

KEYS TO BETTER HEALTH™

Living Paleo and Grain Free - Is It Right For You?

What exactly does it mean to eat grain free and embrace the “Paleo Way,” and determine if “going Paleo” is right for you? Keys to Better Health™ is here with answers to your burning questions!

What is the Paleo Diet?

The Paleo Diet promotes a nutritional plan based on the eating habits of our ancestors in the Paleolithic period. It encourages the consumption of organic fruits and vegetables, grass-fed meat, wild caught fish, eggs, nuts, and seeds, while eliminating foods such as legumes, grains, dairy, potatoes, salt, refined sugar, and other processed foods.



What is Grain Free?

A key component of the Paleo Diet involves eliminating grain products in the diet. This includes all grains such as oatmeal, brown rice, and corn in addition to the traditional gluten-containing grains such as wheat, rye, and barley.

You may have heard of people going gluten free, but some people are taking this to a new level by going entirely grain free. What are the perceived benefits?

Is it Right For You?

Advocates of the Paleo Lifestyle and Grain Free Diet feel it may enhance their health. As with any diet, there are pros and cons.

Pros

- Encourages the consumption of many nutrient-dense foods, such as fruits and vegetables, nuts and seeds
- Discourages the intake of salt and sugar
- Limits foods you are likely to overindulge in (e.g., chips, brownies, cookies, etc.)

Cons

- Completely eliminates entire food groups such as grains and dairy, which each provide their own unique nutrients and benefits
- Can be more expensive and labor intensive
- May be more challenging to follow if vegetarian, especially with the exclusion of beans and dairy

Things To Consider If You Go Grain Free

- Convenience – You may need to spend more time planning out your meals and snacks and preparing ingredients or meals. Many grain-based foods are easy to grab on-the-go and need very little to no preparation.
- Nutrients – Whole grains and legumes provide a variety of nutrients, including the B vitamins, magnesium, iron and fiber. In addition, it may be a challenge to include enough calcium and Vitamin D in your daily diet without the use of a supplement due to the restriction of dairy. Consulting with a Registered Dietitian may help to avoid nutritional deficiencies.
- Family – Are you cooking for yourself, or feeding a family? If feeding a family, it may be a challenge to find enough variety in available foods to satisfy the whole household.
- Availability – Access to wild-caught fish, grass-fed beef, or organic fruits and vegetables is required, and could be an opportunity to develop a stronger relationship with a local food grocer.

Keys to Better Health™ offers a nutrition shelf-edge labeling program, which makes it easy for you to quickly identify healthy choices regardless of what diet you follow. When you're in our store, be on the lookout for our nutrition tags!

