo—as the best elimination diet that you can prescribe to your patients.

The reset diet is designed to reduce inflammation, improve digestion, burn fat, identify food intolerances, reduce allergic reactions or intolerance reactions, boost energy, regulate blood sugar, and stabilize mood. It almost sounds too good to be true, right? I might think so myself if I hadn't experienced the benefits personally and guided hundreds of patients and thousands of blog readers through it, and I can tell you this: There's no other therapy, natural or otherwise, that can come even remotely close to accomplishing these goals in such a short period of time.

There are three categories of foods on the reset diet. First is "Eat Liberally." This means enjoy as much as you like of the foods in this category. No counting calories or calculating ratios of proteins, fats, or carbs. This is not a cleanse or a fast. Two is "Eat in Moderation," so you can eat some of these foods, but don't go crazy. In general, you want to limit consumption of these foods compared to foods in the "Eat Liberally" category. The third category is "Avoid Completely," and this means 100 percent avoidance for best results. You can see the Paleo Reset Diet Guidelines Handout that we have included as part of this unit for a written summary, and then you'll be able to give that handout to your patients as well. There's also a summary of this in my book.

**Eat Liberally**



**Meat and poultry**

Beef, lamb, mutton, pork, chicken, turkey, duck, goat, wild game



**Organ meats**

Liver, heart, kidneys, spleen, tongue, brains



**Bone broth**

Slow-cooked broths made from beef, lamb, poultry or fish bones



**Fish**

Especially fatty fish like salmon, sardines, mackerel, anchovies, herring



**Eggs**

Preferably free-range & organic; eat the yolks!



**Starchy plants**

Yams, sweet potatoes, plantains, taro, yuca (cassava), tapioca, lotus root

OK, so this is the “Eat Liberally” category. We have meat and poultry, organ meats, bone broth. Oh, before we go on, it’s always preferable to have organic and free-range meat and poultry and organ meats, but it’s especially true during the reset phase, when we’re trying to hit this reset button. Having said that, if your patients can’t afford organic and free-range meat exclusively, don’t let that stop them from doing this because they’re still going to benefit. Cold-water fatty fish, I recommend three six-ounce servings a week. If you’re worried about mercury and other toxins, we’re going to talk about that later. Eggs. I hope you’ve gotten the memo by now that there’s really no reason to worry about egg yolks and dietary cholesterol. Even the backward conservative American diet guidelines have now lifted any restriction on dietary cholesterol because there’s simply no evidence that links it to heart disease or any other problem.

Then starchy plants, like yams and sweet potatoes, but also plantains, taro, yuca, tapioca, lotus root. There are really a lot of options here, and a lot of people, when they first start paleo, get really stuck on sweet potatoes as the only option and they get tired of them, but if you live in a cosmopolitan area or any kind of area with ethnic markets, like Asian markets or Latin markets, you’ll be able to find plantains, taro, and yuca, sometimes even at your local grocery store, and they really help broaden the variety quite a bit.

Eat Liberally



**Nonstarchy veggies**

Wide variety,  
cooked and raw.



**Fermented veggies**

Sauerkraut, kimchi,  
curtido, beet kvass,  
coconut kefir, etc.



**Traditional fats**

Coconut oil, ghee, red palm  
oil, macadamia oil, lard,  
tallow, duck fat, olive oil



**Olives, avocados,  
coconuts**

Including  
coconut milk



**Sea salt & spices**

Avoid sugar and  
artificial flavorings

Non-starchy veggies, a really wide variety of these. All of them can be eaten either cooked or raw. We have fermented veggies, like sauerkraut, kimchi, curtido, beet kvass, and coconut kefir. Traditional fats, like coconut oil, ghee, red palm oil, macadamia oil, lard, tallow, duck fat, and olive oil. We have olives, avocados, and coconuts, including coconut milk, and then sea salt and spices. Sea salt has some advantages over table salt, more trace minerals. And then you'd, of course, want to avoid sugar and artificial flavorings.

Choose with **Moderation**



**Processed meat**

Sausage, salami, bacon, pepperoni and jerky



**Whole fruit**

Up to 4 servings a day, depending on blood sugar balance



**Nuts and Seeds**

Almonds, Brazil nuts, cashews, hazelnuts, macadamias, pecans, pistachios, walnuts and pine nuts



**Green beans and Sugar/Snap peas**

Though technically legumes, usually well tolerated



**Coffee and Black Tea**

All teas and coffee permitted; drink black or with coconut or almond milk



**Vinegar**

Apple cider, balsamic, red wine and other varieties



**Restaurant food**

Limit to no more than twice a week if possible

OK, now in the “Eat in Moderation” category, we have processed meat. You want to make sure that that’s gluten, sugar, and soy free. Organic and free-range is preferable, of course, but I would suggest limiting it to two to four servings a week. There are several reasons for this. We’ll talk about it in more detail later. Choose a wide variety of colors of whole fruit. You can have three to four servings a day, depending on your blood sugar balance. If you have blood sugar issues, you should probably favor a low-sugar fruit, like berries, grapefruit, and peaches, and limit dried fruits.

Then we have nuts and seeds. It’s really easy to overeat nuts and seeds, especially on the reset diet, so watch out for that. They can also be hard on digestion, especially when they’re eaten raw. A little tip is if you have patients with impaired digestion, have them soak the nuts for 12 to 18 hours and then roast them at a low temperature, like 150 or 170 degrees, or dehydrate them before eating them, and that will make them a lot easier for them to digest.

Then we have green beans and sugar/snap peas. These are not really a problem for most people even though they’re technically legumes. Then coffee and black tea. These are permitted in moderation, but if you’re experiencing significant fatigue, insomnia, anxiety, mood swings, or depression, I think it’s best to eliminate caffeine entirely, and it’s good to titrate off of it for two to three weeks leading up to the reset. Vinegar can be used in small amounts daily as part of dressing or sauces. And restaurant food, you want to limit that because it contains industrial seed oils and hidden ingredients. It can be easy to overeat at restaurants because they do their best to make food taste as good as possible, and that stimulates reward centers in our brain. Portion sizes are often out of our control, and so eating at restaurants can be disadvantageous for a number of reasons.

**Avoid Completely**



**Dairy**

Butter, cheese, yogurt, milk, cream; ghee is permitted



**Grains**

Wheat, rice, cereal, oats, pseudograins, nongluten grains



**Legumes**

Beans, peas, lentils, peanuts



**Sweeteners**

Sugar, HFCS, dextrose, coconut sugar, molasses, maple syrup, honey, etc.



**Chocolate**

All forms

The “Avoid Completely” category includes dairy products. I do believe that full-fat and fermented dairy is healthy when it’s well tolerated by the individual, so that’s something that could be reintroduced later on. Grains, like wheat, rice, oats, pseudograins, etc., these are best avoided during the reset and probably best avoided for the most part, with some exceptions, forever. We’ll come back to that as well. Legumes, like beans, peas, lentils, peanuts. Legumes are an area where I disagree with a lot of other paleo advocates. I think legumes can be a healthy addition to the diet in moderation if they’re well tolerated, as long as they don’t replace other more nutrient-dense foods, and we’ll be talking more about that as well.

We have sweeteners, concentrated sweeteners. You should definitely remove those during the reset. This includes sugar, high-fructose corn syrup, but also the natural sweeteners, like coconut sugar, maple syrup, and honey. Those are fine to have in moderation later, but during the reset, they’re best avoided. Then we have chocolate. Dark chocolate is extremely nutrient dense. I’m a big fan. It has tons of health benefits, but some people are intolerant of the proteins, and I think it’s best to avoid it during the reset for that reason.

**Avoid Completely**



**Processed sauces  
& seasonings**

Soy sauce, tamari and other processed sauces and seasonings



**Processed or  
refined foods**

General rule: if it comes in a bag or a box, don't eat it!



**Industrial seed  
and veg. oils**

Soybean, corn, safflower, sunflower, rapeseed, peanut, cottonseed, canola



**Alcohol**

In any form



**Sodas & fruit juice**

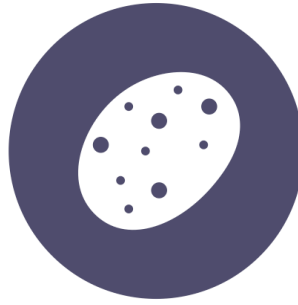
All forms, including natural varieties and diet sodas

Then we have processed sauces and seasonings, like soy sauce and tamari. Processed or refined foods. As a general rule, if it comes in a bag or a box, you shouldn't be eating it during the reset. Of course, there are some exceptions. Industrial seed and vegetable oils, like soybean, corn, safflower, sunflower, etc. These are present in restaurant foods, so you won't be able to avoid them completely if you're eating at restaurants, but you definitely shouldn't be cooking with them at home or adding them to your foods.

Alcohol in any form. There are a number of reasons why I don't think this should be included in the reset diet. It's really good for the body to get a break from it for 30 days. Alcohol, unfortunately, can contribute to intestinal permeability if it's present, so I think it can be really helpful for people to just take a 30-day break when they're doing that reset. Then, of course, sodas and fruit juice, which have very concentrated liquid sweeteners.



**10-15%**  
of calories from  
carbohydrates



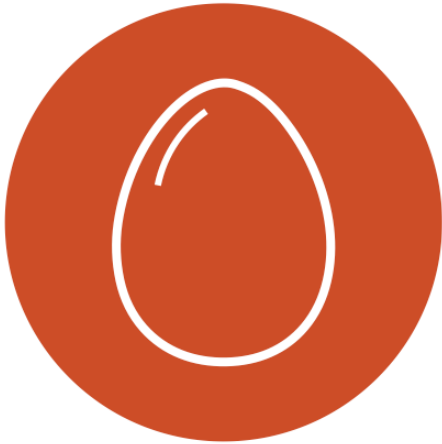
**Limit**  
starchy  
vegetables



**Limit**  
fruit

All right, so that's the basic reset diet, but there are a few variations that you want to be aware of. The first tweak is for patients who are overweight and/or have blood sugar abnormalities. To be honest, the standard paleo reset that I just gave you will often be enough for those patients, and they don't necessarily need further modification. Certainly we have several peer-reviewed studies now showing that the basic paleo diet is extremely effective for weight loss and also effective for type 2 diabetes and metabolic syndrome, so this is, to some extent, a clinical judgment call, depending on where your patient is at and what you think they can handle and how significant their blood sugar issues are. If they have really significant blood sugar issues and they're feeling like they want to be really aggressive, in addition to the reset guidelines that we just talked about, you may also want them to limit starchy vegetables if they know that those aggravate their blood sugar and further limit fruit beyond what we already talked about.

For these kinds of patients, you might advise 10 to 15 percent of calories from carbohydrates. That's pretty low. Limit starchy vegetables and limit fruit. For the average person, a moderately active male, that amounts to about 65 to 100 grams a day of carbohydrates and about 50 to 75 grams per day for a moderately active female.



## **Avoid eggs and nightshades**



## **Use your judgement**

The second situation in which you might want to tweak the reset diet is for someone with an autoimmune disease, and again, this is at your discretion. A lot of people with autoimmunity issues will feel better just moving to a standard paleo reset approach, especially if they've been on a standard American diet. Again, if they want to be more aggressive and they're up for it, you could advise, in addition to the basic reset guidelines, avoiding eggs, both egg whites and egg yolks, and nightshade plants, like tomatoes, sweet and hot peppers, eggplant, paprika, cayenne pepper, pepinos, and pimentos, because these foods can, in some cases, but not all, aggravate patients with autoimmune disease.

It's really important to understand that not everyone with autoimmune disease will need to be on an autoimmune paleo protocol or benefit from it. If your patient does the autoimmune paleo protocol and removes eggs, removes dairy and even some other foods that some people recommend removing, like nuts, and they don't notice any difference, and then they add those foods back in and they don't notice any difference, I don't think it's necessary for them to continue restricting those foods. There's really no peer-reviewed evidence that I'm aware of that suggests that people with autoimmune disease should react more to those foods than people that don't have autoimmune disease. That just mostly comes from anecdotal and clinical experience of a group of practitioners, so if someone isn't noticeably reacting to those foods, I don't think they should necessarily remove those for the rest of their life.

In a similar way, people that are overweight and have blood sugar issues, as I mentioned, will often lose weight and experience improvements without limiting starchy veggies or whole fruit, and if you look at the peer-reviewed scientific literature, the studies on the paleo diet did not restrict carbohydrate intake and permitted starchy vegetable consumption. In fact, the average intake of carbohydrates in those studies was close to 30 percent of calories, and yet these people still lost weight and had improvement across the board in their metabolic markers. So if you think it's going



to be a big stretch for your patient to just do the normal paleo reset diet and asking them to do the autoimmune protocol or the additional restrictions on carbohydrates and fruit is going to be overwhelming and too much, then just start with the basic paleo approach, and if they're successful, they'll feel more confident in their ability to add some further restrictions later on.

This slide actually still pertains to the autoimmune disease, avoiding eggs and nightshades. Like I said, use your judgment in terms of whether to do this at all.

Now let's cover some answers to frequently asked questions. The first is, "When will I see results?" You'll get that a lot from your patients. The answer is, "It depends," but in general, the first few days can often be pretty hard, as people are kind of going through withdrawal from sugar, coffee, alcohol, etc. Most patients and people I know who have gone through this—including myself way back in the day—say the first four to seven days are the hardest. After that, people generally start having more energy, cravings abate, their skin starts to clear up, their sleep improves, and their digestion smooths out.

The second question you'll get a lot is, "Hey, I thought fat's bad, but a lot of the foods on this diet have a lot of fat in them!" Now, in this case, you can, of course, refer to recent research indicating that fat is not the boogeyman we thought it was. My book covers this in detail, so you can recommend that, and there are many other resources now out there, including articles in major news outlets, like *The New York Times*, *The Wall Street Journal*, etc. In general, I'd counsel you to avoid too much of this kind of discussion, not get into philosophical debates, and just invite them to try it and see how they feel. They're only committing to 14 days if they do the 14Four or 30 days if they do the full 30-day reset, and you can tell them they can always go back to a low-fat diet or what they were doing before if they don't feel any better. But I've found that, in general, it's not productive to get into debates. If you need to do a little of that to convince them to get on board and try, that's one thing, but I would just focus on the practical application, and ask them what they have to lose. They're coming to see you for your help, and you've been able to help a lot of people with this approach, so just challenge them to give it a try and see how they feel.

Another question I get a lot is whether they should count calories or macronutrient ratios. I don't recommend this. You can explain to your patients that we're focusing on the quality of nutrients more than the quantity and that this is much more important for the vast majority of people. Later when we tweak it further, we may focus more on quantity and mess around with carbohydrate ratios, but initially it's best not to think about counting calories and it's best not to think about macronutrient ratios.

Another typical question is about how to modify this approach for athletes and really active people. If they're seeking to maintain weight or gain muscle, I think they should aim for a much higher percentage of calories from carbs than people who are not that active, anywhere from 25 or 30 all the way up to 60 percent of calories from carbohydrates for people who are super, super active and training hard and want to maintain weight or gain muscle. If they're trying to lose fat, on the other hand, I would maybe aim for more like 10 to 15 percent of calories from carbohydrates if they're trying to maximize that, especially over a short period of time.

For protein, most athletes should aim for about 0.8 to 1 gram of protein per pound of bodyweight per day to lose fat or to maintain weight, or 1 to 1.25 grams per pound if they're trying to gain muscle. That's a lot of protein, if you do the math, but it's been shown to be safe unless they have pre-existing kidney disease, in which case you should be careful and probably recommend a lower amount of protein, but if someone doesn't have pre-existing kidney disease, those levels of protein have been shown to be safe.

Finally, a lot of patients will ask if they should continue their supplements during the reset. This one's a little harder to answer because it depends on why they're taking them, who prescribed them, etc. If they're taking them for therapeutic use and they're getting a known benefit from the supplement, they should probably continue, but if the patient doesn't know what the supplement is for, which is often the case—you know, patients will come to you and somebody else prescribed a supplement three years ago and they didn't even really understand why at the time and they just kept taking it, or maybe they saw something on the internet and they started taking a supplement—if you have a patient on a bunch of supplements like that, I would actually invite them to stop taking them during the reset.

All right, before we finish up, I want to mention some resources that your patients can turn to for support. I think the best option for most people at this point is [14Four, which is my diet and lifestyle change program](#). We're going to discuss this in a lot of detail later. It has several handouts designed to make the transition to this diet easier, including cheat sheets on fats and oils, pantry cleanout, protein, carbs, fats, paleo superfoods, fermented foods, tips on eating out, tips on eating paleo on a budget, etc. It has video demos of me doing exercise techniques and routines that can be done at home or in an office or in a hotel room. It's really a great program. It has video and audio stress management programs and sleep tips, so it covers all the bases for doing a comprehensive reset.

There are other options, like doing a full 30-day reset. We're going to talk about more of these options in the full course and when to use each different one, but for now, you can recommend 14Four to your patients, and with some of the cheat sheets and handouts we're going to give you, you'll be able to guide them through it yourself.

All right, well, that's it for this presentation. I'll see you the next time.