

By: Wayne Coolidge Jr.

RELEASE YOUR INNER Cave Woman

Ayala, the superbly conditioned and strong-willed heroine in the book *Clan of The Cave Bear*, lived in a time before agriculture. Each day was a fight for survival in which the members of her clan gathered or hunted food—and sometimes the food hunted them!

One thing is certain: Ayala had no need for counting calories or doing aerobics. And though it appears that people are healthier today compared to our Stone Age ancestors, that is actually an illusion based on the extreme differences in life expectancies of the two populations. The mortality rates would be similar if not for accidents, infectious disease, lack of heroic medical intervention, and

extremely high death rates associated with child birth. The people of Ayala's time never knew the scourge of life-style induced chronic diseases such as heart disease, stroke, and cancer—in other words, it was not their diet that killed them.

Persons living 10,000 years ago had lean, muscular bodies, strong bones, excellent teeth, and a near total absence of chronic disease. Archeologists have determined that agricultural societies are more nutritionally challenged and diseased than pre-agricultural societies, and anthropologists studying present-day hunter/gatherer cultures report the same findings in living populations. The high carbohydrate, low-fat diet myth continues to persist despite volumes of scientifically validated studies that refute its value. Fat is not a villain. Our ancestors consumed twice as much protein and about 3% more fat than present-day humans. However, the type of fat consumed can be a problem.

Omega 3 fatty acids are great for you; omega 6 fatty acids, not so much. The typical cave woman ate 1-3 grams of omega 6 fatty acids for every 1 gram of omega 3s. Your primal sisters seldom, if ever, ate grains—and if they did, they were whole, not ground. In addition, their diet was full of vitamins, minerals, phytonutrients, antioxidants, and fiber. Today, women consume 10 grams of omega 6 fatty acids for every 1 gram of omega 3s. Fully 70% of the foods we

consume today were not available to Ayala, yet she was one strong, healthy lady. All you need to do to restore your physical condition to its optimal state is to mimic the eating and physical activity patterns of your ancient ancestors who lived in the healthiest period in human history. To release your inner cave woman, do the primal thing, starting with your diet.

To live a more primal lifestyle nutritionally, you have to think outside the “aisles.” Think of the outer aisles of the supermarket as your sacred hunting/gathering grounds. Rarely venture into the center aisles where refined grains, high sugar, and unhealthy fatty foods lurk. Wild, grass-fed, and organic meats, fish, eggs, and tree nuts are your best food choices to get healthy fats and protein into your diet; fruits and vegetables should form the basis for carbohydrates. Choose foods without labels when possible. And one final tip: do not bring children on your hunter/gatherer excursions unless you blindfold them or secure them safely somewhere in the produce aisle!

Happy hunting! 🏹



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