



Initial Nutrition Guidelines recommended by Absolution CrossFit: As written by @evolution Health Coach and Mom Gone Paleo, Laura Rupsis.

To begin a few disclosures:

- CrossFit National recommends both the Zone Diet and the Paleo Diet. We recommend the books listed at the end of this guide to help educate you on the details of both programs.
- ACF Recommends using the Paleo Diet as your “Quality Template” The Paleo Diet is not a one size fits all way of eating. We recommend you understand the basics and then adjust to what fits best on your body.
- The Zone Diet provides very specific guidelines for the macro nutrient ratio to your diet. We have found it works well for some but not for all. It depends on your unique metabolic rate and your goals.
- Laura Rupsis is (R)evolution Health Coach and Mom Gone Paleo. She is not a doctor, nor does she hold a 4-year degree in nutrition or dietetics. She is a Licensed Health and Nutrition Coach, certified through the ***Institute for Integrative Nutrition***. She is also a ***Certified Primal Blueprint Expert*** and a soon to be certified ***21 Day Sugar Detox Coach***.
- If your goal involves losing weight, gaining weight, fat loss, muscle gain etc., anything that is dependent on you controlling your hormones (your hormones are what tell your body whether to store fat or burn fat, to fuel your muscles or not to fuel your muscles.) **If you do not eat according to your goals you will never fully reach your goals.** Diet is 70% of the equation. Why workout so hard and only get 30% of the way there? Lets get this right and get you there!



10 Nutrition Commandments for all humans:

1. Eat real food! Eat animal foods (meat, poultry, fish, shellfish, eggs), veggies, some fruit, nuts and seeds.
1. Sugar is poisonous. Eliminate or at least drastically reduce sugar intake. It's addictive and the #1 cause of weight gain and ALL heart and metabolic diseases. Hidden sources are not all obvious. Ask Laura if you need help.
2. Artificial sweeteners and chemical additives are not food and should not be eaten. Avoid whenever possible.
3. Natural fats are good for you. Eat enough fat!!! Fat will fuel your brain and your workouts. Fat will help you lose weight! I know, counterintuitive, but it's true. **Caveat:** REPLACE sugar and processed carbs with fat and excess body fat will melt off. ADD extra fat to sugar and processed carbs=disaster!
4. Drink plenty of water. If you replace those sweet drinks (even the diet ones) with water, those sugar cravings begin to wane, your brain functions better and you have better workouts.
5. The only carbohydrates that are truly healthful (without meaningful negatives) are vegetables. Fruit, with the exception of berries, contain too much sugar to eat more than occasionally. Grains are completely unnecessary and can be inflammatory. White potatoes are just a waste of digestive space.
6. Food first! It all starts with food. Supplements can certainly be helpful but you can't supplement your way out of a bad diet. You can't exercise your way out of a bad diet either. (See Supplement recommendations)
7. Yes, organic matters. Yes, it can cost more so prioritize! For example produce like tomatoes, celery or lettuce is more important to buy organic

when you can to avoid consuming chemical fertilizers and pesticides found on the skin or the surface that we typically eat. Conversely, an avocado or banana would be less important because you don't eat the peel. Organic, grass-fed and pasture raised animals are preferred as well. If buying conventionally raised meats, stick with the leaner cuts. Here's why. In a healthy animal most of the beneficial vitamins and minerals are found in the organ meats and fats so fattier cuts are good choice. An animal raised on a feedlot and given antibiotics, hormones and improper feed will store all of those undesirable substances in their fat tissue, so choose leaner cuts. Just try to choose the best quality you can afford.

8. ***Eat when you are hungry. Drink when you are thirsty.*** Stick to balanced meals of adequate protein (for most people: .7-1.0 grams per lb. of bodyweight depending on your activity level) plenty of healthy fats and a low sugar, non-starchy veggie or fruit. You won't feel famished 2 hours later. You won't suffer from high blood sugar spikes or low blood sugar episodes. You will not need to eat 4-6 times a day! And if you're thirsty, drink water. Simple!
9. Dairy is totally optional. Some people tolerate it well; many do not. (See Laura if you don't know.) If you choose to eat dairy stick to FULL fat, organic. If you can find it, raw dairy products are even better. Raw dairy still has the natural enzymes your body needs to digest dairy properly. The pasteurization process kills these off. Stay away from added sugars and additives. Low fat dairy gives you all the lactose (a sugar) and casein (a protein) which are 2 inflammatory substances for many people. The vitamins A, D and K that dairy provides are all fat-soluble. Without the fat we don't absorb the vitamins
10. Keep it simple. Find the foods you love within the parameters above and you will see results! Shoot for 100% compliance but be happy at 80%. No one is perfect; relax!

ABSOLUTE #1 RULE AT ACF: We expect progress, not perfection.

~Don't get discouraged. Ask questions. Read a lot.

~You don't know what will work best for you until you give it a try.

~Give a change AT LEAST 30 days to work before you decide it doesn't. Your body needs time adjust to years of eating certain foods and living a certain way. Be patient and kind to your body.

~ The better care you take of your body the better care it will take of you!



The Paleo Diet in a Nutshell

This way of eating gets its name from the Paleolithic period. The theory is that it was during this time period that our earliest human ancestors thrived and survived to populate the globe. We grew bigger and stronger in stature and our brains grew bigger and stronger. This period dates back as long as 2 million years ago. The basics of this diet are to replicate, as best we can in this modern world, what is most similar to how we ate then. Why?

Because it wasn't until about 10,000 years ago with the advent of agriculture, predominantly grain-based and carbohydrate dominant diets, that we began to see our species suffer from modern ailments raging from, allergies, tooth decay, mental disease, obesity, heart disease, high blood pressure, type 2 diabetes, and many more.

That is about all I will say for now. There are many, many books available that do a fantastic job of explaining the details. For now here are 6 basic principles to consider: (From <http://momgonepaleo.com>)

Principle #1: What to Eat and Drink:

- Animal foods like all meats, poultry, sea animals, and eggs. When you can, eat all parts of the animal including its fat, organ meats if you like them, and broth from the bones for soups. (Buy foods described as grass-fed, pastured or pasture raised, free range, organic whenever possible.)
- Vegetables of all kinds but mostly non-starchy. Starchy veggies are great if you are very active or an athlete and you need to restore the glycogen in your muscles after a rigorous work out. Try to avoid white potatoes but sweet potatoes or yams are great

and other root veggies like rutabagas and turnips. Green leafy veggies should play a big part as well as other brightly colored veggies.

- Sea vegetables like Nori, Arame, Dulse, Wakame and Sea Palm. Typically found in health food stores as well as Asian grocers.
- Some fruit. Fruit is tricky for me because what kind of fruit and how much depends on your activity level and your goal. Rule of thumb if you are not very active and weight loss is a goal then stick to low glycemic fruits like berries and limit the portion. Fruit and starch can spike insulin levels that can make maintaining or losing weight difficult. If weight is not an issue for you then you don't need to be as concerned about it.
- Some nuts and seeds including nut or seed butters. Stay away from peanuts, they are a legume and contain mold. Stick with macadamia nuts, almonds, walnuts, and hazelnuts as your first options. Be careful about how much you eat if weight loss is a goal or you tend to get bloated. You can try soaking your nuts in water overnight to reduce the amount of bloating if that is a concern as well as to remove mold that maybe on them as a result of storing them. Again, eat nuts and seeds in moderation.
- Good quality fats. Animal fats like grass-fed butter or Ghee, Lard, and Tallow make great fats to cook with. Oils tend to break down at high heats and can cause free radicals. Olive oil, coconut oil, palm oil, avocado oil, walnut oil, macadamia nut oil, sesame oil are oils I consider to be relatively safe. Avoid all other oils.
- Fermented foods are fantastic for you. You can buy them or make them yourself. Some of my favorites are fermented veggies of all kinds and Kombucha (a fermented tea). I cannot tolerate dairy but I have learned to make coconut milk yogurt and that is delicious. The recipe is on the blog. (<http://momgonepaleo.com>)
- I love coconut and avocados. They are great sources of fat and fiber. They are extremely versatile. Coconut can be used in so many ways it's mind-boggling.
- Stick with naturally sugar-free beverages whenever possible. This includes water (what I drink the most of), tea and coffee (caffeinated or caffeine free depending on your sensitivity). Non-dairy milks like almond milk or coconut milk make a great creamer for coffee. Coconut water makes a great electrolyte beverage, and kombucha is a delicious probiotic drink. Club soda can be ok on occasion. Natural veggie juices are good, but fruit juices have a TON of fructose! Proceed with caution when it comes to juice, if you can juice it yourself, even better. I would prefer you use fruit juice as an enhancer to tea or club soda rather than chugging down a big glass of

OJ. I'd also rather you eat the whole fruit with all the fiber that comes with it than just the juice.

- Homemade smoothies with Paleo friendly ingredients and a Paleo friendly protein powder can be a great quick meal or snack. Mark Sisson offers a great **whey protein powder** that I trust.

What is OK in moderation:

- Natural unprocessed sugars like raw honey, pure maple syrup, coconut nectar/crystals, and stevia. Some natural sugar alcohols can be OK from time to time like Xylitol but many of them can cause gastrointestinal upset.
- Caffeine, depending on your sensitivity. Some of us just can't tolerate it others have no problem.
- Wine and clear alcohols that are not grains based like vodka and tequila. Remember fermented foods are good but alcohol is tough from a sugar standpoint and other obvious health concerns. If I chose to have a cocktail I opt for a glass of wine or either vodka or tequila with club soda and some lime. Alcohol is the "first to burn" which means if you are trying to lose weight you will burn alcohol first, not fat.
- Dark Chocolate. Shoot for chocolate that is 70% cacao or higher. If you can find it without soy and with 10 grams of sugar per serving or less that is even better.

What is controversial:

- Dairy. Most true Paleo eaters do not eat any dairy. Others will consume only raw, pastured and full fat dairy products. If you are going to eat dairy this is the kind you should eat. I do not recommend dairy as a major part of your diet and would prefer you eliminate it especially in the first 30 days. Otherwise, if you insist that you just cannot live without dairy, stick to full fat, raw, and grass-fed or at the very least, full fat and organic.
- Quinoa, Buckwheat, Amaranth, Rice and other gluten-free "safe grains" I honestly just don't eat them but some say they can eat them and feel fine. Personally, I would rather get my carbs from nutrient rich veggies. Again I recommend you omit them for at least the first 30 days.

What to avoid at all costs:

- Grains especially gluten containing grains. These include wheat, millet, barley and rye. This means no breads, cereal, pasta, baked goods, pizza, etc. made with these ingredients.
- Soy, especially soy by products. Some fermented soy foods can be ok like miso and tempeh but really avoid the processed by products. No Soy Milk.
- Vegetable and seed oils **except olive oil**. These include corn oil, soybean oil, sunflower and safflower oil, canola oil, etc.
- Legumes or beans including peanuts and chickpeas.
- Dairy. I know I also have this on the controversial list but for many people dairy is just a no-no. It is not a Paleo food and both lactose and casein can really be problematic.
- Soda except for club soda on occasion. Sugary sports drinks and sugary beverages in general.
- PROCESSED FOODS!!! If it comes packaged and you have to read the ingredients, then you really shouldn't be eating it. This includes sauces, dressings, processed protein powders, sports drinks, anything that comes in a box, carton, can, or pre-sealed bag or wrapper. As a matter of fact, most of what you have in your pantry right now may just need to be tossed but just be smart. I have boxed and canned things in my pantry, like canned full fat coconut milk, beef jerky from Steve's Paleo Goods and grainless granola bars, bags of nuts, seeds and dried fruit, coconut water, kale chips, and others but I try to make 80% of what I eat come without packaging. This is why I try to make so much myself, so I know exactly what went into it. Even what seems harmless like almond milk is SOOO easy to make yourself and preservative free. ~If you find a packaged food with safe healthy ingredients and can honestly say to yourself, "I could make that in my own kitchen if I had the time." Then it is probably OK.

Principle #2: How to exercise.

- Keep it fun and something you will look forward to doing again. Play a sport, dance, hike, walk, ride a bike.
- Lift, push and pull heavy things at least few times a week in shorter bursts of intense exertion. This is where CrossFit is great!
- Sprint from time to time. Run like your life depends on it, because back during the caveman era, that is exactly what we did. We ran in play and for survival.
- DO NOT UNDER FORCE YOURSELF INTO A WORK OUT YOU HATE BECAUSE YOU FEEL GUILTY! Work out for the love and respect you have for your body.

Principle #3: Get enough rest.

- The average adult needs 7-8 hours a night. I know you think you only need 5-6 but believe me, your body is not running at its optimum level with that little sleep on a regular basis.
- Take time to chill the heck out! When life is running too fast and you are having trouble sleeping, force your self to sit or lie in peace. Breathe deeply and slowly, maybe close your eyes and/or meditate. Be respectful to your adrenal glands. They are what help you cope and when you abuse them they shut down and you will be unable to cope with what you feel are just every day events and stressors. Some anxiety disorders are really adrenal fatigue. Seek a natural health practitioner if you think you may be suffering from adrenal fatigue. See my post on Adrenal Fatigue. (<http://momgonepaleo.com>)

Principle #4: Don't be afraid of the sun.

- Get that vitamin D
- I don't know about you but I am a much happier mom when it is sunny out and I can get out to enjoy it.

Principle #5: Become your own expert in YOU

- I can sit here all day and tell you what to eat and not to eat. How to move and to rest etc., but at the end of the day you need to LISTEN to YOUR body and do as it says.
- Structure your macro nutrient ratios to what feels right on you. I eat a low carb, higher fat and protein version of the Paleo diet. It is actually more of a Primal diet. Others do better on a higher carb version because they run marathons or are endurance athletes.
- No, you do not need to eat small meals every 3-4 hours or even 3 square meals a day if you are not hungry and you have plenty of energy. If nature intended for us to eat very structured like that we never would have made it past the ice age. Food was often scarce and we ate when it was available. My best advice is to eat if you are hungry and eat until you are not hungry any more. You do not need a minimum or maximum number of calories or protein or fat grams etc., unless you are an elite athlete with lofty performance goals. If you eat when hungry, stop when you're not, and stick with the foods mentioned above you will be pleased with your results. Let your body tell you when you are hungry and when it has had enough, if it needs more fat or more protein. Listen, Learn and Repeat.

- Decide if exercise is best for you in the morning, afternoon or evening. You decide how much cardio and strength training feels good on your body based on your goals.
- Use supplements that are appropriate for you. Most of us can benefit from a quality multi vitamin, an omega 3 supplement and a probiotic for sure. For anything else, seek advice from a natural health practitioner.

Principle #6: Give it at least 30 days.

- It really can take a full 30 days to clear up inflammation, determine if you have food sensitivities, and build good habits.
- It can also take a full 30 days for you to become an expert in you, maybe longer.
- You and your best, healthiest, happiest body deserves at least 30 days.



The Zone Diet in a Nutshell

The Zone Diet centers on a “40:30:30” ratio of calories obtained daily from carbohydrates, proteins, and fats. Using a ‘block’ system, the idea behind the Zone Diet is to balance your body’s hormones and achieve an optimum level of insulin and glucagon to support a healthy inflammatory response. Once ideal inflammation levels are obtained, your body will be able to perform and recover faster and more efficiently.

A ‘block’ is a unit of measurement that equals 7 grams of protein, 9 grams of carbohydrates and 1.5 grams of fat. Some meals might have 2 blocks of each in them, while others could have 4 or 5. For example, a 1-block snack could be a hard-boiled egg (1 mini-block protein), 2 cups of broccoli (1 mini-block carb) and 3 almonds (1 mini-block fat).

While this is a good framework to begin with, there are also two very important aspects of nutrition one must consider: food type and timing. The Zone Diet encourages people to get their carbohydrates, proteins and fats from organic and natural sources, but it is still possible to maintain poor nutrition habits while following the diet. For example, some meals from fast food restaurants could be considered Zone Diet approved. Here is a closer look at where you should try to get your carbohydrates, proteins and fats from while on the Zone Diet.

Carbohydrate Choices

Carbohydrate selections are best reserved for non-processed or natural options. Vegetables are usually the best form of carbohydrates because of the

density of vitamins and minerals that will aid in energy production and tissue rebuilding.

- Dark green leafy, cruciferous (broccoli, cabbage, cauliflower and Brussels sprouts) and brightly colored vegetables are the best choices and preferably, they should make up the majority of the carbohydrate blocks during most meals.
- Other nutrient-dense carbohydrate choices include fruits (although try to avoid fruits that are high in sugar), whole gluten free grains such as oats, rice, buckwheat and quinoa, and starches such as sweet potatoes, beets and squash.
- You should try to avoid foods like pasta, processed rice dishes, bread, baked goods and white potatoes.

Protein Choices

The best protein sources include

- Wild caught fish such as salmon, tuna, cod and halibut are the best examples of high quality protein.
- Shellfish such as scallops, crab, lobsters and clams provide a high nutrient value as well.
- Cage-free poultry and their eggs.
- Grass-fed and free-range beef and are also highly recommended. Tip: Other less conventional meats like lamb, bison, elk and venison are not typically raised in conventional feedlots and thus unlikely to be laced with hormones, antibiotics or fed foods outside their natural diets.
- Various nuts, seeds can also provide a solid protein punch, although you may end skewing your carb and fat blocks a bit.

Fat Choices

An abundance of fat is present in the protein blocks of food and some fruits like avocados and olives. Use true whole food fats such as:

- Olives, olive oil,
- Grass fed butter and ghee
- Coconut oil or MCT oil
- Nuts and seeds.

- Olive oil, macadamia nut, walnut oil, and sesame seed oil are healthy oil alternatives to industrial seed oils like soybean and canola, which should be avoided.
- Almonds, walnuts, cashews, macadamia nuts, brazil nuts, hazel nuts and pistachios are all great nut choices. Chia, hemp, pumpkin, sunflower and sesame seeds are also excellent fat choices that will provide energy and nutrients to the body.
- Avoid ALL hydrogenated fats like margarines and shortening. (Palm shortening is one exception this is not hydrogenated; it is a natural saturated fat.)

Food Timing For The Zone Diet

The time at which you eat each meal is also very important. Of course, each individual is different so there is no 'correct' time to eat. It really comes down to what's good for your body. However, for optimal recovery from training, it can be argued that you should try to eat a larger meal soon after a workout to give your body the right nutrients to recover. The highest quality proteins should also be consumed during this meal to maximize the tissue rebuilding process. It is also important to eat a meal not long after you wake-up in the morning to kick-start your metabolism process.

One popular approach in the CrossFit community is to use the Zone Diet block approach to guide the ratio of carb:protein:fat and use the Paleo Diet principles to guide the type and quality of those carb, protein and fat sources. This seems to work well for many, but again, not for all. I think this can be a great place to start and make adjustments from there if you need to.



Recommended Nutritional Books:

The Zone Diet: By Dr. Barry Sears.

If or when you read the book, and I recommend you do, there are some opinions Dr. Barry Sears has that I do not share, nor do any of the leaders in the Paleo community. Dr. Sears is a very well respected person in any dietary and medical circle however his bias against fat, saturated fat in particular, is one that has been disproven over and over again. It's not just his bias; it is a bias that still runs rampant in the decades since Ancel Keyes published his "groundbreaking" research linking saturated fat consumption to higher rates of heart disease. Mr. Keyes research has since been discredited (he cherry picked the data) and research study after research study has failed to show any causal link from saturated fat consumption to heart disease. However there has been credible research study after credible research study that does show a causal link between trans-fats and excess sugar and carb consumption to heart disease. I also do not share his caution against red meat. His concern is over the higher concentration of Arachidonic Acid in red meat and it's link to inflammation. While Arachidonic acid is indeed present in the inflammatory process that is a good thing when inflammation is needed in response to an injury or pathogen. It is also involved in the process to ensure that inflammation gets turned off when it is not longer needed.

The Primal Blueprint: By Mark Sisson

I like this book and this program so much I studied and got certified to teach its principals. It is the program I try to live by most closely. It is also not just an informational book it also has a written program that is easy to follow

The Paleo Solution: By Robb Wolf

One of the most comprehensive books written by a real biochemist who makes this stuff easy to understand and is written from a realistic point of view.

Practical Paleo: By Diane Sanfilippo

What I like about this book is that it offers very clear practical advice with a very comprehensive recipe section and meal plan guide.

Supplements

First rule is **Food First!** If your diet sucks, supplements will do very little. I don't want to get into the weeds on this but there are a few supplements that most people can benefit from.

Omega 3 Fish Oil – Lowers inflammation. I don't know anyone who eats 100% clean all the time, gets 8 hours of sleep every night, has NO stress in their life and doesn't watch TV after the sun goes down. We can all use some help reducing systemic inflammation in the body. Quality matters. Molecularly distilled is important to avoid impurities

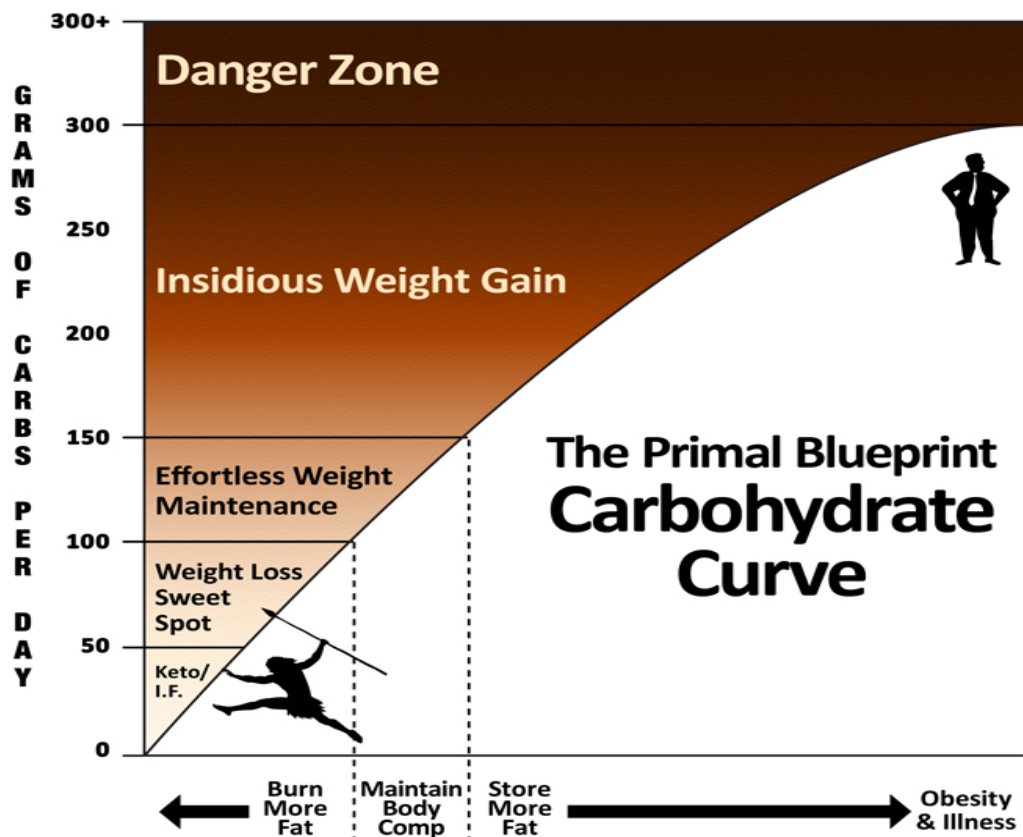
Probiotics - Most of us have had an antibiotic at one point in our lives or ate food that is not friendly to our guts (grains, beans, poorly raised animals foods and chemically treated produce) A probiotic will help restore that beneficial bacteria (gut flora) Not only does it aid in digestion so we can absorb the nutrients from the food we eat, but it is also integral in a strong immune system.

Vitamin D – This is the one vitamin most of us in colder climates are the most likely to be deficient in. Any we can't get it from our food in the amount we really need. Our best source of Vitamin D comes from sun exposure and we all know how much sun exposure we get in the colder months around Chicago!

Every other supplement I believe needs to be addressed on a case-by-case basis depending on your needs.



Lastly, here are my general macronutrient guidelines to consider. Take a look at this graph from the Primal Blueprint, outlining the carbohydrate curve and its implications.



Our brains need about 100-150 grams of carbohydrate to run if it is not running on the ketones produced by fat metabolism. (A discussion for another day) WE DO NOT NEED TO CONSUME all 150 grams, our bodies can actually

make it from the protein we eat. This is a process called gluconeogenesis (Another discussion for another day). You do not need to consume more than 150 grams a day especially on days when you are not exercising.

We all have different carbohydrate tolerances. This just means some people can eat a lot of carbs and never gain weight, others of us just look at a carb and gain 5 pounds. It's an unfortunate genetic truth.

So, my recommendation is that if weight maintenance is your goal, start with 150 grams and see how you feel. Adjust as necessary, but with the right carbs discussed earlier.

If weight loss is your goal you will probably need to eat fewer carbs. I would imagine 100 grams or less, especially if you tend to gain weight around your middle. You can eat a ton of veggies on 100 grams! Some people are very sensitive to carbohydrates and won't lose weight until your carbohydrate consumption is less than 50 grams.

For the vast majority of the average CrossFit population, unless you are an endurance athlete, trying reach a lofty performance goal, or are in a multi WOD competition, you do not need to "carbo load". The majority of the workouts we program do not last for an hour or longer.

I would also recommend you stack any carbs besides non-starchy veggies around your workouts. Either 30 minutes before or within an hour or so afterwards. You do not have to be militant about this timing. It's a guideline. If you workout at 5:00pm and you don't eat dinner until 7:00pm this is not a huge deal.

If you are concerned, a Paleo friendly whey protein powder or recovery drink (ask Laura for some recommended brands) will suffice in a pinch if you can't remember to pack a real food snack. Celery or an apple with almond butter or some nuts, or leftover meat and a sweet potato or veggies from last night's dinner are a few examples.

Remember the average protein requirements of approximately .7-1.0 grams per pound of body weight. Some folks recommend that be based on lean body weight but to get started, keep it simple for now.

Make sure you are getting a good dose of healthy natural fats! Olive oil, olives, coconut oil, coconut meat and coconut butter, egg yolks, grass-fed butter, ghee. Cook with heat stable fats like butter, ghee, coconut oil, lard, tallow or even reserved bacon grease! Your brain and your body need fat!

So, to summarize, starchy carbs or sugar of any kind should be reserved for days when you exercise and preferably around the time you exercise. Keep the rest of your meals consisting of proteins, healthy fats and veggies!

I hope you found this little guide helpful. I know it seems like a lot to digest right now, but believe me we have only scratched the surface and we are always learning more.

Please email me with questions. I apologize if it takes me bit to get back to you. Please be patient with me as I am working, meeting you all at the gym and raising our 4 kids!

Yours in Good Health!

~ Laura Rupsis
MomGonePaleo and (R)evolution Health Coach
Momgonepaleo@gmail.com