

The Paleolithic Diet Reduces Western-Civilization Chronic Disease Symptoms

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The Paleolithic diet refers to a hunter-gatherer style of eating, used by humans prior to the industrial revolution. This diet is high in protein, low in carbohydrates, and excludes dairy and added salt. A MedLine and PubMed search was conducted using the term "paleo* diet". Inclusion criteria included peer-reviewed studies published within the last ten years. The objective of this systematic review was to summarize research found on the effects of the Paleolithic diet on lowering chronic disease symptoms in a variety of adult subjects. Two randomized control trials (RCT), and two non-randomized trials (NRT) were evaluated. Three studies found a decrease in blood pressure with the Paleolithic diet. Four studies showed decreased energy intake, along with decreases in weight, BMI, and subcutaneous fat. Two studies reported an increase in insulin sensitivity. Favorable effects of the Paleolithic diet included increased intake of antioxidants, unsaturated fatty acids and numerous vitamins, and lowered dietary glycemic index and sodium intake. An implication of the Paleolithic diet is the lack of dairy products, which causes decreased calcium intake. In conclusion, the Paleolithic diet shows positive effects on lowering risks associated with chronic disease. A limitation of three studies was lack of a control group and small sample size. Further research is necessary to discover how Paleolithic diets reduce the incidence of chronic disease.